

# Committee Team To Interview Ray

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WASHINGTON — The House Select Committee on Assassinations, which delved briefly and fruitlessly Wednesday into the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy, will send a team to Tennessee next week to interview James Earl Ray, the convicted killer of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Jack Kershaw, a Nashville attorney hired by Ray three weeks ago, said in Nashville Ray will give depositions at Brushy Mountain state prison at Petros next week to the committee's deputy chief counsel, Robert Lehner, and two court reporters.

Ray, who pleaded guilty to the 1968 Memphis murder of King and now says he didn't do it, is serving a 99-year sentence at the Petros prison.

Kershaw said he has new evidence that will aid the committee's investigation of the King

case, but declined to reveal it. He said, however, that Ray will not testify before the committee merely to support his original guilty plea.

"Like Mr. Ray just said, he wouldn't go before them (the committee) just to prove that he was guilty," Kershaw said, referring to Ray's statements in a CBS-TV interview that was aired Tuesday.

Kershaw said that until now Ray "hasn't had a forum" at which to tell his story.

"At that time (when Ray pleaded guilty) the establishment was looking for a victim. Right then, Ray was victimized," Kershaw said. "It will be my contention that he never plotted together, never breathed together, to murder King. He was a victim of a conspiracy, just like King was."

Ray insisted on CBS-TV that he not only didn't fire the shot that killed King, but wasn't even in the rooming house from which the shot allegedly was fired.

Committee chairman Louis Stokes (D-Ohio) announced subpoenas have been issued for records and other documents in the possession of Memphis and Birmingham officials. He identified them as E. Winslow 'Buddy' Chapman, Memphis director of police; Huge Stanton, who was district attorney in Shelby County at the time Ray pleaded guilty; Shelby County Sheriff Gene Barksdale, who was a police inspector, and Police Capt. Jack LeGrand of Birmingham.

At a brief public hearing here Wednesday, Santo Trafficante Jr., a 63-year-old, balding Miami gangland figure, refused to answer questions about what he knows of Kennedy's assassination and plots to kill Cuban Premier Fidel Castro.

Trafficante is the only surviving member of a gangland trio that, according to earlier Senate testimony, was enlisted secretly by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in 1960 in efforts to dispose of Castro.