

Witness May Not Be as Strong

MEMPHIS, Tenn. — (AP) — A witness expected to be questioned by U.S. House investigators here next week has contradicted a claim made by an attorney for James Earl Ray, convicted assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Willie Green, the witness, was named by Jack Kershaw of Nashville as a man who could place Ray at a service station at the time King was shot a few blocks away.

GREEN, INFORMED of the statement, said only that he saw a man fitting Ray's description walk past the old Esso service station at



RAY

Third and Linden streets after the assassination.

Kershaw identified Green as the witness Tuesday after investigators of the House Assassinations Committee interviewed Ray for the fifth time. He also said House investigators would travel to Memphis next week to question Green and others.

Green said Tuesday that he saw the man pacing along the street after King was killed.

"I didn't see the shooting cause I was too far from it," he said. "When I saw him, he was walking to Hernando. He made about three trips."

Kershaw, told of Green's remarks, said: "That doesn't jive at all. Why would Ray be walking up and down the street after the shooting?"

RAY HAS repeatedly told investigators that he went to a service

station several blocks north of the rooming house where he was staying and tried to get a spare tire repaired, Kershaw said. Since it was just before 6 p.m. on April 4, 1968, prior to the shooting, Ray could not get the tire fixed during rush hour, the attorney said.

Green said he did not recall fixing any spare tires on the day of the assassination.

"There is a statement in existence from him (Green) locating Ray at a filling station attempting to have a tire filled at the time King was killed," Kershaw said.

However, Kershaw said he had not made any attempt to find Green.

"WE MUST proceed to Memphis and inspect the site and interrogate witnesses, including Green and a very important witness, the common law wife of Charles Quitman Stephens, who was committed to the mental institution at Boliver after contradicting her husband," Kershaw said.

Kershaw said Stephens tentatively identified Ray as the man he saw running from a boarding house seconds after King was killed April 4, 1968. But, his common law wife said he was too drunk to recognize anyone and that the man she saw was smaller and had a dark complexion — resembling a mysterious figure Ray has identified only as "Raoul."

During his fifth meeting with House investigators at the Brushy Mountain State Prison, Ray said he had bought a deer rifle at Birmingham, Ala., on Raoul's orders.

"Ray testified today that he never saw the gun after he delivered it to Raoul at the New Rebel Inn," said Kershaw Tuesday.

The attorney said Ray, serving 99 years for King's murder, met Raoul the afternoon King was shot and was told to take a room up-

as Ray's Attorney Says

stairs at a boarding house.

The room did not overlook the motel where King was staying, but a nearby bathroom window provid-

ed a clear line of fire. Police believe the single shot was fired from the bathroom window.

Kershaw said House investiga-

tors would return to the East Tennessee prison to wind up their interrogation of Ray after collecting more information in Memphis.