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British Law Was Waiting To Nab Dr. King Suspect

WASHINGTON (AP) — James Earl Ray, a fugitive convict accused of slaying Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., was arrested in London Saturday as he was about to fly to Belgium, the FBI announced.

Scotland Yard detectives took Ray into custody at London Airport, ending a two-month manhunt through the United States, Canada, Mexico and parts of Europe.

The Justice Department announcement of the arrest came while Mrs. Coretta King, widow of the civil rights leader, was attending the New York funeral of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, another victim of an assassin's bullet.

She was told of the arrest as

she left St. Patrick's Cathedral but had no public comment.

FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover said Ray was carrying a fully loaded pistol but offered no resistance as he was seized before he could reboard a plane bound from Lisbon, Portugal, to Brussels.

British authorities charged the arrested man with using a false Canadian passport and with carrying a concealed weapon. He is to have a hearing on these charges Monday. Meanwhile he is held without bond under maximum security conditions at London's Cannon Row police station.

It was learned authoritatively that a check of Ray's fingerprints was used in identi-

fying the arrested man as the longtime criminal wanted in King's murder. The arrest was made at 11:15 a.m. London time, 3:15 a.m. Pacific time.

Ray was wanted on federal charges of conspiracy to deny King his civil rights and on a first-degree murder indictment returned in Memphis, Tenn.

It is expected that extradition will be sought on the more serious charge of murder but the formal application is unlikely to be lodged with London authorities before Monday or Tuesday.

Asst. Atty. Gen. Fred M. Vinson Jr., head of the Criminal Division of the Justice Department, was leaving Saturday evening for London, the department said, "to review on behalf of the United States the custody, protection and

expeditious return to this country of James Earl Ray."

Memphis officials hailed the arrest and said Ray will be brought to trial as soon as possible.

It was in Memphis on April 4 that King was killed as he stood on the balcony of a motel talking to friends.

The search for his killer

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Passport Files Tripped Ray

OTTAWA (AP) — A photograph unearthed in a check of 200,000 to 400,000 Canadian passport applications led to the arrest in London Saturday of James Earl Ray, wanted in the slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a Foreign Affairs department spokesman said.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police found the picture in a month-long search of Foreign Affairs department files and quickly discovered that the application to which it was attached, made out in the name

of Ramon George Sneyd, was fraudulent.

There have been complaints in the past that foreigners too easily obtain Canadian passports. Foreign Secretary Mitchell Sharp said Saturday: "In the light of this case, I have asked for a full study and report on whether stricter requirements for identification of persons applying for Canadian passports are necessary or desirable."

Sharp said the man arrested in London was carrying a Canadian birth certificate in addition to two Canadian pass-

ports under a false name. Birth certificates in Canada are issued by provincial governments. There was no indication whether the one mentioned by Sharp was forged.

A Royal Canadian Mounted Police spokesman said the RCMP had traced Ray's journeys in Canada, relearned he was headed for Britain and tipped off Scotland Yard and the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation.

He said RCMP investigations in the case are closed and added: "From now on, it is up to Scotland Yard and the FBI."

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first turned up a suspect identified as Eric Starvo Galt, but the FBI later said Galt really is Ray, a 40-year-old escapee from the Missouri State Penitentiary.

Ray was using the name Ramon George Sneyd when he was arrested Saturday and was carrying two Canadian passports issued in that name. He had obtained one in Ottawa on April 24 and the other from the Canadian embassy in Lisbon, Portugal, on May 16.

Chief Inspector Thomas Butler of Scotland Yard's Flying Squad told newsmen in London:

"Although the man claims to be Sneyd, his physical description is in fact identical to that of James Earl Ray."

Although Butler went no further than that in saying the man arrested is Ray, the Justice Department statement said unconditionally that he is Ray, without providing details on how the identification was verified.

British authorities said the man arrived in London by jet airliner Saturday morning from Lisbon, en route to Brussels.

While his passport was being examined and he was being interviewed at London Airport he was searched and the loaded pistol was found in a hip pocket, the immigration men said.

Scotland Yard then was called and the arrest followed.

A spokesman at the U.S. embassy in London said the arrest was made at the request of the embassy's legal section in connection with the King slaying.

A Scotland Yard statement said the passports describe the bearer as a 29-year-old



RAY IN CANADA — This photo, seized by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Toronto, led to the Saturday arrest of James Earl Ray in London. Ray, charged with the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., allegedly had two Canadian passports under assumed name. (AP)

native of Toronto, Canada, unemployed and with no fixed current address.

The announcement of his arrest was made in a statement issued at the Justice Department in the name of Atty. Gen. Ramsey Clark and Hoover, neither of whom was present. No questions were permitted at that time.

Among the questions raised by Ray's extensive travels since the shooting is where he got the money.

He had escaped from prison at Jefferson City about a year before King's murder. An extensive check of his activities during that year showed he rarely worked and had no apparent income but appeared

to be well supplied with money.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, who worked closely with the FBI in the hunt for Ray, supplied the tip that focused the search on London. An RCMP spokesman said a check of Canadian passport files, begun soon after the FBI started looking for Ray, finally turned up one with a picture that looked like Ray. It had been issued to Sneyd and was found to be fraudulent.

Hoover praised the cooperation of the Canadian police and Scotland Yard but said Ray's arrest was the direct result of an intensive investigation by the FBI that covered all 50 states, Canada, Mexico, Portugal, England and other countries.

As the trail appeared to grow dim there were complaints from civil rights leaders, particularly followers of King, that the G-men were not pursuing the investigation vigorously enough. Among law enforcement people there was some fear also that Ray had been killed by others involved in a conspiracy to murder King.

The FBI produced a massive file on Ray's activities up to the time of King's death and gathered such personal information as that he was an avid dancer, liked beer and was a loner.

The detailed description furnished by the FBI led to mystery and confusion in the manhunt as many who claimed to have been the gunman after the shooting of King provided contradictory information. For example, some said the gunman was in his late 20s, in contrast to Ray's age of 40.

A chief source of speculation about the shooting has been that Ray was part of a group that plotted King's death with care, but no other

persons are known to be involved at this point.

Ray had served seven years of a 20-year sentence for armed robbery when he escaped from prison. A fellow inmate said Ray told him he would be willing to kill King for \$1 million.

Ray, the son of a laborer, had a long list of arrests for burglary, vagrancy, driving a car without an operator's license and forgery. He was a man of many aliases, including Eric Starvo Galt, John Willard, Harvey Lowmyer, James McBride, James Walton, James O'Conner. And now, Ramon George Sneyd.

It is expected he will be brought into court by London authorities Monday on the charges of false documentation and carrying a concealed weapon.

At the State Department, officials said they expect a formal request will be made for his return to the United States under a U.S.-British extradition treaty, which lists murder as one of the crimes for which extradition is authorized.

Ray was reported wearing a sports jacket, flannel trousers, light raincoat and glasses when he got off the Lisbon-Brussels flight at London.

He had checked his luggage through to Brussels when he boarded the plane at Lisbon.

It was learned here that Ray had flown from Canada to London May 6 with a round trip ticket but cashed in the return portion in exchange for passage to Lisbon and went right on to Portugal.

The FBI, with the help of the RCMP, had picked up Ray's trail in Canada and officers satisfied themselves a few days ago that the man bearing a passport in Sneyd's name was, in fact, Ray.