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Galt Eludes F.B.I. Agents in California; Thousands of

By MARTIN WALDRON
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BIRMINGHAM, Ala., April 18 —Eric Starvo Galt, the suspected assassin of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., apparently eluded the Federal Bureau of Investigation in California last night, a source said today.

The source said that agents believed that they were close to the 36-year-old Galt after Attorney General Ramsay Clark announced that a warrant had been issued for Galt's arrest.

When the arrest did not materialize last night, thousands of wanted posters asking for the public's help in locating Galt were distributed around the nation.

Galt was charged in Birmingham yesterday by the F.B.I. with a conspiracy to violate Dr. King's civil rights, and was charged in Memphis by the state of Tennessee with murdering the 39-year-old civil rights leader with a single rifle shot on April 4.

An unidentified brother of Galt's was said in the F.B.I. complaint to be a co-conspirator. No warrant has been issued for the arrest of the brother and the bureau has refused to discuss him.

A source in the bureau indicated that the brother might have supplied information. Speculation that the bureau had

the brother in custody brought a denial from headquarters in Washington.

"The F.B.I. has no one in custody in connection with Dr. King's slaying," the bureau said.

Galt is known to have twice mentioned a brother in the last two months. The first mention came when he is reported to have told a clerk in a Birmingham gun store that he and his brother planned to go hunting.

Agent Joseph H. Gamble, in charge of the Birmingham bureau, said in the complaint that the rifle found discarded on a Memphis street near the scene of Dr. King's slaying had been bought by Galt on March 30, 1968.

The clerk at the gun store refused today to answer questions about the rifle sale.

The Remington Arms Company of Bridgeport, Conn., and the Memphis police have said that it was a .30-'06 caliber Remington rifle with a telescopic sight.

A second mention by Galt of a brother was reported when he was about to be graduated from a bartenders' school in Hollywood in March. He turned down a job because, he is reported to have said, he had to go see his brother.

There was an indication that the F.B.I. still had not learned whether Eric Starvo Galt was

a fictitious name, although the agency was reported yesterday to have decided that it was.

Agents were searching through the files of Birmingham bail bondsmen, looking for old bail bonds under the name Galt.

In its nationwide bulletin for the pick-up of Galt, the bureau did not mention where Galt had been born, where he had lived, whether he was married and what his occupation was.

The only schooling mentioned was dancing lessons and a course in bartending. This information was developed in California this week.

Two Aliases Mentioned

The wanted poster mentioned two aliases, Harvey Lowmyer and John Willard.

Until yesterday, agents were still trying to find out at rooming houses in Birmingham if Galt had checked into one of them in the last few weeks. The proprietors of 10 of 21 rooming houses checked in Birmingham said that agents had questioned them this week.

There was no mention of a possible motive in the F.B.I. complaint.

The details of the murder charge filed in Memphis have been kept secret by the state. A police spokesman said there that the details of the charge would not be released until Galt was in custody.

The bureau's photographs of Galt have drawn conflicting reactions from persons in Birmingham, Memphis and Atlanta who have told the F.B.I. that they had seen Galt recently.

Most of the witnesses have said that the photographs did not appear to be that of the man they had seen.

Mr. Gamble, the Birmingham agent, said last night that a photograph of Galt was taken in Birmingham last month. Today, it was reported that the photograph came from Galt's application at the bartenders' school.

Meanwhile, the drivers' license division of the Alabama Highway Patrol said again that it mailed a duplicate of Galt's driver's license to him at a Birmingham address on March 1, 1968, a date that the F.B.I. said Galt was in California.

Duplicate License Sought

The Highway Patrol spokesman said that a telephone caller, identifying himself as Eric Galt, had asked for a duplicate of the original license that was issued to him last September.

The envelope with the duplicate license contained a bill for 25 cents to cover the cost, and the 25 cents was paid promptly. The Highway Patrol said it received the money on March 6.

Wanted Posters Distributed in Nation

The complaint filed by Mr. Gamble read:

"On or about March 29, 1968, at Birmingham, Ala., in the northern district of Alabama, Eric Starvo Galt and an individual whom he alleged to be his brother, entered into a conspiracy which continued until on or about April 5, 1968, to injure, oppress, threaten or intimidate Martin Luther King Jr., a citizen of the United States, residing in Atlanta, Ga., in the free exercise and enjoyment of his rights secured by the Constitution or laws of the United States, namely the rights to freely travel from state to state.

"In furtherance of this conspiracy, Eric Starvo Galt did on or about March 30, 1968, purchase a rifle at Birmingham, Ala., all in violation of Section 241, Title 18, United States Code.

"And the complainant states that this complaint is based on the purchase of the weapon used to carry out the conspiracy in Birmingham, Ala., on or about March 29, 1968; identification of the gun used by defendant found at the scene of the crime, and investigation conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation."

The complaint was sworn to before United States Commissioner Mildred F. Sprague. Last night, Mrs. Sprague denied that

such a complaint had been filed before her. Today she declined to explain why she had denied it.

Galt Recalled on Coast

Special to The New York Times

LOS ANGELES, April 18—Acquaintances of Eric Starvo Galt recalled him today as pleasant and intelligent but shy and somewhat mysterious.

The suspect apparently spent most of last December, January and February in the Los Angeles-Long Beach area.

He took lessons at the National Dance Studios in Long Beach from mid-December to Feb. 12, the manager, Rod Arvidson said, paying \$465 in cash for a 50-hour course of instruction.

Galt left before completing the course, the manager said, with the explanation that he was concentrating on a bartending course so he could open a bar in Los Angeles.

Early in February, according to Tomás Reyes Lau, operator of the International School of Bartending in Hollywood, Galt paid \$225 for a course that extended over the next four weekends.

He completed the course March 2, Mr. Lau said, but declined a proffered job, saying:

"I have to leave to see my brother. What would it do for me to work only two or three

weeks? I'd better wait until I get back to town and get a permanent job."

Galt telephoned a week later. Mr. Lau said, and again declined a job.

While taking the bartending course, Galt lived in a small hotel in Hollywood. Some individuals he gave as references at that time could not immediately be located.

The people who have known him recalled him clearly but had no notable recollections about him except that he had a Southern accent.

Personnel at the dancing school said he had spoken of operating a bar in the Mexican coast, yet did not appear to speak Spanish.

A Suspect Released

Special to The New York Times

ATLANTA, April 18—The police arrested a man this morning said to resemble Galt, but after questioning by F.B.I. agents he was apparently cleared and released.

The man, who said that he worked for a carnival, had just arrived in Atlanta from Valdosta, officials said. They said he had volunteered to accompany them to the Atlanta police headquarters for questioning this morning after someone reported him as resembling Galt's photograph.

No charges were lodged.