

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Man Claims He's Entitled To Rewards in King Slaying

By TOM JONES
Press-Scimitar Staff Writer

Charles Quitman Stephens today was the first witness in a Chancery Court trial on his claim to \$185,000 in rewards offered after the 1968 assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Stephens testified that he gave descriptions of a man who fired a shot from the bathroom window of a rooming house at 422½ S. Main on April 4.

Stephens, who lived in a room adjoining the bathroom, said he gave police a partial description on the day of the shooting of Dr. King as the civil rights leader stood on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel, 406 Mulberry.

Stephens added that he later gave a fuller description of the assassin and identified a photograph of James Earl Ray, who pleaded guilty to the slaying.

Stephens, who now lives at the Madison YMCA, said he saw Ray talking with the apartment manager about renting Room 5 earlier on April 4.

"At approximately 4 or 4:30, there was a shot from the bathroom," he said. "The bathroom was

just a wall between my kitchen. Just a thin wall. I got up and there was hollering at the Lorraine Motel and I tried to get in the bathroom several times before and I couldn't.

"This time I went to the bathroom, opened the door, glanced in and then down the hall. This guy was just turning the corner down the hall."

Stephens said the man appeared to be Ray and was carrying a bundle "in some dingy colored material" under his right arm. Police said that Ray wrapped the rifle used in the slaying in a bundle, but later dropped it by a nearby store as he fled.

Harvey Gipson, attorney for Stephens, said in his opening statement that Stephens was the most important of 380 witnesses in the case. "Stephens was the only one placed on material witness bond and put in jail," he said.

Gipson said Stephens was entitled to \$50,000 reward offered by Memphis Publishing Co., \$100,000 reward posted by the City Council, \$25,000 reward offered by the Downtown Association, Chamber of Commerce and Future Memphis, \$10,000 re-

ward of National Alliance of Postal Employees, and a \$1,000 reward offered by Mrs. Awsumb.

Gipson said the rewards were placed in special accounts in 1968, but the accounts now have a balance of \$85.

Gipson argued that Ray was arrested in London, England, from photographs which had been identified by Stephens.

He added that Stephens was the only witness placed under guard following Ray's plea of guilty.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 15

MEMPHIS PRESS
SCIMITAR

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: 1-21-74
Edition:
Author: CHARLES H.
Editor: SCHNEIDER
Title:

Character:
or
Classification:
Submitting Office: MEMPHIS
☐ Being Investigated

44-1987 Sub C 539

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Witness Says He Hoped To Collect King Reward

By JAMES COLE

Charles Quitman Stephens, a material witness in the 1968 slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., testified in Chancery Court yesterday that he gave information to investigators in hopes of collecting a reward.

"I got to thinking the next day (after the April 4, 1968, assassination) that if there was a reward, I wanted it," Stephens testified before Chancellor Charles A. Rond.

Stephens, 52, who is claiming \$185,000 in rewards, said he was repairing a radio in his room at a boarding house near the Lorraine Motel when he heard shots ring out from a next-door bathroom.

Stephens testified he heard the shots about 4 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. King was shot at 6:01 p.m.

"I opened my door, glanced in the bathroom and then glanced down the hall. This guy was just turning the corner," he said.

Stephens said the man, whom he later identified from police photographs as James Earl Ray, was wearing a dark suit, a light-colored shirt and a blue or blue-striped tie. He said the man was carrying a bundle three-to four-feet long wrapped in dingy colored material.

That night Stephens said he gave a partial description of the man to local police but added that he was "pretty well shook up." He said he was able to give FBI agents a better description and by that time had read about rewards being offered in Memphis newspapers.

Stephens' attorneys, Harvey L. Gipson and Robert A. Tucker, are claiming their client's description was "the prime factor" in the arrest and conviction of Ray.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

— PAGE 15

— COMMERCIAL APPEAL

— MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: JAN. 22, 1974

Edition:

Author:

Editor: GORDAN HANNA

Title:

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Classification:

Submitting Office: MEMPHIS

☐ Being Investigated

44-1987 Sub C 540

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Hester

Ray pleaded guilty in Criminal Court to first-degree murder and was sentenced to 99 years in the state penitentiary. He is appealing the conviction in the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Defendants in the suit are individual members of the 1968 Memphis City Council, the Memphis Publishing Co., the Memphis Area Chamber of Commerce, Future Memphis, Inc., Downtown Association of Memphis and the National Alliance of Post Office Employees.

