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MEMPHIS, Tenn. AP - A contention by attorney Arthur J. Hanes that an international Communist conspiracy is at work against James Earl Ray appears to have brought a reaction from the judge who will hear the Ray case.

Criminal Court Judge W. Preston Battle named eight attorneys Sunday to check for a possible violation of his order limiting publicity in the case of Ray, who is charged with murder in the death of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Hanes, the former Birmingham, Ala., mayor who is acting as defense counsel for Ray, met with his client Saturday, then called an airport news conference at which he also asserted Ray's rights are being violated in Shelby County Jail.

Hanes disagreed with U.S. Atty. Gen. Ramsey Clark's statement that the April 4 slaying of King was carried out by one man.

"There is a giant conspiracy here and my client is being used by the conspiracy," said Hanes, who said he would disclose details of the plot when Ray's trial gets under way on Nov. 12.

He said the number of threats against his family and their 70-year-old maid are increasing.

"There are forces at work in this country that do not want to see this man tried," said Hanes, "and they will use any means, in my judgment, to see that neither he nor I appear in the courtroom."

Less than 24 hours after the news conference, Battle appointed the eight-man committee to probe possible infringement of his order issued the day Ray was returned here from London.

The order originally prohibited attorneys, officers, witnesses and anyone else connected with the Ray case from giving "interviews for publicity" or making "extrajudicial statements."

He revised it Wednesday to forbid only interviews "prejudicial to a fair trial by an impartial jury."

Hanes was critical of intense security measures surrounding Ray in Memphis as being detrimental to his client's health, and said Ray is unable to sleep because of around-the-clock closed-circuit television observation.

"He even has the evil eye of a camera on him when he uses the bathroom," said Hanes in describing the TV surveillance as "cruel."

In a related development, Dist. Atty. Gen. Phil M. Canale repeated his earlier stand that he and his staff will try the case without assistance from the Justice Department or any special prosecutors the King family might want to hire.

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29 JUL 68