

3 May 71

King's Killer Is Intercepted In Escape

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Corrections Commissioner Mark Luttrell said today that James Earl Ray, convicted of killing Martin Luther King Jr. in Memphis, broke out of his cell at Brushy Mountain State Prison during the night.

He was recaptured in the compound at the maximum security prison in East Tennessee, Luttrell said, looking for a way to get over the prison wall.

Luttrell credited Prison Warden Robert Moore with foiling Ray's escape.

Luttrell said Moore heard a noise in the prison about 3 a.m., and ordered guard's to check Ray's cell first.

There they said, they noticed what appeared to be a man asleep in a bunk. But further examination showed that Ray somehow had come upon a wig—and put it atop a roll of blankets in the bunk.

Guards discovered that Ray had chipped through the concrete in his cell and sawed through some bars to gain access to a heating vent.

Luttrell quoted Moore as saying Ray slipped outside through the heating vent and into the compound.

Luttrell said Ray was recaptured within 25 minutes after the disturbance in or near Ray's cell was first noticed by the guards.