

# F.B.I. Says 'Galt' Is an Escaped Convict



Photos from Federal Bureau of Investigation show James Earl Ray at left in 1966 and at center in 1960, in prison. At right, he is shown this year under alias Eric Starvo Galt.

By FRED P. GRAHAM  
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 19—

The Federal Bureau of Investigation announced today that an escaped convict named James Earl Ray was the man being sought under the alias of Eric Starvo Galt for the murder of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The bureau pictured Ray as a trouble-prone drifter with a long record of erratic and violent behavior.

Galt's true identity was discovered after latent fingerprints uncovered in the King investigation were compared with the prints of more than 53,000 persons listed as wanted by the bureau.

Attorney General Ramsey Clark and J. Edgar Hoover, the director of the bureau, said in a joint announcement that Ray escaped from the Missouri State Penitentiary on April 23, 1967.

Ray, a 40-year-old native of Illinois, had served seven years

of a 20-year sentence for armed robbery and car theft in St. Louis.

The bureau released front and side "mug" photographs of Ray that were taken by Missouri prison officials in 1960. They bear a close resemblance to pictures of Galt, taken in 1968, that the bureau released Wednesday.

Ray had close-cropped hair and a leaner face than the Galt,

photo shows, but the protruding left ear, which the bureau emphasized in its initial description of Galt, appears to be the same in both photographs.

The F.B.I. announced Ray's identity after an around-the-clock check of fingerprint records.

Fingerprints can be matched quickly by an elaborate classification and filing system when the full 10 prints of the person to be identified are available and it is known which finger and hand each prints represents.

But when only a few prints are available and it is not known which fingers or thumbs made them, they can be checked only by comparing each latent print with all 10 prints on the card of each wanted person.

This can be a monumental task, since the bureau's wanted list includes a cumulative file of all persons who have been reported as fugitives by the local police forces around the country and who have not yet been caught.

Latent fingerprints are not readily apparent and are discovered only by careful search and sometimes chemical development. There was no indication by the authorities where these prints were found.

Ray was said to have used the names of James McBride, James Walton, W. C. Herron and James O'Connor during his criminal career. When the F.B.I. filed formal charges against Galt on Wednesday, it gave two other aliases, John Willard and Harvey Lowmyer.

The identification of Galt as the escaped convict explains some of the circumstances that led to speculation Galt might have established a false identity in contemplating the assassination of Dr. King.

On Wednesday a fugitive warrant was obtained by the bureau accusing Galt of having conspired with a person "whom he alleged to be his brother" to injure Dr. King and violate his civil rights.

Dr. King was killed by a sniper on April 4 as the civil rights leader stood on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis. The Tennessee au-

thorities have sworn out an arrest warrant charging Galt with murder.

Bureau spokesmen declined to say whether Ray had a brother or to comment on reports that the bureau had the "brother" in custody.

No New Warrant Planned  
Special to The New York Times

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., April 19—The F.B.I. does not plan to issue a new warrant for the arrest of Ray.

Joseph H. Gamble, the agent in charge of the Birmingham office, said that because Galt was an alias used by Ray, the warrant issued on Wednesday was legally sufficient.

A source said that the bureau thought that Galt's "alleged brother" probably was not a relative. Galt had reportedly told a gun store clerk in Birmingham that he and his brother planned to go hunting with a rifle he was purchasing.

The .30-'06 caliber Remington rifle was found on a Memphis street on April 4 near the site of Dr. King's murder.

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