The local defendants are contending that fingerprints found on the rifle identified as the murder weapon were the key factor in solving the case and that Stephens provided investigators with his description before he was aware of any rewards.

Edward Welch, a St. Louis attorney representing the postal employees, denies that the organization made a bona fide reward offer.

Ashby Smith, the organization's former president who is now deceased, announced a \$10,000 reward but was not authorized to do so, Welch said yesterday.

Frank C. Holloman, who was Memphis police director at the time of the slaying and now the executive director of Future Memphis, testified that Stephens was placed in protective custody as a material witness in the Shelby County jail during the early stages of the investigation.

Asked why Stephens was jailed, Holloman said, "Because he had been consistently drunk. We had a responsibility to see he didn't harm himself and that others didn't harm him."

Stephens testified he went to jail voluntarily. But he was released several days later after his attorneys filed a writ of habeas corpus in Circuit Court.



Charles Q. Stephens

—Staff Photo

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Judge Ponders Witness' Suit

A suit seeking \$185,000 in reward money for a key witness in the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was taken under advisement by Chancellor Charles A. Rond yesterday.

Attorneys for Charles Quitman Stephens, 52, argued that their client is entitled to the money because he was the only witness who identified James Earl Ray near the boarding house bathroom where the fatal shots were fired in 1968.

Robert A. Tucker, one of Stephens' attorneys, said Ray would never have been arrested in London if Stephens had not identified photographs used on wanted posters circulated worldwide.

"The rewards were offered because they (the defendants) wanted results. Well, Mr. Stephens gave them results," Tucker said in his closing argument.

Defendants in the suit are Memphis City Council, Memphis Publishing Co.,

Memphis Area Chamber of Commerce, Future Memphis, Inc., Downtown Association of Memphis and National Alliance of Post Office Employees.

Defense attorneys attacked the importance of Stephens' role in the ultimate conviction of Ray for first-degree murder on a guilty plea in Criminal Court.

They argued that fingerprints found on the murder weapon which was found in a doorway near the downtown rooming house were the foundation of the prosecution's case against Ray.

Asst. City Atty. Arthur Shea said the City Council did not actually post a \$100,000 reward but instead guaranteed that all rewards would total \$100,000.

Shea also called police Lt. James D. Johnson to testify that Stephens had been arrested 20 times on public drunkenness charges.

"If the state was trying to convict James Earl Ray on Mr. Stephens' testimony,

we'd still be looking for Ray," Shea said.

Armistead Clay, attorney for Memphis Publishing Co., confirmed that The Commercial Appeal and Memphis Press-Scimitar each offered a \$25,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of King's assassin.

But Clay noted that in a deposition introduced in evidence that Atty. Gen. Phil M. Canale Jr. said offers of reward were "not of any material significance" in solving the case.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 25

COMMERCIAL APPEAL

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: JAN. 23, 1974

Edition:

Author:

Editor: GORDAN HANNA

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Character:

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Classification:

Submitting Office: MEMPHIS

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Transfer for Ray May Take Years

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — (UPI) — A state corrections official says it may be months or even years before James Earl Ray is transferred to a federal prison.

Information Director Stewart Judkins confirmed that Tennessee authorities have not responded to a request from the Federal Bureau of Prisons for the admission of the convicted assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to the federal prison at Springfield, Ill.

"We haven't responded because of the ruling by Attorney General David Pack's office that to be strictly legal we would need enabling legislation to set up this type of transfer," Judkins said.

"In addition, we were advised it would be better to wait until such time as he (Ray) completes his appeals."

The transfer was originally requested by state prison officials so Ray could lead a more "normal" life behind the walls. He has been in solitary confinement during his stay at the main prison here.

Ray has numerous lawsuits pending, seeking among other things to have himself released from prison, to be re-tried, and to prevent his transfer to a federal institution.

Judkins confirmed that exhaustion of Ray's appeals

could take years. "We're still considering it (the transfer)," Judkins said. "But we're not anticipating transferring him in the next few weeks or months, certainly not."

Sources in Springfield have said the cost to Tennessee for keeping Ray in a federal institution would be about \$23 a day.

Judkins said details of the transfer, including payment for Ray's keep, had not yet been worked out.

The information director also said to his knowledge there was no move afoot to produce the enabling legislation for Ray's transfer at the present time. He said some states have laws that set out conditions for this type of transfer, but Tennessee does not.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 17

MEMPHIS PRESS
SCIMITAR

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: JAN. 24, 1974

Edition:

Author: CHARLES H.

