

Ray Reportedly Hoped To Make Much Money

Associated Press

Shortly after he was arrested in England, James Earl Ray said in his jail cell that he hoped to make a lot of money from the assassination of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr., a retired London police inspector testified yesterday.

Ray hated black people, Alexander A. Eist said, and bragged of plans "to get into Africa to kill some more."

Eist was the leadoff witness before the House Assassinations Committee in a month-long series of hearings on the King assassination in Memphis, Tenn., on April 4, 1968.

The committee is attempting to pin down Ray's various confessions and denials in the assassination.

As a Scotland Yard detective, Eist was assigned to stay continuously with Ray following his arrest at London's Heathrow Airport on June 6, 1968.

Eist portrayed Ray as a "character" who asked for magazines on yachting to pass the time in his jail cell pending extradition to the United States.

The former detective said Ray "never really told me that he pulled the trigger" in the King assassination.

But Eist had previously told committee investigators, "There isn't any doubt from the conversation that he told me that he was admitting to me that he had done the murder."

Yesterday, Eist recalled Ray's description of throwing the gun away near the assassination scene in Memphis because he had seen either a policeman or a police car.

In Ray's view, tossing away the rifle with his fingerprints on it was the only mistake he made, Eist said.

"He seemed quite elated and he showed no remorse," said Eist, who now owns a pub in Cambridge.

"He was going to get a lot of money out of the situation," Eist said. "He told me it was his plan to get a lawyer to get him on TV to get a lot of money."

Washington Post, Nov 10, 1978, A13