

# RAY LAWYER WINS DELAY TO JUNE 27

## Judge Grants Plea for Time to Study Data—Suspect's Guard Again Is Heavy

By HOMER BIGART  
Special to The New York Times

LONDON, June 18 — James Earl Ray, the accused slayer of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., was told today that American demands for his extradition would take precedence over the relatively minor British charges against him. His extradition hearing was set for June 27.

Ray, alias Ramon George Sneyd, reappeared in Bow Street Magistrates' Court under security arrangements even tighter than those attending his arraignment June 10.

Almost hidden by a solid line of policemen who stood between him and the spectators' gallery, Ray heard with no show of emotion that he was wanted by the United States on two counts—as the accused killer of Dr. King in Memphis last April 4 and as a fugitive from Missouri State Penitentiary, from which he escaped last year after serving seven years of a 20-year sentence for armed robbery.

American authorities had hoped that the extradition hearing would be held on Friday. But Ray's court-appointed lawyer, Roger Frisby, asked for more time, citing the massive documentation submitted by the Americans. His plea was granted by the chief metropolitan magistrate, Frank Milton.

The magistrate ruled that the two charges on which Ray was held after he was seized at London airport June 8—possessing a fraudulent passport and carrying a revolver without

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a permit—would be put aside pending action on the extradition demand.

It was a muggy, murky day. Bow Street was rank with the smell of vegetables in Covent Garden Market. Inside the crime-encrusted court only a feeble light filtered through the skylight in Courtroom No. 1.

The police were everywhere. Some, with walkie-talkies, stood outside the courthouse, which



Associated Press

**SETS HEARING FOR RAY:**  
Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Frank Milton scheduled hearing June 27 for James Earl Ray in London.

faces the Royal Opera, remaining there until Ray was taken back to Wandsworth Prison in a police van under heavy guard.

The police lined the walls of the small courtroom. Eight burly plainclothesmen stood in front of the dock, glowering down on the newsmen and hiding Ray from view during most of the brief hearing.

The prisoner was wearing the same blue-green sports jacket he wore in his first appearance at the court. His thick black hair was combed and glossy. But he was somewhat pallid, having lost the sunburn he had acquired during his 10 days in Lisbon, where he had tried vainly to enlist as a white mercenary in Africa.

The three rows of benches in the spectators' gallery were tightly packed and the main entrance was locked when Ray was brought in through a side door.

Everyone, including newsmen, had been thoroughly frisked by detectives. A court officer warned that no photographs or sketches were permitted and that no one would be allowed to leave the chamber until the end of the hearing.

Ray kept his head down, his eyes on the floor. He did not enter the dock. Instead, he was placed just in front and to one side of it. Behind him a solid line of policemen faced the press tables and the gallery.

Nigel Maw, counsel for the American embassy, read the murder count quickly, in a low voice:

"James Earl Ray, hereinafter called the defendant, suspected and accused of the crime of murder, to wit, on April 4, 1968, in Shelby County, State

of Tennessee, did unlawfully, feloniously, willfully, deliberately, premeditatedly and of malice aforethought, kill and murder Martin Luther King Jr., within the jurisdiction of the United States."

Ray's court-appointed lawyer, Roger Frisby, complained to the magistrate about press coverage. He noted that one London newspaper, The Times, carried on June 10 this headline: "U. S. Justice Department Chief Interviews King Case Man".

Such an interview, while Ray remains in British custody, would have been highly irregular and would have prejudiced American attempts to secure his extradition.

British law specifically states that no evidence obtained in interviews from a person by an official of the country seeking his extradition is admissible in establishing a prima facie case for extradition.

The Justice Department official, Fred M. Vinson Jr., an Assistant Attorney General, was at pains to deny he had interviewed Ray when he saw the prisoner last week before Mr. Vinson returned to Washington.

A fingerprint expert will be brought from the United States as part of the effort to establish the prima facie case of murder against Ray at the June 27 hearing.

Yesterday, the American Embassy delivered a bundle of supporting affidavits to the magistrate to complete its documentation of the extradition warrants.

If extradition is ordered, Ray will have 15 days to appeal. He could take his appeal to the House of Lords, pleading that his alleged crime was an internationally "political" one, and, under British law, no one may be extradited for such crimes.

from same story, as carried by SFChronicle:

official, Fred M. Vinson Jr., an assistant attorney general, went to pains to deny he had interviewed Ray when he saw the prisoner last week before Vinson returned to Washington.

Vinson had gone to the police station "with the specific understanding that he was not to interview Mr. Sneyd," said Frisby, using Ray's last alias.

The police had confirmed completely and absolutely that no interview occurred, Frisby said.

If extradition is ordered, Ray will have 15 days to appeal. He could even take his appeal to the House of Lords, pleading that his alleged crime was a "political" one. Under British law, no one may be extradited for "political" crimes.