

The New York Times

20¢

April 7 1968

Martin Luther King Junior Shot Dead

By Alex King

Yesterday Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968), American clergyman and Nobel laureate, was shot dead.

Assassination

King's subsequent preoccupation with Vietnam and his determination to lead a Poor People's march on Washington combined with changing public priorities to challenge his leadership.

He was exhausted from stress, and his speeches increasingly alluded to his possible death. He was undeterred, however, for as he put it on April 3, 1968, he had "been to the mountain top and seen the Promised Land".

Yesterday King was shot and killed in Memphis, Tennessee. Some 100,000 people attended his funeral in Atlanta. A white escaped convict, James Earl Ray, was arrested for the murder; he pleaded guilty and in March 1969 was sentenced to 99 years in prison.



Martin Luther King being carried away on a stretcher after being shot five times in the chest cavity.

Why This Event Is Important

This is important to the black people of America because Martin Luther King Jr was a real fighter for their civil rights. He also won the Nobel Peace Prize. He will always be remembered for what he did for them.



'I have a dream.' When we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! free at last! thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"