

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

State Wants Ray Petition Thrown Out

FROM PRESS DISPATCHES

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The State of Tennessee has sought to have James Earl Ray's latest petition for freedom thrown out of federal court because it lacks his signature.

Asst. State Atty. Gen. W. Henry Haile III asked Judge L. Clure Morton of U.S. District Court on Wednesday to strike Ray's 100-page petition because Ray had not signed it and certified it as required by federal law.

Ray, 44, is serving a 99-year sentence at the Tennessee State Prison in Nashville in the April 1968 slaying in Memphis of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Ray, who is in solitary confinement, pleaded guilty to the shooting in March 1969 in Memphis.

Ray's petition was filed Dec. 4. In it he seeks either to be freed from prison outright or to be granted another trial.

Ray's motion was filed after he had exhausted state court appeals. He claims that former attorneys Percy Foreman and Arthur Hanes coerced him into the guilty plea so the story of the assassination could be sold to author William Bradford Huie.

The petition said Ray had never had a trial on the murder charge.

"In short," it said, "Ray's guilt was determined by the judge, the defense counsel and outside pressures, but not by a jury or the admission of Ray himself."

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

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