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HAD GUN, RAY'S ATTORNEY SAYS

Pistol Said Voluntarily
Surrendered

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) —

The attorney for James Earl Ray confirmed Monday he had carried a pistol on one of his trips to the Shelby County jail to see his client. But he said he surrendered it voluntarily before seeing Ray.

"I had a gun on me," Arthur J. Hanes said in Birmingham, Ala. "As soon as I walked into the building, I displayed it and my briefcase, just as anyone else would.

"Hell, I wasn't trying to smuggle the thing in. That's ludicrous, Hanes said. "The sheriff knows the true facts of the matter."

Sheriff William N. Morris confirmed Hanes' version of what happened.

FEARS DANGER

Hanes had indicated previously he feared he was in danger because he was representing Ray, the man charged with murder in the slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Hanes said he had a permit to carry the pistol in Alabama and

that sheriff Morris has a copy of the permit. But Robert K. Dwyer, executive assistant district attorney general, said Hanes' Alabama permit would not be valid in Tennessee.

The revelation that Hanes had been armed came as a committee of eight Memphis attorneys appointed by Criminal Court Judge Preston Battle met to discuss possible violations of the judge's ruling against publicity statements in the Ray case.

COMMITTEE APPOINTED

Battle appointed the committee a day after Hanes, in an airport news conference, declared that Ray was a victim of a "communist left-wing conspiracy." Hanes also attacked what he termed a lack of privacy for Ray in the jail.

Battle said late Monday the panel would issue the findings of its report in his courtroom Tuesday morning.

Asked whether he thought he had violated the judge's order, Hanes said: "It would be mere speculation on my part. I know nothing about the committee except what I've been told by the press.

"As far as I know, the committee may be checking on somebody else."

Battle's order prohibits "interviews for publicity" or "extra-judicial statements" that would be prejudicial to a fair trial.