

King Slayer's Trail*

GUATEMALA CITY
Guatemalan secret police
said U.S. FBI agents were
investigating a report that
James Earl Ray, suspected
killer of Dr. Martin Luther
King, had been in Guate-
mal.

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Wash Post

8 MAY 1968



Two new photographs of James Earl Ray, sought in the slaying of Dr. King, were released yesterday by the FBI. They were taken in November, 1967, in Mexico City, left, and in late January or early February of this year in California.

2 New Ray Photos Are Issued by FBI

By John P. MacKenzie
Washington Post Staff Writer

The FBI released yesterday two new photographs of James Earl Ray, the object of the nationwide manhunt in the murder of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Agents appeared satisfied that the pictures, one taken in Mexico last November and the other taken in California in late January or early February, were the best likenesses yet made available of the 40-year-old fugitive.

Previously the FBI has had to rely chiefly on old mug shot type pictures from Missouri State Prison, from which Ray escaped a year ago, or a front-view photograph of the suspect with eyes closed, on which a Bureau artist drew open eyes.

The FBI refused to say who supplied the new picture or what role they may already have played in the search for Ray.

The FBI would not disclose whether agents had shown the pictures to persons who know Ray, under the name of Eric

Galt or any other alias, either in Birmingham, Ala., or the Los Angeles area. Some persons who remembered "Galt" have failed to identify him from previous pictures.

Both new pictures appeared to be candid snapshots. The one said to have been taken in California had a background of a print pattern of wallpaper or drapes and a table lamp. The lamp is at an angle from the vertical, suggesting that it was taken by an amateur.

The California picture showed Ray in a "business suit," the FBI said. In January and February the FBI has said Ray was attending a Los Angeles bartending school. The Mexico picture shows him wearing an open-collar, light-colored shirt and sun glasses.

The FBI has said that Ray traveled to Los Angeles and Mexico, among other places, in a white Mustang purchased in Birmingham last August and abandoned in Atlanta on April 5, the day after Dr. King was assassinated.

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CARL T. ROWAN

King Murder Hatched Abroad?

The entire U.S. intelligence apparatus, including the military and the Central Intelligence Agency, has now become involved in the investigation of the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King.

Evidence gathered by FBI agents in one of the most massive probes in the nation's history has forced serious investigation of these possibilities:

1. That James Earl Ray, the alleged assassin, was the hired killer in a Cuba-Red China plot.
2. That the "assassin squad" of the Soviet secret police was somehow involved in the plot.
3. That Ray was hired indirectly by certain black nationalists who paid him with money made available by foreign sources.

The FBI has had as many as 2,000 agents working at one time, in cooperation with hundreds of local policemen and other U.S. intelligence agents, to track down every lead—including the above possibilities.

ties that the assassination was plotted with the intention of creating internal chaos in the United States.

It should be emphasized that the dominant theory—and hope—among those directing the investigation is still that the killer was a loner who murdered King out of his own crazy, racist views.

But this theory loses supporters as each day goes by without agents turning up any trace of Ray, who is linked to the murder and murder weapon by fingerprints and ballistics data.

FBI agents believe no longer could get food and drink for so long a period in this country without being detected in the massive day-and-night search that is under way.

This point, added to the now known fact that Ray had plenty of money, has given credibility to the theory that King's assassin was a hired killer.

A growing fear in FBI circles is that the killer was giv-

ing \$10,000 in advance to murder King with a promise of much more upon completion of the job. When he returned to his U.S. racist employers for the final payoff, the theory goes, he was slain and his body dumped where agents may never find it.

International intelligence agents have entered the investigation, however, because of Ray's mysterious trips to New Orleans—and certain of the suspect's trips out of the country. The FBI reportedly has pinpointed Ray's movements even to knowing which prostitute he spent which night with in certain countries, but it has not yet produced meaningful evidence of an international plot.

But there is deep suspicion of a Cuba-Red China plot. The assumption is that, if the Cubans had made arrangements to spirit their hired killer out of the United States, they very likely killed him and dumped him in the ocean.

Totally informed sources here say, however, that there is no evidence whatsoever of involvement by the communist party of the United States, or of any splinter group of U.S. Communists.

One source called the King killing "one of the most baffling cases in memory."

He also theorized that the slaying and escape were so smoothly organized that they tend to discredit suspicions of black Nationalist involvement—but that "every possibility must be checked."

