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## Attorney Says Ray Is Guilty

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Memphis, Tenn.

James Earl Ray killed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. believing he would be the "champion of the white race," and then readily pleaded guilty because he was confident no prison could hold him, his former attorney testified yesterday.

The comments of criminal lawyer Percy Foreman, contained in a deposition, were read before U.S. District Judge Robert McRae Jr., who will decide in the next few months whether Ray is entitled to a new trial.

Ray claims he did not kill King and contends Foreman pressured him into entering the guilty plea.

The eight-day hearing concluded with the reading of Foreman's deposition. During his testimony Ray hinted strongly at a conspiracy in the King killing, but stopped short of saying how it allegedly worked.

Foreman said he is convinced that Ray acted alone, and had raised the possibility of a conspiracy because he didn't understand the law.

"He had the idea that a conspiracy was a defense to murder — that you could participate in a conspiracy and not be responsible for a murder," Foreman said.

The Texas attorney, fired by Ray the day after the guilty plea was entered, said Ray killed the civil rights leader because he hated blacks.

"He was a racist. He is a racist and has been one all of his life. He couldn't imagine anybody that was white not thinking like he did.

"He thought the killing of Martin Luther King would make him the champion of the white race, that he would be the most popular man in America.

"... he never intimated that he expected anybody to believe he was innocent," the 73-year-old attorney said.

Foreman said before entering the guilty plea on Ray's behalf he tried to explain to him the difference between a 99-year sentence — which Ray drew — and a life term.

"It doesn't make any difference to me," Foreman quoted Ray as saying, "there isn't any jail that could keep me more than two years."

Ray was a fugitive from a Missouri prison at the time of the King slaying, and has tried twice unsuccessfully to escape since being jailed in Tennessee.

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