

Supreme Court: Actions Taken

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 13 — The Supreme Court took the following actions today:

ATTORNEYS

Without comment, the Court turned down an opportunity to specify rules regarding a Federal Court's power, or lack of power, to intervene in bar disciplinary proceedings against a lawyer accused of violating a state's ethical rules for lawyers.

The issue arose in a South Carolina case involving a black woman lawyer who had been a board member and officer of the American Civil Liberties Union's local affiliate. Disciplinary proceedings were begun against her charging that she had improperly solicited a client. She and the A.C.L.U. contended that the proceedings had been started in retaliation for a lawsuit brought by the A.C.L.U. involving sterilization of women. They filed suit in Federal District Court seeking an injunction against continuation of the proceedings. The district court declined to intervene and was upheld by the appeals court. (American Civil Liberties Union v. Bozardt, No. 76-290).

CRIMINAL

With no Justice recording a dissent, the Court refused to review James Earl Ray's contention that his guilty plea in the slaying of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had been coerced, and that he should be given a trial on the charge. (Ray v. Rose, No. 76-5508).

DEATH PENALTY

In what is becoming a standard pattern, the Court refused to review the death penalty of a man sentenced under the Georgia capital law that was upheld by Brennan Jr. or

sentenced, vacated

SUPREME COURT BARS NEW HEARING ON RAY

Refuses to Review His Attempts to Withdraw Guilty Plea in Slaying of Dr. King in Memphis in 1968

WASHINGTON, Dec. 13 (AP)—The Supreme Court today refused to review James Earl Ray's unsuccessful attempts to withdraw his guilty plea in the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The Court voted not to consider Mr. Ray's contention that he was "framed by the F.B.I. and local police, and then coerced by his own attorney to plead guilty against his will."

Just last week, a special Congressional committee authorized \$6.5 million for the first year of an investigation into the assassinations of President Kennedy and Dr. King, one of the nation's leading civil rights activists.

In seeking Supreme Court review, Mr. Ray's appeal said that the case "raises major constitutional issues with respect to voluntariness of the plea, waiver of conflict of interest on the part of criminal defense attorneys, professional and ethical competence and obligations in representing a defendant."

Arrested in London

Dr. King was killed by a rifle blast in Memphis, Tenn., in 1968. Mr. Ray was arrested in London a short time later and extradited to the United States to stand trial for murder. His case never reached a jury because he subsequently pleaded guilty.

Mr. Ray's appeal for review by the high court said that his financial agreements with two attorneys, Arthur Hanes and Percy Foreman, and William Bradford Huie, the author, had precluded his chance to receive fair representation. Mr. Ray said that Mr. Foreman had forced him to plead guilty.

The appeal said that other, conflicting considerations by Mr. Ray's attorneys had led to a "gross violation of the right to private attorney-client communications."

A lower court's finding that there was "potential and limited actual conflicts of interest" by Mr. Ray's defense attorneys should be enough to have his case reviewed, his appeal said.

"The charge is that those who did kill Dr. King are still at large, protected in part by the unwillingness of the courts to face these unpleasant facts," Mr. Ray's appeal said.

Mr. Ray is an inmate at the Tennessee State Prison where he is serving a life sentence.