

Evidence in Documents

U.S. Formally Asks Extradition of Ray

LONDON (AP)—A formal request for the extradition of James Earl Ray, accused assassin of Dr.

Martin Luther King Jr., was handed to the British Foreign Office today by U.S. officials.

The U.S. Embassy declined to give details of the petition. It merely described it as "documents required for the extradition proceedings."

THE DOCUMENTS run several hundred pages and contain information on Ray's identity and the cases against him—both in connection with King's murder and Ray's escape from the Missouri State Prison while serving an armed robbery sentence.

The Foreign Office now must certify that the request satisfies the terms of the extradition treaty with the United States. The Home Office then rules on the validity of the murder case under British as well as U.S. law. Then the file goes to a judge for a court hearing.

The formal extradition request came as Scotland Yard delved into the mysteries of Ray's stay in Britain.

Ray has been traced to two London hotels between May 28 and his arrest Saturday, but there is an unexplained gap of about 10 days, starting May 17 when he left Lisbon.

FBI AGENTS were understood to be working with Scotland

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Yard detectives, but British police are doing the spadework since the FBI has no legal authority in foreign countries. Police on both sides of the Atlantic are trying to untangle Ray's travels, which took him to Canada, Britain and Portugal after King was shot April 4.

Ray was transferred yesterday to a maximum security cell in Wandsworth Prison because Brixton Jail on London's South Side, was not considered secure enough.

Extradition proceedings could last two months if the 40-year-old escaped convict fights all the way through the British courts.

As a first step, American authorities have obtained a provisional British warrant charging Ray with the murder of King in Memphis, Tenn. A State Department spokesman in Washington said documents to support the extradition request "will be transmitted to London shortly."

THE BRITISH police are holding Ray on charges of using a forged passport and carrying a loaded gun. On Scotland Yard's records he is officially listed as Ramon George Sneyd, the name on his Canadian passport.

U.S. officials have not tried to question Ray to avoid legal complications resulting from Supreme Court decisions in recent years. And now that he has been charged under British law, Scotland Yard cannot interrogate him outside a courtroom.

While British police were trying to ascertain whether Ray had any contacts in London, detectives in Toronto were searching for a short blond man who reportedly came looking for Ray in a rooming house three or four days after the suspect flew to London.

The landlady, Mrs. Fela Szpakowski, told police about the caller, the second Ray reportedly had during his month-long stay in Toronto after the assassination of King. The first was an unidentified fat man who was reported to have called on Ray at another rooming house.

MRS. SZPAKOWSKI said the blond caller presented a police identification card, but both the Mounted Police and the Toronto police said he was not a policeman.

The Atlanta, Ga., Constitution, in a copyright article, said that an apartment manager in the Southern city's hippie district reported a man using the name Eric Starvo Galt stayed in his building for more than a week prior to the slaying of King. The name is one of the aliases under which Ray was sought by the FBI.

The manager said the man "looked more like a preacher than a convict."