Editor: SCHNEIDER

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Submitting Office: MEMPHIS

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Hester

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Delay Foreseen For Ray's Shift

NASHVILLE, Jan. 23. — (UPI) — A state corrections official said Wednesday it may be months or even years before James Earl Ray is transferred to a federal prison.

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(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 23

COMMERCIAL APPEAL

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JAN 30 1974	
FBI - MEM	
HESTER	

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Ray's Suit Seeks Law Library Use

James Earl Ray claimed in federal court here yesterday he is unable to research his legal rights, because the state penitentiary at Nashville denies him access to its law library.

In a civil suit, mailed to Memphis from the state prison, Ray said his jailers try to justify their refusal with "constant allegations of security" measures necessary in his confinement.

But, the prisoner, serving a 99-year sentence for the slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., said such precautions are unnecessary, since he has "never tried to es-

cape." He said he must use the library to research his pending civil damage claim against New York publisher Doubleday & Co., Inc.

Ray claims in a separate lawsuit that Doubleday "fraudulently" acquired unspecified items of his personal property in 1972. He says Doubleday used the property in publishing "An American Death," an account of the King slaying.

The only defendant in yesterday's civil suit is state prison warden James H. Rose.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 25

COMMERCIAL APPEAL

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: JAN. 26, 1974

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JAN 30 1974	
FBI - MEM.	

Hester

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Court of Appeals Grants Hearing On Ray's Claim Against Lawyer

James Earl Ray, 41, confessed slayer of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., today won a review of his guilty plea from the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati.

The appellate court, in a 2-1 decision, remanded Ray's petition for review to U.S. District Judge L. Clure Morton in Nashville.

The appeals court accepted Ray's contention that he was given improper legal advice in his 1969 guilty plea. It cited two letters written to Ray by Percy Foreman, then his attorney.

The letters revealed arrangements for Foreman to receive \$165,000 from royalties on publications and movies based on Ray's case. Also, the letters indicated that Ray's share of the money would be delivered only on his plea of guilty with "no embarrassing circumstances to take place in the courtroom."

The ruling of the Appeals Court today was based on an Oct. 9 hearing held in Cincinnati on Ray's appeal of Judge Morton's Nashville decision, which denied Ray an evidentiary hearing.

Morton denied the writ of habeas corpus in March, 1972. Ray's attorney, Robert I. Livingston of Memphis, appealed the denial.

Ray pleaded guilty in 1969 to the April 4, 1968, slaying of Dr. King, but he has since renounced the guilty plea. He is serving a 99-year sentence in the State Penitentiary in Nashville.

Warden Jim Rose of the State Penitentiary in Nashville said Ray "didn't hardly react at all" when notified of the decision.

"He said he didn't want to see anybody, he did not want to talk to anybody, he did

not want to see anyone hanging around," Rose said.

Ray also has filed in Memphis District Court a civil libel suit against Doubleday & Co., Inc. of New York, claiming he was libeled in the book "An American Death," published by Doubleday in 1972. Ray

also has filed another civil suit in Memphis protesting his denial of law library facilities at prison. Both are pending.

Livingston said of the Appeals Court decision: "Why that is wonderful news. I wish I had had it yesterday

Turn to Page 6—JAMES

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 1

MEMPHIS PRESS
SCIMITAR

MEMPHIS, TENN.

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Editor: SCHNEIDER

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JAN 31 1974
FBI - MEMPHIS
HESTER

James Earl Ray Wins Hearing

From Page 1

when I saw James Earl Ray. It would have cheered him up. He has gotten discouraged. It would have done him good to know we have finally won one."

Livingston said he and Washington lawyers Bernard Fensterwald and James Lesar originally filed the suit in the Nashville District Court on Dec. 4, 1972.

"We never had a hearing on it," said Livingston, who said Judge Morton "just wrote a lengthy opinion denying it."

Livingston said he felt "certain" that the Nashville State Attorney General's office would appeal the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court, "so when we will get our evidentiary hearing is anybody's guess. But when we get it I feel certain the state will have to call Houston lawyer Percy Foreman and he and James Earl Ray will get to face each other in court."

Livingston said the basic contention in their suit was that Ray's guilty plea "was not freely and voluntarily given, but that he was coerced into it by Foreman and, due to his unusual confinement in the Shelby County Jail, he was not in the correct physical or mental condition to make a rational decision."

