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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sheriff William N. Morris, Jr., today announced the appointment of a former Memphis newsman to act as press secretary for the community's law enforcement agencies in connection with the possible return of James Earl Ray to Memphis to stand trial on charges of killing Dr. Martin Luther King.

"Charles Holmes, former reporter for the Commerical Appeal and now public information officer for Memphis State University, has been appointed to the position with the approval of University President Dr. C.C. Humphreys, Governor Buford Ellington, and the law enforcement agencies involved," Sheriff Morris said.

"Mr. Holmes, who served as a volunteer press officer for the Memphis Police Department during the days following the killing of Dr. King, is a former police reporter and well qualified for the work at hand," the Sheriff added.

"Since the capture of James Earl Ray in London, we have received an increasing number of requests from both foreign and domestic news-gathering agencies for accreditation to cover the trial if and when it is held", the Sheriff said.

Mr. Holmes will be responsible for co-ordinating these requests and for working with representatives of the agencies involved in preparing for the trial should Ray be returned here.

"With limited space in the courtroom it would be necessary to limit the number of media representatives present while insuring that the flow of information between official agencies and the press is in no way impeded."

"Mr. Holmes will be responsible for organizing effective channels of communications to achieve this objective."

"The Sheriff's Department also is interested in insuring that earlier circumstances which led to unfavorable exposure of Memphis in the national press not be permitted to recur," Sheriff Morris said, "and we believe that in appointing Mr. Holmes we are taking an initial and important step in this direction."

Office spaces has been allocated for Mr. Holmes' use at the Sheriff's Department offices in the Criminal Courts Building and news media representatives have been asked to direct correspondence to him at that address.