

## Abernathy Thinks Ray Was Set Up

### Atlanta

Ralph Abernathy, a close associate of assassinated civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., said yesterday he believes the escape from prison by James Earl Ray is a move to set Ray up to "be destroyed."

"I am greatly outraged over this news. I firmly am convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt that James Earl Ray has not escaped but is part of a plan," Abernathy said of Ray's escape last night from a Tennessee prison.

Abernathy succeeded King as head of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference after King was killed in 1968.

"I really believe that the prison officials, authorities in very high places, have planned for his escape. I just do not see how an individual who is being held for the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in maximum security can possibly escape," he added.

Abernathy said someone is trying to keep Ray from revealing the story of King's assassination.

"I am just greatly outraged. There is a scheme in this country to destroy an individual who has the information and the facts and has come to the point now where he is willing to tell those facts, and I would say he is going to be destroyed as so many others have been destroyed," he said.

*Associated Press*

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