The FBI is pouring vast amounts of manpower and money into the search because it knows its reputation is at stake. It also knows that if King's killer is not found all sorts of rumors will arise.

Some of those directing the investigation are openly hoping that it will turn out to be the work of one man. They fear the explosive repercussions if it turns out that the murderer was a hired killer for white U.S. racists—or for a foreign power.

Ray

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HOLED UP—OR BURIED

The Ray Mystery Deepens

By JEREMIAH O'LEARY

Star Staff Writer

James Earl Ray, sought as the slayer of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., has disappeared as effectively as if the earth had swallowed him, and that may well have been the case.

"If he was the hired trigger-man of a conspiracy, the chances are very good that he has been killed to silence him forever," said one official who has been close to the international manhunt for Ray. "But if he conceived and carried out the plot alone, he is probably holed up somewhere. But where?"

Whether he was a paid gunman or a loner, the last trace of Ray goes back to the morning of April 5, less than 15 hours after Dr. King was shot to death by a sniper in Memphis, Tenn.

Mrs. Ernest Payne, who lives in a low-rent housing project called Capitol Homes in Atlanta, Ga., peered out her window



JAMES EARL RAY

sometime between 7 and 9 a.m. that day and saw a man believed to be Ray park and lock a white 1966 Mustang. Two Atlanta cab drivers believe they may

have given Ray a short ride that same morning.

Beyond that point, Ray has vanished.

The FBI has said nothing about the progress of its investigation and has issued only three terse press releases along with several photos of the wanted man. But from a number of sources it has been possible to amass a considerable amount of information about Ray's life prior to last April 4.

Ray was penniless when he escaped from the Missouri State Penitentiary at Jefferson City, Mo. on April 23, 1967.

On Aug. 30, 1967, he turned up in Birmingham, Ala., rented a safety deposit box in the Birmingham Trust National Bank and began spending large amounts of money — estimated to total up to \$10,000 — over the next seven months.

Where he obtained the money

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RAY

Mystery Surrounding King's Killer Deepens

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that he spent on the car, his 19,000 miles of travel to Canada, Mexico and the West Coast, and on wine, women and bartending lessons is one of the mysteries of the case.

FBI agents have located some persons who describe Ray as a Negro-hating racist and others who say he never mentioned race over long periods of time.

If he has a profession, it is that of a notably unsuccessful small time hoodlum. So far as the records indicate, every hold-up or robbery he ever tried ended in disaster for him. He was, as the convicts say, a three-time loser.

Investigators trying to trace the source of his money have been unable to connect him with any robbery that occurred in his year of freedom since his Missouri prison escape.

The basic federal charge against Ray is conspiracy to violate the civil rights of Dr. King, while the Tennessee charge against him is murder. The conspiracy charge was based on a remark attributed to Ray himself. He is said to have told a Birmingham gun dealer that his brother had told him to buy the 30.06 Remington gamemaster pump gun which has been tabbed as the murder weapon.

Ray's brothers have been checked out and officials say they have not been linked with the crime:

- But investigators have not ruled out the possibility:
- That Dr. King's murder may have been ordered and paid for by extremists of the right or the left.
- That these plotters may have been either white or black.
- That they could have been either domestic or foreign.

The FBI, on orders from Director J. Edgar Hoover to break the King case at any costs, has traced Ray's life from his birth on March 10, 1928 in Alton, Mo., up to the morning of April 5, 1968.

A ninth-grade dropout, he eventually joined the Army and served the better part of three years in the West German cities of Bremen, Bremerhaven, Nuernburg and Frankfurt. He was tried in a refrigeration company, the military police and the infantry, but the Army finally gave him a general discharge for ineptness.

Arrests Mount

Soon after his release, Ray turned to crime and was arrested many times from 1949 until his last sentencing in 1960. His life pattern was fixed. He became a loner whose amusements centered on bar girls and prostitutes. He rarely worked. When he needed money for vodka and beer, he stole or took it by force. He never married.

Fellow prisoners knew him as a man addicted to amphetamine or "pep" pills, an avid reader of "girlie" magazines, a lone wolf who constantly talked of escape. A fellow prisoner has reported that once when a rumor was circulated in prison that a "businessmen's group" had offered a \$1 million bounty for the death of Dr. King, Ray said, "If I ever get out of here, I believe I'll collect that."

On Aug. 30, 1967, Ray answered an ad placed in a Birmingham newspaper by William D. Paisley, who wanted to sell his 1966 Mustang. Ray paid \$1,995 in cash for the car.

