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RAY-Foreman 250

HOUSTON, Tex. AP - Attorney Percy Foreman denied a report Sunday that he used financial pressure to obtain a guilty plea from James Earl Ray in the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The Nashville Tennessean quoted Jerry Ray, brother of James Earl, in a copyright story: "Foreman said he would take \$150,000 if my brother pleaded guilty, but he wanted everything he would ever earn if he didn't."

"It's all a bunch of —," Foreman said.

"How is any man doing 99 years in the penitentiary going to earn anything?" he asked. "That's ridiculous."

Foreman said he asked Ray to specify a reasonable fee three weeks after he received a letter from Ray asking for a guilty plea and Ray said \$150,000.

"I didn't fix the fee, he fixed it," Foreman said.

Foreman said he originally was to get 60 per cent of a contract for picture, book and magazine rights. The 60 per cent probably will be more than \$400,000, he said.

"When it appeared the plea was going through," Foreman said,

"in view of the fact that I would be relieved of the responsibility of appeal, I thought there should be an adjustment of the fee in his favor."

Foreman said he plans to place his 60 per cent over the \$150,000 fee in a trust fund for Ray's family. He said he has told the family, and is waiting until they decide on a bank.

Picture rights already have been sold for \$175,000 plus 13 per cent of the receipts, he said.

Foreman said he advised Ray to plead guilty "because I believed he would be electrocuted if he didn't."

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