

# Tribune Editorial Page

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## Pursue Assassination Probe

The sudden conclusion of the James Earl Ray trial is hardly an acceptable end to the investigation into the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Despite Ray's guilty plea and subsequent 99 year prison sentence, the Justice Department is properly keeping alive its probe to determine whether a conspiracy was involved in the slaying.

Ray himself made a cryptic comment to the effect that he did not agree with the theory that no conspiracy was linked to the assassination. But he did not elaborate. A number of other questions also remain to be answered before the books are closed on this tragedy.

How did Ray, an escapee from the Missouri State Penitentiary, manage to plot, finance and carry out the slaying of Dr. King? Where did he get the estimated \$10,000 he spent between the time he escaped from prison and the time he was caught in London last June?

How did he know where Dr. King would be staying in Memphis? How did Ray, a fleeing felon with no great ex-

perience in international travel, know how and where to acquire the passports and other documents necessary to make his escape through Canada and into England? Why did he choose that particular route?

It strains credibility to believe that spur-of-the-moment holdups provided most of the money and that Ray was able to carry out the assassination and make good his escape without any help at all. If he did, then that should be established beyond a reasonable doubt.

But too many of these questions were not adequately answered at Ray's brief trial. There was no chance to cross-examine him on the witness stand at length or to analyze each detail of his story for possible conflicts.

As a result, a cloud of disbelief still surrounds the affair. Federal authorities should pursue their investigation into the case until that cloud is lifted.

The conspiracy theory cannot be dismissed or proved until all the facts are established. It will take a far more extensive probe to convince the public that the facts known so far add up to the whole story.