

321-7
\$175,000 Said Offered
MAR 25 1969
For Ray Movie Rights

New York (AP) — Percy Foreman, the lawyer who advised James Earl Ray to plead guilty to the Martin Luther King Jr., slaying, said Monday an offer of \$175,000 has been made for the movie rights to the story.

Foreman said the offer was made by Carlo Ponti, film producer and husband of Italian actress Sophia Loren, to William Bradford Huie, Ray's official biographer.

"And I'll get 60 per cent of it," Foreman said in an interview in his New York hotel.

Plus Percentage

Foreman said that in addition to the flat fee, Ponti would pay 13 per cent of the gross receipts of the movie.

Foreman, of Houston, Tex., said Look magazine had guaranteed another \$85,000 for Huie's series of articles on Ray's life, and that he was entitled to 60 per cent of that also.

The Houston lawyer, who successfully defended Candy Mosler and her nephew Melvin Powers in 1966 against a charge of murdering her husband, said Ray himself had fixed the attorney fee at \$150,000.

Foreman said he understood that Arthur J. Hanes, a former mayor of Birmingham, Ala., who was Ray's original lawyer in the King case, had been paid \$35,000.

"It all comes through Huie," Foreman said.

The attorney said that his 60 per cent share of the movie, book and magazine rights might total \$400,000 or so, but that he would take only the \$150,000 agreed upon with Ray.

Foreman said he would put anything above that figure in trust for Ray's family.

"I didn't fix the fee, he fixed it," Foreman said.

He said he advised Ray plead guilty "because I believed he would be electrocuted if he didn't."

Ray was given a sentence of 99 years in the Tennessee State Penitentiary. He has since notified his intention of asking for a rehearing at which he could withdraw his guilty plea and elect to stand trial by jury.

In Savannah, Ga., Ray's best lawyer, J. B. Stoner, said his Ku Klux Klan connections would help Ray's case.

"They show I'm a loyal white man and the white people of Shelby County are for white supremacy," Stoner said. Memphis, where the murder occurred, is in Shelby County.

Stoner asserted that King brought about his own death with his activities across the country" and added:

"He was a troublemaker." Commented Robert B. Jan, chairman of the Memphis City Council: "It's just making a lot of trouble that we don't need. He's certainly not coming around here when he takes that."