

Ray's 'Bounty' On King

DALTON (Ga.) — (UPI) — Fugitive James Earl Ray bragged he was going to collect a "million dollar kitty" put up by a Klan group for the "removal" of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a prison friend says.

Authorities said there is no evidence any such fund ever existed.

Ray, an escaper from the Missouri state prison, has been charged with conspiracy and murder in the assassination of King at Memphis, April 4.

Convict Raymond Curtis, awaiting an appeal of a murder conviction, said yesterday he had served with Ray in jail once and prison twice and first heard him mention King shortly after the 1963 assassination of President Kennedy.

"Well, somebody made a pretty penny on that," he said Ray commented on hearing of Kennedy's death. "Martin Luther King is going to get it someday. They have a million-dollar kitty started on him and someday, when I get out, I'm going to collect it."

He said Ray added he had heard a Klan "businessman's association" was putting money into a fund to be used to "remove King."

Curtis said he and Ray were in the Missouri state prison at the time. Ray fled the prison last year by hiding in a bread truck.

He said Ray talked "a couple of times" afterward about killing King for "a million-dollar bounty."

"I didn't think much about it at the time," said Curtis. "In prison, you hear all sorts of hellacious ideas."

He said FBI agents have



RAYMOND CURTIS

Says he knew Ray

questioned him about his talks with Ray.

Curtis said Ray never mentioned racial matters. "He didn't have any prejudice. He didn't care if a man was white or colored," Curtis said. "He was only interested in money."