

Quick Extradition of Ray Studied by U.S. Officials

By PETER GROSE

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, June 9—United States officials weighed today the quickest means of extraditing James Earl Ray from Britain.

Justice Department officials said that the extradition might be easier and quicker on grounds other than Ray's alleged role in the slaying of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Attorney General Ramsey Clark touched on various alternatives during an interview on the American Broadcasting Company television program "Issues and Answers."

After the broadcast he returned to his office to study a further possibility that he had

not mentioned, according to Justice aides—that extradition could be requested on the basis of a complaint that Ray was a fugitive who broke out of the Missouri State Prison 13 months ago while serving a 20-year sentence on a robbery conviction.

Legal experts believed that this might make a more straightforward extradition case than either the Tennessee murder charge or a Federal charge of conspiracy to violate Dr. King's civil rights.

State Department legal experts, Justice Department lawyers and the Governors of Tennessee and Missouri were reported to be in consultation about the procedures to be followed.

While British officials have been quoted as saying that extradition could take as long as three to six weeks, United States officials are hopeful of quicker action.

Meanwhile, Mr. Clark said that the security of the prisoner, held since yesterday by the British police, held top priority for Assistant Attorney General Fred M. Vinson Jr., who flew to London within hours of the arrest.

After conferring with Mr. Vinson by telephone, Mr. Clark said that the prisoner had made no statement about Dr. King's assassination April 4 in Memphis, for which he is under indictment in Tennessee.

Mr. Clark said that Ray's return to the United States for trial "as quickly as possible" was Mr. Vinson's second priority in his consultations with the British legal authorities.

Mr. Vinson visited London's Cannon Row police station to see Ray in his cell, Justice Department aides said, but

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made no attempt to talk with him.

Mr. Clark said that Ray would not be questioned except "in strict conformity with applicable legal standards."

Asked whether the suspect's European travels, some of which are known to have been paid for in cash, suggested that Ray was being financially supported by others in a conspiracy, Mr. Clark replied:

"We have to go on evidence, on fact, not on theory or speculation. At this time we have no evidence that James Earl Ray was not acting alone. If there was a conspiracy, it will be discovered."

As to the money for Ray's travels, Mr. Clark said:

"He is a person who lived a life of crime, who obtained money through crime, and I think we can reason that this is a very plausible possibility as to the source of his funds."

The Federal Bureau of Investigation was unable to shed any light on Ray's movements just before he flew to London from Lisbon yesterday morning.

A spokesman said that the Portuguese police had not yet supplied a report on his movement so he could not explain reports that there was no one with Ray's assumed name, Ramon George Sneyd on the London-bound plane.

If he left Portugal under some other name and passport he must have destroyed the false documents, the spokesman said, because he had only two passports in his possession when he was arrested, both of them in the name of Sneyd.

Court Appearance Today

By DANA ADAMS SCHMIDT

Special to The New York Times

LONDON, June 9—James Earl Ray will appear tomorrow morning at the Bow Street Magistrate's Court on charges of traveling with a forged passport and carrying a weapon without a certificate.

An authority on British law explained tonight that charges would be brought against Ray mainly to give the American authorities time to begin the procedure of extradition.

They said that the magistrate would most likely "re-mand him in custody" for up to eight days to provide time for further investigation.

The magistrate could, however, deal with the case if Ray pleaded guilty to the two charges brought by the police—illegally carrying a pistol and traveling on a false passport.

If he pleads not guilty the magistrate could, in theory also hold a hearing, but the law expert thought this unlikely.

Under British law, Ray could be sentenced on each of the two charges against him to 12 months in prison, the sentences probably running concurrently.

Since the purpose of bringing the charges is to facilitate extradition, however, this expert thought that the magistrate would, in the case of conviction, choose one of these alternatives:

☐He might impose a deferred sentence.

☐He might sentence Ray to 15 days in prison, which would in practice presumably run concurrently with the 15 days during which, under British law, a person must be held in custody after he has been ordered extradited.

☐He might be fined.

☐The magistrate might order an "absolute discharge," which would mean that he had been found guilty but that no punishment was being exacted.

15 Days Granted

Under the Extradition Act of 1870 a person must be held for 15 days after an extradition order has been made in order to safeguard his rights. This means that instead of rushing him out of the country he is given 15 days, when he can apply for a writ of habeas corpus to dispute his extradition.

Mr. Vinson, in his efforts to "expedite" Ray's extradition, can follow two courses, the authority on British law continued.

He could either submit a "requisition" in the name of the state of Tennessee, through the Foreign Office to the Home Secretary, who would issue instructions to the Dow Street Magistrate, or he could apply directly to the Dow Street Magistrate, bypassing the machinery of the Foreign Office and Home Office.

The Dow Street magistrate could then issue a warrant for the extradition of Ray if he has evidence that in his opinion would "justify the issue of the warrant if the crime had been committed in his local jurisdiction in the United Kingdom."

It will be Mr. Vinson's task, therefore, to submit the necessary evidence, through a British lawyer, to the magistrate.

Mr. Vinson arrived by plane this morning. Asked whether he would seek a "voluntary" or a "compulsory" order, Mr. Vinson replied that "the easiest way is always the best one."

When he visited the Cannon Row station, the police prevented crowds from approaching by sealing off the streets leading to the station, Derby Gate and Cannon Row. The police guarded the main gates to the station.

British police officials understood, that Mr. Vinson had assisted in the identification of Ray.

Scotland yard detectives picked up Ray as he waited for a flight to Brussels following his arrival from Lisbon.