The three-judge panel today said:

"We hold that Ray is entitled to an evidentiary hearing. It is clear that the allegations which are the subject of Ray's petitions have never been tried upon their merits or resolved by any court — allegations which, if true, plainly negate any notion or idea that his guilty plea . . . was made voluntarily and intelligently.

"The allegations . . . if true would support a finding that Ray's attorneys deliberately compromised their client's interests in order to further the financial success of William Bradford Huie's works in which they themselves had a substantial interest."

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Hearing For Ray Ordered By Court

The Sixth U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati ruled yesterday that James Earl Ray is entitled to an evidentiary hearing, which could lead to a new trial for Ray in the 1968 slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

A spokesman for the state attorney general's office in Nashville said he is "sure the state will appeal" the decision.

In return for a 99-year sentence, Ray, 41, pleaded guilty on March 10, 1969, in Memphis to slaying the civil rights leader. He has been seeking a new trial in the case since the day after he entered the plea.

Yesterday's ruling calls for a hearing to be held to determine if Ray was coerced by his attorneys into entering the guilty plea, as Ray's new attorneys have argued. The hearing will be in Nashville, one of Ray's attorneys said.

The three-judge panel's decision said in part, "It is clear that the allegations which are the subject of Ray's petition have never been tried upon their merits or resolved by any court — allegations which, if true, plainly negated any notion or idea that his guilty plea was made voluntarily and intelligently.

"The allegations . . . if true would support a finding that Ray's attorneys deliberately compromised their client's interests in order to further financial successes of (author William Bradford) Huie's works, in which they themselves had substantial interest."

To pay for his defense, Ray had promised his attorney, Percy Foreman, all royalties he received from Huie, an ~~Alabama~~ author who had made an arrangement with Ray to write about the case.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

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— COMMERCIAL APPEAL

— MEMPHIS, TENN.

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44-1987 Sub C 546

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FBI - MEMPHIS	

HESTER

In the court's 2-1 decision, the judges noted two letters written to Ray by Foreman concerning their financial arrangements with Huie.

Ray, who is being held at the state penitentiary in Nashville, has since fired Foreman and hired a team of attorneys headed by Bernard Fensterwald of Washington. Fensterwald is out of the country and could not be reached for comment yesterday.

Another Ray attorney, James Lesar of Maryland, said following the ruling that he believes "without any question" the district court will "be forced to order a retrial for Ray."

He said he doubts, however, whether Ray will be tried for the slaying, because "the state won't want to go

through the embarrassment of having him acquitted after five years in jail."

Lesar also said he does not believe that an evidentiary hearing would bring out much information concerning the death of King, "but at a minimum it will lead to a look at the coercion of Ray. And almost inevitably it will get into the withholding of exculpatory evidence." Exculpatory evidence is that which would tend to prove Ray's innocence.

Lesar said the hearing could not bring out information concerning a conspiracy to murder King in which Ray was involved, "because Ray did not shoot Dr. King and does not know who did."

Assistant State Atty. Gen. William H. Haile, who opposed an evidentiary hearing for Ray, said in Nashville he is convinced Ray "acted alone" in the assassination of King.

"The evidence against him was really overwhelming," Haile said. "He signed the 57-paragraph stipulation and admitted pulling the trigger. I believe he acted alone."

Haile said evidence in the case does not support the contention that Ray was "browbeaten, badgered and bribed" into answering the guilty plea.

"He (Ray) is just another con. He's a professional criminal," Haile said. "He just happened to knock off somebody the nation happened to care for."

King was shot to death April 4, 1968, as he stood on a balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis. He had been here in support of a strike by sanitation workers.

Ray was later arrested in London and extradited to the United States for trial in Memphis.

The state's case was headed by Atty. Gen. Phil M. Canale. Canale's office said he is at home sick and could not be reached for comment on the court's decision.

Haile said the original investigation into the slaying of King cost about \$4 million and a trial "would be enormously costly to the State of Tennessee." Ray's lawyers said that if the court ordered a trial and the state decided to hold it, it probably would be held in Memphis.

Haile was asked if he thought the U.S. District Court in Nashville would order a new trial after the hearing. "I don't see any way unless Percy Foreman came in here and said, 'Yeah, I beat him every day before breakfast and told him he would go to the electric chair if he didn't plead guilty'."

