

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Ray Denies He Killed King

By Associated Press

LONDON. — James Earl Ray denied Thursday that he killed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Fighting extradition to the United States to stand trial for the murder of the Negro civil rights leader, Ray professed innocence in Bow Street Magistrates Court.

The 40-year-old fugitive from the Missouri Penitentiary took the stand in his own defense after the U.S. government unveiled a carefully detailed case against him as "the single hand" in the assassination at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tenn., April 4.

George Jacob Bonebrake, a fingerprint expert of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, testified he found Ray's prints on the rifle, telescopic sight and binoculars that were dropped at the doorway of a shop near the motel shortly after King was slain.

Under questioning by his court-appointed British attorney,



JAMES EARL RAY
... 'No, Sir'

ney, Roger Frisby, Ray declared in a soft, reedy drawl he had never met Dr. King and that he bore him no grudge.

"Did you kill Martin Luther King?" Mr. Frisby asked.

"No, sir," the prisoner replied.

Chief Magistrate Frank Milton, presiding in a gray suit with lots of white cuff showing, later adjourned the hearing until next Tuesday. It is expected to be completed then. Ray went back to prison.

BRITISH LAWYERS retained by the United States told Milton of witnesses to the purchase of the rifle and of a disabled war veteran, Charles Stevens, 46, who said he heard the fatal shot fired from the common bathroom of a rooming house across South Main street from the Lorraine Motel.

But Ray resisted moves to extradite him to stand trial for Dr. King's murder with all the legal ammunition provided by Britain's clouded extradition laws.

If the court's decision goes against him, Mr. Frisby is expected to appeal to a higher court on the ground that Dr. King's assassination was a political crime, for which Britain does not permit extradition.

Mr. Frisby electrified the court by summoning Ray to the stand for a six-minute unsworn appearance.

"Call my client," he ordered.

Ray was formally addressed as Ramon George Sneyd, the alias under which he is held here on charges of entering Britain on a forged Canadian passport.

HE SAT RATHER than stood in the witness box to make less of a target in any attempt on his life and Scotland Yard de-

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teatives clustered around him in a human screen. This was the exchange:

Frisby: Did you know Martin Luther King personally?

Ray: No, sir.

Frisby: Had you ever met him?

Ray: No, sir.

Frisby: Have you any kind of grudge against him?

Ray: No, sir.

Frisby: Did you kill Martin Luther King?

Ray: No, sir.

Asked by the court clerk to sign a summary of this for evidence, Ray turned to his lawyer and said: "How would I sign it?"

It went into the record unsigned. At no point during the hearing did his lawyer admit that the prisoner was Ray.

The U.S. case was presented by David Calcutt, a tall, bald British lawyer.

GEORGIA GROUP OFFERS TO DEFEND RAY, PAY COSTS

SAVANNAH, GA. (AP)—An organization calling itself the Patriot Legal Fund has offered to defend James E. Ray if he is brought to trial on charges that he assassinated Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Dr. Edwards R. Fields, the fund's secretary, said Thursday. "We have offered to defend Ray free of charge; pay all legal costs, attorney fees, court costs, costs of appeal if there are any, and bonds."

Dr. Fields said the offer was made in a letter about two weeks ago to John Tyndall, a representative of the Patriot Legal Fund and editor of the *Spearhead* in London.

He identified the *Spearhead* as a monthly publication similar to one published by the National States' Rights Party in Savannah.