At that time, Ray was going under the name of Eric Starvo Galt and it was by that alias he was known to his Birmingham landlord, Peter Cherpes, and to Alabama authorities who issued him a license on Sept. 6, 1967. This was the start of his heavy spending, although he continued to live in cheap rooming houses and rundown hotels.

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Trip to Canada

For reasons unknown, Ray drove to Canada and spent a few days in Montreal. He lived in an old hotel and passed himself off as an employee of Expo-67.

While living in Cherpes' house in Birmingham, Ray received a large box of expensive camera equipment from a mail order firm in Chicago.

Cherpes said Ray left his place on Oct. 7, 1967. He drove to Mexico, where he passed some time in places like Jalisco and Puerto Vallarta. He became well known in the cantinas there and even had his picture taken with a Mexican prostitute. (That picture, showing Galt wearing sun glasses, was released by the FBI this week.)

Investigation believe his motive for going to Mexico was to buy marijuana but Ray apparently also liked the country. He told one acquaintance: "When I make my big score, I'm going to come down here and live on beans and beer."

He next turned up in Los Angeles where he checked into the

St. Francis Hotel and became a regular habitue of the Sultan Room bar of the hotel and other saloons. The barkeeps and girls around the Rabbit's Foot Club grew to know him as a man with a thirst and a bankroll.

Still as Eric Starvo Galt, he remained in Los Angeles until March 27, 1968, and left a broad trail. There was one side trip from Los Angeles to New Orleans with a man named Charles Stein, a bearded songwriter. Stein reported that his friend required him, his sister and his cousin to sign a petition for third party presidential candidate George Wallace in North Hollywood, Calif. as the price for taking him to New Orleans and back.

Stein recalled that Ray made one long-distance call from somewhere in Texas but did not know who he called. Stein also does not know why Ray went to New Orleans, nor who he saw there.

While in Los Angeles, Ray advertised in the L. A. Free Press, a "hippie tabloid," for a contact with a "passionate married woman." He signed the ad "Eric S," but Free Press records show that he used the full alias, "Eric S. Galt" in paying for the ad. He also bought a list of five female names from the Swinger's Club of Downey, Calif. for \$1 and sent a letter and picture of himself to a Los Angeles girl on Feb. 17. She gave the Polaroid picture to the FBI and it, too, was made public this week.

Using his "Galt" pseudonym, Ray paid more than \$400 for dancing lessons in Long Beach and more than \$200 for a course in bartending during his Los Angeles stay. He paid cash for both.

Birmingham Story

Ray left Los Angeles on March 27 and drove to Birmingham arriving there on March 29, the day he made the first of two visits to the Aeromarine Supply Co.

On the first visit he gave his name as Harvey Lowmyer and bought a Remington .243 caliber rifle, telling the salesman he wanted to go deer shooting in Wisconsin. On March 30, "Lowmyer" returned to the shop and said his brother had told him he had gotten the wrong kind of gun. What he wanted, he said, was a Remington 30.06 Game-master with a telescopic sight.

From there, the deduction is that Ray went to Atlanta and got a room in a boarding house inhabited largely by hippies. Here he was once again Galt. The FBI did not find the boarding house until several days after Ray's abandoned car was reported parked in the Atlanta housing project on April 11.

In the vain hope that Ray might still be hiding inside, the FBI staked out the house and watched it for more than 24 hours. Then agents dressed in "hippie" clothes got inside and found that the quarry had either fled from the room soon after ditching his car April 5 or had not returned there at all.

But the agents found key evidence in the room — a television set that "Galt" had gotten in a trade with a girl in Los Angeles and a city map of Atlanta.

