

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

# Ray Asks to Be Out of Solitary

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — (AP) — An attorney for James Earl Ray told a federal judge yesterday that the mental condition of the convicted slayer of Dr. Martin Luther King is deteriorating because of solitary confinement.

Ray, serving a 99-year prison term for the 1969 slaying of King, is seeking a return to the normal prison population at the Tennessee State Penitentiary here where he is being held in what prison officials call administrative segregation.

Bernard Fensterwald Jr. of Washington told Judge L. Clure Morton that Ray's physical and mental condition are suffering because of his confinement. He said Ray has no recreation, no contact with other prisoners, no exercise and no sunlight.

"In the last few months I find a great deal of deterioration of his mind," the attorney said. "He's not totally capable any longer of being much assistance..."

Fensterwald argued that the state is, in effect, "condemning him to 30 years of solitary confinement. Personally, I think it's kinder to put somebody to death."

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

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