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MEMPHIS, Tenn. AP - James Earl Ray, pale from weeks in British and Memphis jails but neatly dressed in a dark blue suit, sat silently Monday as his lawyer entered a plea of innocent to a charge that Ray killed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Judge Preston Battle set Ray's trial for Nov. 12.

Ray's appearance at the arraignment was the first time he had been seen publicly since being flown from London to Memphis, under tight security, last week.

~~Closely guarded, but not wearing handcuffs as he did when he entered the Memphis jail last Friday, Ray listened quietly as attorney Arthur Hanes of Birmingham, Ala., entered his plea.~~

Immediately after the 12-minute proceeding, Ray was returned to his steel-skinned suite of air-conditioned cells on the third floor of the Shelby County jail, adjacent to the court building.

~~At no time did Hanes call Ray by name. After the reading of each indictment-one charging murder and the other carrying a dangerous weapon-Hanes said: "The defendant wants to enter a plea of not guilty."~~

~~Hanes did not request a psychiatric examination for his client.~~

Following the arraignment, Hanes spent about three hours in the jail cell with Ray. The lawyer told newsmen he planned to return to Birmingham later in the day.

~~About 70 persons, most of them newsmen, ran the security gauntlet to enter the courtroom. Each was searched and his voice and picture tape recorded.~~

Nearly a dozen policemen in civilian clothes sat inside the courtroom, and more were outside in the hallway.

~~The security checks, required also of the judge and attorneys in the case, delayed the start of the arraignment for 27 minutes.~~

Ray, brought from jail through a tunnel, entered the courtroom through a door beside the judge's elevated bench. Ray was escorted by Sheriff William N. Morris Jr. and two other officers.

Ray sat between his lawyers, Hanes and Hanes son, Arthur Jr., at the counsel table. To their left sat Dist. Atty. Gen. Phil Canale and two of his aides. The sheriff sat behind Ray.

Above the door through which Judge Battle entered, is inscribed the motto: "Law, right and responsibility-the basis of justice."

The United States and Tennessee flags flanked the bench, and recessed fluorescent lights shown down on the dark brown and scratched benches in the spectator's section.

Canale introduced all of the attorneys in the case, then Hanes asked that the indictments be read.

"You don't have to enter a plea at this time," the judge told Hanes. "Would you like a recess?"

"We will enter a plea to the indictment," Hanes said. "The defendant wants to enter a plea of not guilty."

Canale said both sides agreed to a Nov. 12 start of the trial, and the judge ordered it.

King, who had come to Memphis to plan demonstrations by striking sanitation workers, was killed by a single shot April 4 as he stood on a motel balcony. Ray was arrested July 8 in London under the name of Sneyd, and was ordered extradited to the U.S. last Thursday.

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