

King Killing Called Political

LONDON, July 2 (UPI) — A British attorney argued today the slaying of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a political crime that does not fall under the Anglo-American extradition treaty. He said the man accused of killing Dr. King should not be deported from Britain.

Barrister Roger Frisby made the argument at Bow Street Magistrate's court to open the second session of a formal hearing into American demands for custody of escaped Missouri convict James Earl Ray.

Mr. Frisby said Ray should not be taken to Memphis, to face charges he shot the Nobel Peace Prize winner to death April 4 because the extradition treaty does not cover political crimes. Mr. Frisby contended Dr. King's 13-year campaign for civil rights had made him a political figure.

Ray, 40, appeared in court under heavy guard, tieless and dressed in a ruffled blue suit. He toyed nervously with his heavy-rimmed glasses and mopped sweat from his brow. It was his first appearance in court since Thursday when the extradition hearing opened.

The British court hoped to complete the hearing

today. If Chief Magistrate Frank Milton orders Ray deported, his order automatically will be held in abeyance for 15 days to give Ray time to appeal. Appeal could take the rest of the summer.

Legal sources said the attorney for the U. S. Embassy, David Calcutt, would rebut the "political crime" thesis developed by Mr. Frisby last Thursday. They said Mr. Calcutt would cite precedents in which the United States has granted British requests for the extradition of persons charged with similar offenses.

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