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A CONVICT SAYS RAY SOUGHT KING BOUNTY

DALTON, Ga., April 23 (AP) —A convicted murderer who was in prison with James Earl Ray, now hunted in the slaying of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., said Tuesday he had once heard Ray say he would be willing to try to collect \$1-million for killing the civil rights leader.

The prisoner, Raymond Curtis, who is in Whitfield County Jail pending appeal of a murder conviction, said that he and Ray were inmates at the Missouri State Penitentiary when they heard the news that President Kennedy had been assassinated.

Curtis said that a third prisoner had told them a "K-K businessman's association" was offering "a million-dollar bounty to get King."

"King was running his mouth pretty good then," Curtis went on. "Ray said, 'If there is a million-dollar bounty on King, I believe I can collect it.'"

Curtis said he had known Ray since 1955, when they shared a cell in Jackson County jail at Kansas City, Mo.

Later, he said, they had adjoining cells at Leavenworth Federal prison.

Curtis said Ray did not associate freely with other inmates. "You could pick him out of a crowd of 2,000 men in the prison yard," he said. "He would be off to himself walking and his mind would be somewhere else."

"The only thing he would make a long conversation out of was when he was planning something and you were a part of it," Curtis said. "Anything he did was thoroughly planned. He never went off half-cocked."

Curtis said he had heard Ray mention "a King bounty" several times. At one point, Curtis said, Ray referred to the Kennedy assassination by saying: "Boy, probably somebody made a nice little penny off of that. I sure wish it was me."