Both Haile and Lesar said they would like to give Ray a lie detector test on the accusations he has made against his former lawyers.

Lesar said he believes that Ray is telling the truth and added, "We will be able to show (at the hearing) that Ray's guilty plea was coerced and we may be able to show by implication that James Earl Ray was framed."

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Ray's Suit Against Book Is Dismissed

U.S. Dist. Judge Harry M. Wellford yesterday granted James Earl Ray's request to dismiss a civil damage suit filed in connection with a 1969 book about the slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Ray, the convicted slayer of Dr. King, had filed the suit last March, claiming he was libeled by the book, "An American Death," written by New York author Gerold Frank and published by Doubleday & Co., Inc., of New York.

After a preliminary hearing in the case last November, Wellford dismissed two of Ray's claims, but deferred ruling on whether Dou-

bleday "fraudulently" acquired Ray's personal property or evidence that might have been helpful to his defense in the murder case.

The judge said the third claim was "not specific enough," and gave Ray 30 days to amend or supplement his complaint, stating precisely what property or evidence the firm may have acquired.

Instead, Ray wrote to the judge Monday, asking that "the entire case" be dismissed.

Originally Ray had contended that former Shelby County Atty. Gen. Phil M. Canale Jr. and one of his for-

mer assistants, Robert K. Dwyer, supplied Frank with confidential records relating to the slaying and that Frank "falsely quoted" the records in writing the book. He said Doubleday was "in collusion" with Frank and the two Memphians in an effort to deny him due process of law and to violate his right to privacy.

Wellford dismissed those claims after the preliminary hearing. He said the collusion claims require "as a predicate" that the defendants acted with the authority of the state, and that Ray's privacy was not violated, because he was a "clearly newsworthy figure."

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

PAGE 3

COMMERCIAL APPEAL

MEMPHIS, TENN.

Date: 3-6-74

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Author:

Editor: GORDAN HANNA

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FBI - MEMPHIS

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)



—Staff photo by Robert Johnson

Says Memory, Concentration Suffering

James Earl Ray, wearing sunglasses, is surrounded by guards as he leaves federal court after testifying about what he called his unhealthy living conditions in the prison. Warden Jim Rose is at left with back to camera.

Ray Asserts Health Injured by Vitamin, Air, Exercise Lack

By PAT WELCH

James Earl Ray, who claims he was told he would never get out of solitary confinement, testified here yesterday that his health is weakening because he can't get fresh air, vitamin C and exercise.

Ray began a 99-year sentence for the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in March 1969. He said he has been locked in a small cell all but four days since he was transferred to the main prison here in July 1972 from the maximum security Brushy Mountain Prison at Petros, Tenn.

WARDEN JIM Rose testified in yesterday's hearing that Ray has been in "administrative segregation" longer than any other inmate. But Rose said Ray is an escape risk and his life is in danger from an assault which could lead to "a racial situation."

Rose said Ray could resume his clean up job, giv-

(Turn to Page 3, Column 4)

Banker

BURNSVILLE, Minn. (

— Mrs. Eunice Kronhol bank president's wife naped Friday and held tive despite payment \$200,000 ransom, slipped from her abductors yest and made her way to s at a suburban supermarl

The blonde hous walked into the market Burnsville, asked calm

she could venture, taken

the lack of fresh fruit in s diet, the absence of salt, pper and other condiments ad his restriction from free ccess to the law library.

HE ADMITTED he could TENN. der any law book he wanted and that he had either ee or five attorneys rking on his cases — but indicated he wanted to

Date: 3/19/74
Edition: MORNING
Author: PAT WELCH
Editor: LLOYD ARMOUR
Title:

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FBI — MEMPHIS

HESTER

Health Injured, Ray Tells Hearing

(Continued From Page One)

ing him up to 10 hours a day outside his cell, anytime he wants. He said the penitentiary does not have enough guards to give Ray "special treatment" so he can mix with other inmates for recreation.

Ray, making his first appearance in court since a similar hearing Dec. 29, 1969, said he has had no threats from any other inmate, black or white, and is not interested in escaping.

"IT WOULD be idiotic to attempt to escape now, when there's a possibility of a new trial," he told U.S. Dist. Court Judge L. Clure Morton.

The 6th Circuit Court of Appeals, overruling Morton, has ordered a hearing on Ray's claim that his plea of guilty to King's murder was coerced.

