

## Assassin's Gun Target Of Lawsuit

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — The three-year fight by a private detective to get the rifle police said James Earl Ray used to kill Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., reached the U.S. 6th Circuit Court of Appeals Wednesday.

The three-judge panel in Cincinnati took the case of Renfro T. Hays, the Memphis detective, under advisement.

Hays contends Ray deeded him the rifle as partial payment for services performed for Ray's attorneys.

Lower courts have ruled that local authorities may continue to hold the rifle and other items "pending a final resolution of the Ray case."

King was assassinated here April 4, 1968, when he came to help organize a protest by black garbage workers.

Ray, arrested in London the following summer, was returned to Memphis under heavy guard, and pleaded guilty in March 1969. Ray, who still maintains he is innocent, is serving a 99-year sentence at Brushy Mountain State Prison, the state's maximum security facility in East Tennessee.