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JAMES RAY WAS INTERVIEWED IN PRISON
He said his lawyer put him 'in a bind'

Ray Might Plead Guilty Again

Nashville

James Earl Ray says he might once again plead guilty to the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. — even though he insists he never fired the fatal bullet at the civil rights leader.

"I was in a bind," Ray said in a copyright story in yesterday's edition of the Nashville Tennessean.

Ray, serving a 99-year sentence for the King assassination, claimed he was pressured into a guilty plea in 1969 by his lawyer at the time, Percy Foreman.

"I'm not guilty in any ways legally," Ray said. "In other words, I didn't shoot him... But I may be in some way partly responsible for it... I purchased the weapon and things like that."

Ray claims a mysterious man named "Raoul" supplied the money for the rifle apparently used to kill King in Memphis on April 4, 1968. But Ray said he had no idea "Raoul" was planning to shoot King.

"I understand the difference between knowing and unknowing... There's got to be an intent," Ray said.

Ray said Foreman put him "in a bind" by telling him that the chances were "99 per cent" sure Ray would go to the electric chair.

He said he also feared his brother, Jerry Ray, might be prosecuted by the government unless he pleaded guilty.

James Earl Ray said he signed a stipulation that he fired the shot that killed King, even though he knew the statement was false.

"If I had to do it all over again I would have had to — I think I would have to admit to that stipulation based on the position they had me in — Percy Foreman, the trial judge and the prosecutor," Ray said.

He said he is convinced he might have received "40 or 50 years" if he had represented himself or had a public defender handle his case.

Ray said he signed a letter to Foreman authorizing the guilty plea. But he claimed the letter, prepared by Foreman, was "completely false."

Ray said he was nearby at the time of the slaying but that he was unaware of the killing until he heard about it on the radio.

Ray said he bought the rifle, on which his fingerprints were found, but claimed the last time he saw it was the day before King's death, when he gave it to "Raoul" in Memphis.

Associated Press