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MEMPHIS, Tenn. AP - A committee of lawyers reported Monday that author William Bradford Huie and the publishers of Look magazine probably are in contempt of court because of an article on James Earl Ray in the current issue of Look.

The committee, named to watch over pre-trial publicity in the case of Ray, charged with murder in the slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., made its report to Criminal Court Judge W. Preston Battle.

It said that Huie, by writing the article, and Cowles Publications, by publishing the article in Look, probably violated the judge's order restricting pre-trial publicity.

The article, appearing in the current issue of Look, tells of Ray's activities following his escape from the Missouri state prison and before King's slaying in Memphis last April 4. It was the first of a series.

Huie's article was based on notes written by Ray in the Shelby County jail here and given to Huie, who is writing Ray's biography.

In a related development Tuesday, two Memphis newspaper reporters asked the Tennessee Supreme Court to reverse contempt citations handed down against them by Battle.

Roy Hamilton of the Memphis Press-Scimitar and Charles Edmundson of the Commercial Appeal were held in contempt by Battle Sept. 30.

Battle ruled that stories they wrote quoting Ray's attorney, Arthur J. Hanes, and a private investigator hired by Hanes, Renfro T. Hays, violated his court order restricting pre-trial publicity. Hanes and Hays also were adjudged in contempt.

Ray is to go on trial Nov. 12. Battle reserved passing sentence on the newsmen until after the trial. He indicated at the time the four defendants could purge themselves by future compliance with his order.

The newsmen charge that Battle acted illegally in holding them in contempt and that his decision deprived them of their legal right to due process and to free speech and free press.

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