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Ray's 'Raoul' Reportedly Is His Brother

Washington

Two independent investigators claimed yesterday that the mysterious "Raoul" whom James Earl Ray blames for the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. is Ray's younger brother, Jerry.

Ray is serving a 99-year sentence in a Tennessee prison after pleading guilty to the 1968 murder of King in Memphis. He later changed his story and asked for a new trial, saying he was the fall guy for a man identified only as Raoul, a Canadian who allegedly aided and financed him.

David S. Lifton and Jeff Cohen claim in an article in the April edition of New Times magazine that in his testimony Ray substituted the non-existent "Raoul" for his brother, Jerry.

Lifton told United Press that he briefed House assassination committee investigators, including counsel Robert Lehner, for two days in January on his findings. Lehner and chief counsel Richard Sprague will be interviewing Ray at Brushy Mountain Park Prison in Tennessee this week.

According to the magazine article, Ray has described how he met Raoul in a Montreal bar, entered into a smuggling scheme with him and was promised money if he would move south, lie low and wait for instructions.

Seven months later he went to Memphis "with a weapon Raoul had told him to buy" and "on April 4, 1968, James Earl Ray, sitting outside a ramshackle rooming house, heard a shot, and a moment later, saw Raoul emerging, gun in hand," it said.

The authors identified Raoul as Jerry Ray, one of James Earl Ray's two brothers, who was in 1968 "a devoted lieutenant of Georgia lawyer Jesse B. Stoner, leader of the racist National States Rights party." Jerry Ray was last reported working in Chicago, they said.

A recent Justice Department investigation concluded that James Earl Ray alone killed King, but noted that Jerry Ray aided and abetted his brother after his escape from a Missouri prison, lied to the FBI about the extent and nature of his contacts with his brother and would, had the statute of limitations not expired, have been liable to prosecution.

United Press