

## RAY IS REPORTED IN U.S. CUSTODY

Accused Assassin Is Said  
to Be at Air Force Base

LONDON, Friday, July 19 (AP)—James Earl Ray, accused as the assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., has been handed over to United States custody, informed sources said early today.

Ray was taken late last night from Wandsworth jail in London and convoyed under guard to a United States air base north of London, the sources said.

### Charges Are Dropped

LONDON, July 18 (UPI)—Britain dropped the charge of illegal entry against James Earl Ray today and ordered him turned over to the United States authorities for extradition to Memphis, where he faces trial as the assassin of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

A British source said Scotland Yard was handing Ray over to United States agents "when the American Government advises it has transportation waiting."

The flight to United States soil for the 40-year-old accused assassin was described as imminent.

Ray's attorney, Arthur J. Hanes of Birmingham, said he was trying to find out if the authorities were attempting to get Ray out of Britain Thursday night.

### Advice to Ray

"I don't want this man grilled, cross-examined and interrogated in the plane when I'm not there," Mr. Hanes said in charging that he had not been given permission to accompany Ray on the flight to the United States.

He said he had advised Ray to "keep his mouth shut and not answer any questions—not even talk about the weather."

The last legal hurdle to the extradition was cleared when Home Secretary James Callaghan signed an order handed down July 2 by London's Chief Magistrate. The order dismissed British charges that Ray had entered Britain with a revolver and illegal passports.

Mr. Hanes accused the United States Justice Department of making "A Yankee Stadium, P.T. Barnum Show" out of the extradition case.

"I haven't got a clue," a United States Embassy spokesman

said when asked when Ray was being flown back to the United States. "Nobody's told me anything. The Justice Department has told me nothing and they've said they aren't going to tell me anything."

A spokesman for the United States Air Force referred all queries to the Embassy.

"This is a Justice Department case," an Air Force spokesman said.

The secrecy over the transportation arrangements underscored the Justice Department's determination to protect Ray against the fate that befell Lee Harvey Oswald, who was charged with the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Oswald was murdered before he could be brought to trial.

Ray was arrested in London on June 8. He was named in a United States warrant as the sniper who killed Dr. King April 4 as he stepped from his motel room in Memphis.