

SUPREME COURT BARS NEW HEARING ON RAY

Refuses to Review His Attempts to Withdraw Guilty Plea in Slaying of Dr. King in Memphis in 1968

WASHINGTON, Dec. 13 (AP)—The Supreme Court today refused to review James Earl Ray's unsuccessful attempts to withdraw his guilty plea in the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The Court voted not to consider Mr. Ray's contention that he was "framed by the F.B.I. and local police, and then coerced by his own attorney to plead guilty against his will."

Just last week, a special Congressional committee authorized \$6.5 million for the first year of an investigation into the assassinations of President Kennedy and Dr. King, one of the nation's leading civil rights activists.

In seeking Supreme Court review, Mr. Ray's appeal said that the case "raises major constitutional issues with respect to voluntariness of the plea, waiver of conflict of interest on the part of criminal defense attorneys, professional and ethical competence and obligations in representing a defendant."

Arrested in London

Dr. King was killed by a rifle blast in Memphis, Tenn., in 1968. Mr. Ray was arrested in London a short time later and extradited to the United States to stand trial for murder. His case never reached a jury because he subsequently pleaded guilty.

Mr. Ray's appeal for review by the high court said that his financial agreements with two attorneys, Arthur Hanes and Percy Foreman, and William Bradford Huie, the author, had precluded his chance to receive fair representation. Mr. Ray said that Mr. Foreman had forced him to plead guilty.

The appeal said that other, conflicting considerations by Mr. Ray's attorneys had led to a "gross violation of the right to private attorney-client communications."

A lower court's finding that there was "potential and limited actual conflicts of interest" by Mr. Ray's defense attorneys should be enough to have his case reviewed, his appeal said.

"The charge is that those who did kill Dr. King are still at large, protected in part by the unwillingness of the courts to face these unpleasant facts," Mr. Ray's appeal said.

Mr. Ray is an inmate at the Tennessee State Prison where he is serving a life sentence.