

Brother calls Ray unknowing accomplice

By DON SHANNON
Los Angeles Times Service

WASHINGTON — Jerry Ray, brother of James Earl Ray, said yesterday that he believes his brother was an unknowing accomplice in a conspiracy to assassinate Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

At first, Ray told the House Select Committee on Assassinations that he knew of James Earl's involvement in such a conspiracy. But after Rep. Harold Sawyer, R-Ohio, pointed out that participation in a conspiracy would make James Earl Ray guilty of first-degree murder, Jerry changed his testimony to say:

"I strongly believe he was involv-

ed — unknowing involved."

Jerry Ray, at the close of yesterday's testimony, was granted permission to include in the committee records a copy of James Earl Ray's suit for publication of all FBI records of the King case.

"I'd also like to say in James' behalf that if he wins his suit and gets all these secret FBI files, we'll find out who killed Martin Luther King," the witness said.

Ray was less certain in his replies to many questions concerning the possible contacts among the three Ray brothers during the period from April 23, 1967, when James Earl escaped from the Missouri state prison, until his capture in Britain

two months after King's assassination on April 4, 1968. Explaining conflicting statements he had made over the years, Jerry said he had difficulty recalling events of a decade ago.

He strongly denied, however, that

Jerry protested that local authorities had cleared the Rays but that this had not appeared in the committee record. Florence Kennedy, co-counsel for Ray, attacked the committee for omitting this evidence while pursuing "slivers" of information aimed at incriminating the three brothers.

The hearing ended with testimony by Ray that he had located, through a map drawn by James Earl, the motel in Corinth, Miss., where James Earl stayed on April 1, 1968. This was the date the committee contends he was in Atlanta, offering as proof a ticket given to James Earl by an Atlanta laundry.

Jerry Ray testified yesterday that

a St. Louis reporter had told him the FBI had removed the registration book from the motel.

William F. Pepper, Jerry Ray's other counsel, criticized the congressional investigators for using the opinion of writers to develop a theory that Jerry or John Ray, the third brother, or both, could be the mysterious "Raoul." James Earl claims involved him in the conspiracy.

Pepper said James Earl is perhaps a legitimate target for such public speculation, but he told the congressmen "you go far afield" in implicating Jerry and John, who is scheduled to appear before the committee today.

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William F Pepper - Co counsel for Jerry

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