

14 MAR 69

## BROTHER SAYS RAY WAS PART OF PLOT

Quoted by St. Louis Paper  
as Certain of Conspiracy

By The Associated Press

James Earl Ray's brother said yesterday he was convinced that there was a conspiracy in the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., to which Ray pleaded guilty in Memphis Monday.

The brother, John Larry Ray, was interviewed by The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, which quoted him as having said he was sure that Ray first was approached by conspirators in Canada.

That would have been after Ray's escape from the Missouri State Penitentiary on April 23, 1967.

"I am not the only one in on this," Ray was quoted as having told my brother. "My brother said there was someone else in on this 'deal,' but it had been hushed up by the Federal Bureau of Investigation," the newspaper quoted the brother as having said. "I didn't press him on what he meant."

### Reason for Guilty Plea

James Earl Ray was sentenced to 99 years in the Tennessee State Penitentiary.

The guilty plea has been represented as the only way Ray's lawyer, Percy Foreman of Houston, felt Ray could escape the electric chair. But Ray was quoted by The Nashville Tennessean, second-hand, as having said he now has second

thoughts, and wishes he had taken his chances on a trial and a life term.

Under the 99-year term, he will be eligible to seek parole in 1999. Had he been sentenced to life, he could have sought parole in 1982—earlier if he were given maximum good behavior time.

### Marches in Memphis

Meanwhile, two groups announced plans to hold memorial marches in Memphis on April 4, the first anniversary of Dr. King's death. The Rev. Ral David Abernathy, who succeeded Dr. King as head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, said a new Poor People's March will begin in Memphis on that date. He gave no details.

And Jesse Epps, head of the union that represents some 7,000 Memphis workers, said these workers would take the day off for an anniversary demonstration. Dr. King had gone to Memphis in behalf of about 1,200 striking garbage workers when he was killed. The Post-Dispatch quoted John Larry Ray as having said:

Several members of the Ray family met with Foreman in a St. Louis suburb two weeks ago.

"Foreman told us there was just too much evidence in the hands of the prosecution. Foreman said he couldn't agree to pursue any conspiracy angle, because it would make Jimmy sound like a hired killer rather than someone who may have killed King because he thought he was a Communist or differed with his beliefs.

"Foreman warned us that if the trial were to take place, Jimmy would possibly go to the electric chair to be made an example of, even though Tennessee hadn't electrocuted anyone in 10 years."