

### Ray Says Lawyer Promised Pardon After Guilty Plea

MEMPHIS, Tenn., May 8 (AP) —James Earl Ray said in a petition for a new trial that his former lawyer promised to get him a pardon within two years if he pleaded guilty to a charge of murdering Dr. Martin Luther King.

Ray pleaded guilty March 10, 1969, to a charge of murder of the civil rights leader on April 4, 1969, and was sentenced to 99 years in prison. Almost immediately he began efforts to get a new trial, contending there was pressure of various sorts from his lawyers whom he since has replaced.

The petition for a new trial will be heard May 15 by Criminal Court Judge William H. Williams. Judge Arthur Faquin refused several months ago to grant Ray a new trial.

The latest petition says Ray had decided to plead innocent. But the day before his trial, the petition says, Percy Foreman of Houston, his lawyer, spent two hours with him, convincing him to plead guilty.

Mr. Foreman told Ray he

knew who the next Governor of Tennessee would be, the petition asserts, and if Ray pleaded guilty Mr. Foreman could get him a pardon within two years.

In Houston, Mr. Foreman said Ray's statement was "wholly false."

"I explained to him in conversation that a stay in the pen on a 99-year sentence is longer than a life sentence," Mr. Foreman said.

"He told me, 'Mr. Foreman, I don't care how long a sentence I get. I will be out of there in two years. There isn't a penitentiary that can hold me.'"

Ray also contends that he was denied due process when he was returned from England because the extradition treaty forbids extradition for political crimes.

The petition also contends Ray was denied evidence he should have seen.

Ray did not know, it asserted, that the bullet taken from the body was too shattered to be identified, or that Charles Stevens, who was to have been a key prosecution witness, could not identify the fleeting figure he saw shortly after the shooting. The petition requests permission to see the physical evidence which it says was denied Ray.