Map Delineated

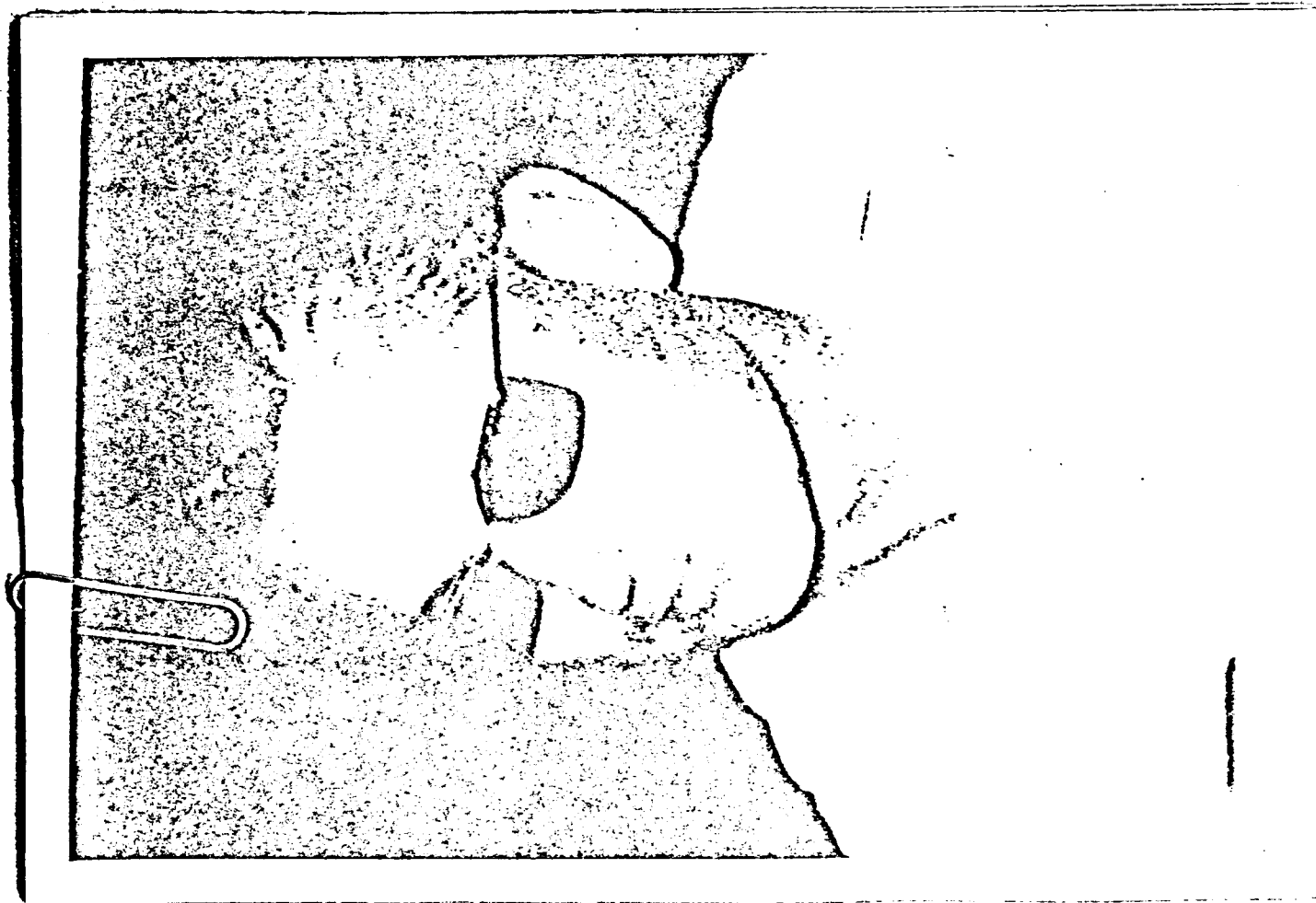
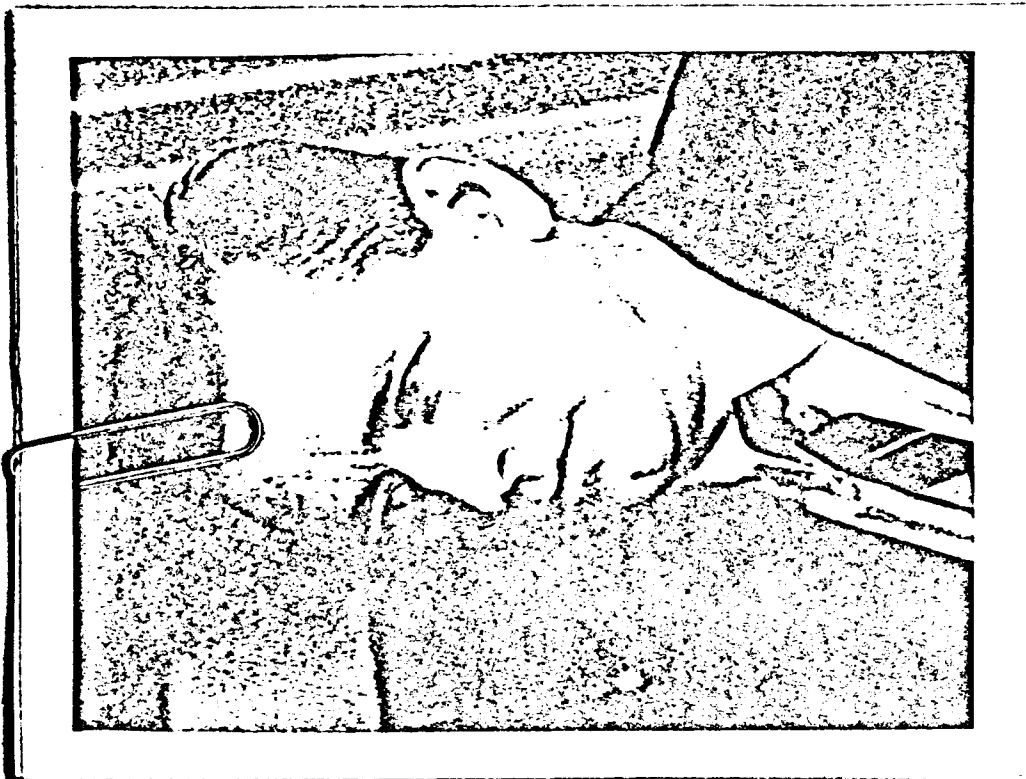
The map had four circles drawn around four significant locations: Dr. King's Atlanta residence; the office of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; the "hippie" house and the spot where the car had been abandoned on April 5.

