

Swift Trial

Death Penalty in Memphis Unlikely

MEMPHIS —(UPI)—Secretive. swiftness apparently will be the order of the day when, and if, James Earl Ray, the accused assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King, is returned to Memphis to stand trial for murder.

District Attorney Gen. Phil Canale said a request for extradition will be made as soon as possible.

Ray was arrested Saturday in London.

Although Tennessee law requires the death penalty on a conviction of first degree murder without extenuating circumstances, it appears unlikely any convicted killer will be put to death.

The last time the electric chair at state prison in Nashville was used was 1960.

Since that time, in spite of the fact the nine cells on Death Row have remained virtually full, there have been no executions, at first because of questions raised about the law and civil rights and later by the personal convictions of two governors, Buford Ellington and Frank Clement.

Ellington has indicated there will be no further executions as long as he remains in the Governor's mansion.