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Ray Begins Battle Against Extradition

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By Associated Press

LONDON. — James Earl Ray began a legal fight Tuesday against extradition to the United States to face the charge of assassinating Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The 40-year-old escaped convict sat silently in a well-guarded dock while his British lawyer asked London's Bow Street Court for as much time as possible to prepare for the extradition hearing.

Judge Frank Milton gave him until June 27, the date he set for the hearing to begin.

As attorneys representing the United States presented their extradition request to Milton, Ray said barely a word and displayed not a flicker of emotion in the eight-minute session.

Milton addressed Ray only once, to inform him of when the formal hearing on the extradition request would be held

and that he would continue to be held in custody.

Ray replied quietly, "Thank you."

Roger Frisby, the British lawyer defending Ray, told Milton he wanted as much time as possible to prepare, but Milton said he thought it "highly desirable that an early date be fixed." They compromised on the June 27 date.

An American lawyer is due in London later this week to discuss preparation of Ray's defense if he is extradited to Tennessee to stand trial. King was slain in Memphis April 4.

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

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