Even more important was a well-defined fingerprint found on the map. FBI fingerprint experts were able to determine that the print was from a right thumb whereas all other 26 latent fingerprints from Ray's rifle, car, binoculars and places he had been were too incinct for classification.

The decision was made to compare the map fingerprint with the equivalent points of all white male fugitives in the general age range of the man known as "Galt." An exhaustive finger-by-finger comparison proved that Eric Starvo Galt and James Earl Ray were one and the same and the manhunt was launched.

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Carl Rowan

Plot Theory Probed

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MANY AGENTS

The FBI has had as many as 2,000 agents working at one time, in cooperation with hundreds of local policemen and other U.S. intelligence agents, to track down every lead—including the above possibilities that the assassination was plotted with the intention of creating internal chaos in the United States.

It should be emphasized that the dominant theory—and hope—among those directing the investigation is still that the killer was a loner who murdered Dr. King out of his own crazy, racist views.

But this theory loses supporters as each day goes by without agents turning up any trace of Ray, who is linked to the murder and murder weapon by fingerprints and ballistics data.

FBI agents believe no loner could get food and drink for so long a period in this country without being detected in the massive day-and-night search that is underway.

WELL HEeled

This point, added to the now-known fact that Ray had plenty of money, has given credibility to the theory that Dr. King's assassin was a hired killer.

A growing fear in FBI circles is that the killer was given \$10,000 in advance to murder Dr. King with a promise of

much more upon completion of the job. When he returned to his U.S. racist employers for the final payoff, the theory goes, he was slain and his body dumped where agents may never find it.

International intelligence agents have entered the investigation, however, because of Ray's mysterious trips to New Orleans—and certain of the suspect's trips out of the country. The FBI reportedly has pinpointed Ray's movements even to knowing which prostitute he spent which night with in certain countries; but it has not yet produced meaningful evidence of an international plot.

But there is deep suspicion of a Cuba-Red China plot. The assumption is that, if the Cubans had made arrangements to spirit their hired killer out of the U.S., they very likely killed him and dumped him in the ocean.

LITTLE EVIDENCE

Totally-informed sources here say, however, that there is no evidence whatsoever of involvement by the Communist party of the United States, or of any splinter group of U.S. Communists.

One source called the King killing "one of the most baffling cases in memory." He said suspect Ray "just vanished in the face of the damndest FBI manhunt in ages."

He also theorized that the slaying and escape were so smoothly organized that they tend to discredit suspicions of black nationalist involvement—but that "Every possibility must be checked."

The FBI is pouring vast amounts of manpower and money into the search because it knows its reputation is at stake. It also knows that if Dr. King's killer is not found all sorts of rumors will arise. Memphis police already have been accused of plotting the murder, and the accusations soon could be hurled at the FBI or other federal agencies.

Some of those directing the investigation are openly hoping that it will turn out to be the work of one man. They fear the explosive repercussions if it turns out that the murderer was a hired killer for white U.S. racists—or for a foreign power.

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