

Galt Trip From Coast to New Orleans Recalled by Companion

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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 songwriter, 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 "Italian" 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.

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.

"We would stop and get a six-pack and he would drink it while he was driving," Mr. 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 the 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 kinds 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."

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

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

Mr. Stein, 38, 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.

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 publicity" to information about the suspect.

Mexico Frees Suspect

HERMOSILLO, Mexico, April 25 (AP)—An American arrested by Mexican officials because they thought he resembled pictures of the man wanted in the slaying of Dr. King was released today after questioning. Daniel David Kennedy, 41 years old, of Baltimore, praised the Mexicans upon his release. He had been detained 24 hours after the police in nearby Coahuila arrested him.