

BRITISH SEEK CLUE TO CALLS FOR RAY

2 Phone Messages to Hotel
in London Pose Mystery

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LONDON, June 11—Two mysterious telephone calls were made to James Earl Ray during his three weeks in London.

Scotland Yard knows of four telephone calls to Ray, who has been indicted in the murder of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., while he was staying in cheap bed-and-breakfast hotels in West London under the name Ramon George Sneyd.

Two of the calls were from British European Airways and related to Ray's attempts to book passage to Brussels where, it is thought, he hoped to make contact with white mercenaries operating in Africa.

But Scotland Yard has been unable to trace the other calls.

However, the police are said to discount the possibility that Ray received and meaningful aid or encouragement in London.

He was believed to be running out of money and feeling desperate after having been unable to reach any mercenary agents in Portugal. On May 7, he flew from London to Lisbon. This was a day after he had arrived from Canada where he spent four weeks hiding out in seedy boarding houses in the West End of Toronto.

Some Information Gaps

There are still two gaps in the known movements of Ray.

Where was he during the four days between the assassination of Dr. King in Memphis on April 4 and April 8 when he turned up in Toronto?

And where was he staying in London between May 17, when he returned from Lisbon, and May 28 when he registered at the New Earl's Court Hotel in Penywern Road?

He stayed at that small hotel until last Wednesday when, after a snarling comment to a receptionist who had mentioned the assassination of Senator Robert F. Kennedy, he moved to a smaller hotel, the Pax, in Pimlico, a district in London.

From a telephone box he called Ian Colvin, an editorial writer on The Daily Telegraph, who is one of that paper's experts on Africa.

The way Mr. Colvin recalled it today, Ray, speaking in a high, rapid sing-song voice said:

"I'm a Canadian in London for a while. I'm trying to reach my brother who is with 'these people' in Angola."

Ray implied that his missing brother had enlisted with mercenaries based in Portuguese Angola and operating against the Congo.

According to Mr. Colvin, Ray asked for the telephone number of a South African, now living in London, who was said to have been second in command of one group of mercenary soldiers.

Mr. Colvin promised to get in touch with the South African but would not give Ray the telephone number.

Ray Phones Again

That was last Tuesday. On Thursday Ray phoned Mr. Colvin again and, when asked if he had heard from the South African, "replied 'no' in a kind of sheepish way, according to Mr. Colvin.

By then, Ray had changed his hotel and had not left any forwarding address, Mr. Colvin said:

Again Ray was speaking "a torrent of words," Mr. Colvin recalled, and there was more desperation in his high-pitched voice.

"Nobody seems able to help," Ray kept saying.

What about the Canadian Embassy? Mr. Colvin asked.

"Well, they are just no help to me at all," complained Ray, who had identified himself as Raymond Sneyd.

"If your brother is missing someone will have to help you," said Mr. Colvin, suggesting the consular section of the British Foreign Office.

"Well, it's not so much my brother's missing," said Ray, changing his approach. "I just haven't heard from him in four months. Fact is, I'd like to join him and be a mercenary myself."

Mr. Colvin said he tried to discourage Ray, who "sounded highly distraught," from joining the mercenaries, but he promised to send Ray by postcard the address in Brussels of a man who might be able to give him information.

By that time, Mr. Colvin said today, "I was beginning to get uneasy about him. [Ray]." The postcard Mr. Colvin later sent was the only mail Ray received at the Pax. But instead of giving Ray the address of the man in Brussels, Mr. Colvin wrote:

"On second thoughts, go to the Belgian Embassy here or try

the consular section of the British Foreign Office."

At the Pax, a narrow three-story building painted white in contrast to the yellow of other bed-and-breakfast hotels on the block, Ray stayed in his room, keeping the door locked. He complained of headaches and asked the landlady, Mrs. Anna Thomas for aspirin.

It was Mrs. Thomas who took the messages from the British European Airway and relayed them to Ray, shouting through the locked door.

Ray had paid in advance for three nights' lodging and when he departed on Saturday he left his room littered with newspapers. He had abandoned a syringe in the sink, indicating he had taken drugs.

Earlier at the New Earl's Court Hotel, Ray had been equally withdrawn. The hotel has a tiny bar on the ground floor, but Ray never patronized it.

The receptionist, Miss Jane Nassau, tried to be friendly. Ray was having trouble with British currency, and Miss Nassau tried to explain it. On the last day she reported to him the assassination of Senator Kennedy.

"It's terrible," Ray said in a voice described by Mrs. Trudy Lloyd, the manager, as filled with savage sarcasm.