

No Federal Prison Transfer for Ray

Washington

Attorney General Griffin Bell yesterday refused to transfer James Earl Ray, convicted murderer of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., to a federal prison.

Tennessee Governor Ray Blanton had asked the federal government to take Ray after his short-lived escape from Brushy Mountain State Prison in eastern Tennessee June 10.

But Bell, in a letter to Blanton, said, "Ray now appears to be incarcerated in a secure prison with no apparent problems as to his safety."

Questioned about the decision at a news conference, Bell cited "the old saying — 'leave well enough alone.'"

In Nashville, Blanton said he was "extremely disappointed."

"I am confident we can handle him, but I would point out again that Ray is a nationally known figure, that he is the subject of numerous investigations, and that he has a record of attempted escapes," Blanton said.

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