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CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM



THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 1968

Galt Trip From Coast to New Orleans Recalled by Companion

By MARTIN WALDRON
Special to The New York Times

LOS ANGELES, April 25—James Earl Ray, accused by the Federal Bureau of Investigation of conspiracy in the murder of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., was reported to have driven last December from Los Angeles to New Orleans to talk business with "a man with an Italian name."

Charles Stein, a bearded writer, said that he had made the trip with Eric Starvo Galt, said by the F.B.I. to be an alias of Ray's. Mr. Stein said in an interview that Galt had told him the man's name, "but I don't remember right now what it was."

"But it was a man with an Italian name and he either lived on the industrial canal in New Orleans or he had a business there," Mr. Stein said. There are scores of businesses but no residences on the New Orleans industrial canal, which is part of the Mississippi River port facilities.

Complaint Filed

Dr. King was fatally wounded by a rifle bullet in Memphis April 4. A complaint filed by Joseph H. Gamble, F.B.I. agent in Birmingham, said that Galt, with an "alleged brother," had conspired to violate Dr. King's civil rights.

A week ago, in discussing the trip he had taken with Galt, Mr. Stein said that Galt had driven to New Orleans as a favor to Mrs. Rosas to pick up two of the widow's daughters, who were staying in New Orleans with relatives.

Mr. Stein said that Galt had agreed to make the trip if Mr. Stein and his sister would sign a petition seeking to get the name of former Gov. George C. Wallace of Alabama on the California ballot as a Presidential candidate.

Mrs. Rosas said that she and her brother had signed the Wallace petitions because they were both from the Deep South, not because they had wanted a favor from Galt.

Mrs. Rosas said that Galt had been discussing his proposed trip to New Orleans in a Hollywood bar where she worked. She said she had told him about her two daughters in New Orleans and that he had invited her to go with him and bring them back.

On Dec. 15, when the trip was to begin, Galt came by her house to pick her up, she said, but she said that she had not intended to go and asked Galt if her brother could go instead. Galt readily agreed, she said.

Mr. Stein said that he and

Galt drove straight through New Orleans without stopping for the night. Galt, he said, drank many cans of beer on the way.

"We would stop and get a six-pack and he would drink it while he was driving," Stein said.

Mr. Stein said that Galt reported having talked to the man he had driven almost 2,000 miles to see. Mr. Stein added that Galt seemed to be "pleased."

"He wanted to leave and drive right back to Los Angeles," Mr. Stein said.

Mr. Stein, who once lived in New Orleans, said that he had prevailed on Galt to stay over for a couple of days while he visited relatives.

Records at the Provincial Motel in New Orleans showed that Galt stayed three days, Dec. 17 through Dec. 19, in a \$12-a-day room.

Mr. Stein said that he and his widowed sister, Mrs. Rita Rosas, 30 years old, with whom

he lives in Hollywood, have been questioned numerous times by F.B.I. agents about the trip.

"They are now saying I am the key to this thing, who may have paid for it," Mr. Stein said.

He would not elaborate.

Mrs. Rosas said last night that she was interviewed several hours yesterday by agents. "They asked me all kind of things, like did I think Eric Galt was capable of murder," she said. "Everybody is capable of murder, but I don't believe the Eric Galt I knew shot Dr. King."

Mr. Stein said that he had spent \$35 for gasoline and food but that Galt had not seemed worried about money.

In New Orleans, Mr. Stein took Galt to meet Mr. Stein's sister, Mrs. Marie Lee. Mrs. Lee said today that the picture released by the F.B.I. of an escaped convict from Missouri did not appear to be those of Galt.

The bureau has said that it found that Galt and Ray were the same person through fingerprints.

Mr. Stein, 33, said that he could not disclose all the details of his conversation with Galt during the trip to New Orleans. He said that he had an offer from a magazine for exclusive rights to his story. Mr. Stein said that Galt had stopped several times in Texas on the way to New Orleans to make long-distance telephone calls.

Similar requests had been made through United States diplomatic missions in a number of countries.

International Hunt Opens
HONG KONG, April 25 (UPI)—The F.B.I. has begun an international search for information on the whereabouts of James Earl Ray. The United States Consulate General issued a statement today saying that the bureau has asked assistance in "giving the fullest possible information about the suspect."

A consulate spokesman said

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104-10178-10430