Morton took Ray's bid for more freedom and access to law books under advisement after his attorneys said they will file a brief next week. In an ironic touch, his lawyers cited the case of Angela Davis, a black activist, in arguing for his release from solitary confinement. (Morton noted that her case involved pretrial detention.)

RAY'S APPEARANCE in court surprised his attorneys, James Lesar of Washington and Robert Livingston of Memphis, who were not informed their client would be a witness in the hearing Morton set Friday. A third

attorney, Bernard Fensterwald Jr., was in Miami.

Lesar said he learned that Ray would be brought to court only after his arrival in Nashville about 7:30 a.m. yesterday. Livingston said he happened to read about Ray's court appearance in the Tennessean.

Ray, 46, appeared pale and blinked continually in his hour and 15 minutes on the witness stand. But Asst. Atty. Gen. Henry Haile noted, "His mind is sharp and alert. He didn't have any trouble with my questions."

RAY BEGAN his testimony hesitantly, but warmed up to show a dry wit under Haile's cross-examination.

"I don't think they're going to send me outside the walls to work," he admitted at one point.

And again, after a discussion of the differences in his food and that of others, he said: "I'm not complaining about the food, per se. I'd just as soon they'd turn me out in the yard and give me a Euell Gibbons book."

Ray said he is not the best judge of his own mental health but that his memory and concentration are suffering from his close confinement.

HE SAID his "health is run down," and he wants to prepare for his upcoming hearing in Memphis "so I can get this criminal thing dealt with."

Asked what he hoped to gain in the hearing, Ray told

a reporter, "I don't answer legal questions."

Haile told the court that Ray will be given a complete physical in the next day or two. He also asked Ray to stand up in the witness box and remove his gray prison jacket, so the judge could see Ray's physique.

RAY admitted he had quit his job in the maximum security cellblock but he said he did so only after prison officials took away his recreation privileges. "They stopped everything else, so I figured I might as well quit that too," he said.

He said he is permitted to exercise alone in a "concrete bunker," smaller than the former exercise yard and less well equipped than it or the main yard. But he said he quit that, too, because it wasn't any better than the 3-by-5-foot area of his cell. "You couldn't get no sunshine 'less you was out there at high noon," he said.

Ray said former Commissioner of Correction Harry Avery had offered him more freedom if he would "talk with the attorney general's office or the FBI about the crime I was charged with."

RAY SAID he never discussed anything with state or federal prosecutors except once when he gave background information on himself to an FBI agent and the information was "turned over to John J. Hooker Sr. to use against me in a civil case. After that I never did

cooperate any more."

Ray explained to Morton the difference between segregation and "the hole." He said he had been put in the "hole" and denied his radio, TV, typewriter and other comforts for three days in December 1973 for violating a prison rule. He did not say what it was.

Ray's complaints centered on the lack of fresh fruit in his diet, the absence of salt, pepper and other condiments and his restriction from free access to the law library.

HE ADMITTED he could order any law book he wanted — and that he had either three or five attorneys working on his cases — but he indicated he wanted to

browse around.

Ray displayed a keen knowledge of legal matters. When Haile cross-examined him closely about an attempted escape, he turned to Morton:

"Does the state intend to prosecute this case? I don't want to testify against myself."

And again, asked if he had not intended to escape, Ray shot back quickly, "That's prior restraint."

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Editor: LLOYD ARMOUR
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MAR 20 1974
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HESTER

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Ray Seeks Way Out Of Solitary

NASHVILLE, March 14.—(AP)—James Earl Ray, who pleaded guilty to the slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., has asked to be released from solitary confinement to prepare for a hearing on whether he can withdraw his guilty plea.

Shortly after his trial in 1969, Ray tried to go back on his plea of guilty and get a full trial in the sniper killing of the civil rights leader.

The latest effort has resulted in the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals ordering a full hearing on Ray's request in U.S. District Court in Nashville. A pre-hearing lawyers conference is scheduled Friday.

Defense lawyer Bernard Fensterwald mailed a petition Tuesday to federal court in Nashville asking that the state be told to release Ray into the general prison population for a minimum of two hours each day to allow Ray to exercise, go to the library and prepare for his hearing, which is expected in the summer.

Prison officials have testified at earlier hearings that they feel Ray's life would be in danger if he were allowed to mingle freely with the other inmates. However, Ray says he has no such fears.

Ray contends he was pressured into pleading guilty by his lawyers.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

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— COMMERCIAL APPEAL

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