

**LAWYERS SWITCHED****Ray Trial Not Seen Until After Holidays**

By BILL JOHNSON

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP)—A switch in lawyers just two days before James Earl Ray was to stand trial on charges of murdering Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., raised doubts as to whether the trial will be held this year.

Ray took action yesterday to drop Arthur J. Hanes, a former Birmingham, Ala., mayor, as his lawyer and retain famed defense attorney Percy Foreman of Texas.

Foreman, whose clients have included Jack Ruby and heiress Candace Mossler, said he would

he would not object to the motion.

Since the trial is expected to last at least four weeks, a postponement of 30 days would push the start of trial close to the Christmas holidays—with the likely result that Battle would reset it for early next year.

Ray, charged with first-degree murder, is accused of the sniper slaying of King on April 4 while King was in Memphis to support the city's striking garbage collectors.



—AP WIREPHOTO.  
PERCY FOREMAN

go before Criminal Court Judge W. Preston Battle at 9:30 a.m. tomorrow—the time Ray's trial is scheduled to begin—and request a continuance.

When told earlier yesterday of rumors of the impending switch, Battle said he would grant a delay "if Ray retains Foreman and if he asks" for a postponement.

IT WAS BELIEVED that Foreman would ask for at least 30 days to give him time to become familiar with the case. Hanes, who said the change came as a surprise to him, said

**THE SURPRISE** switch by Ray was announced in a late night news conference called by Sheriff William N. Morris Jr. The sheriff said Foreman and two of Ray's brothers, John and Jerry Ray, had come to the jail earlier yesterday to see Ray. "During the course of this visit, certain decisions were made and a letter was written to Mr. Arthur Hanes Sr., attorney, and signed by James Earl Ray," Morris said.

"This letter was presented to me for reading by Mr. Foreman and it declared an intent by James Earl Ray to dispense with the legal services of Mr. Hanes and his son and of an intention to obtain new counsel and a Tennessee lawyer."

**MORRIS ALSO SAID** Foreman had told him he intended to appear before Battle tomorrow morning and request a continuance.

The Tennessee lawyer to be retained by Ray was not named. "The first I knew of this was at 8:20 this evening," Hanes said in a brief news conference of his own.

Foreman, 66, was defense attorney for Ruby but withdrew from the case after four days. He sent a letter to Ruby saying, "You know I don't let people tell me what to do in a case."