

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

Mr. Bishop

DATE: 4-19-68

M. A. Jones

- Tolson _____
- DeLoach _____
- Mohr _____
- Bishop _____
- Casper _____
- Callahan _____
- Conrad _____
- Felt _____
- Gale _____
- Rosen _____
- Sullivan _____
- Tavel _____
- Trotter _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Holmes _____
- Gandy _____

SUBJECT: JAMES EARL RAY, aka - FUGITIVE
 CIVIL RIGHTS - CONSPIRACY
 UFAC - ARMED ROBBERY
 "TEN MOST WANTED FUGITIVES" PROGRAM

Handwritten notes:
 9/11/68
 [Signature]
 9-4

James Earl Ray, an escapee from the Missouri State Penitentiary who is charged under the alias Eric Starvo Galt with Civil Rights - Conspiracy in connection with the gunshot slaying of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., at Memphis, Tennessee, on April 4, 1968, is being recommended as a special addition to the FBI's list of "Ten Most Wanted Fugitives."

While ten fugitives currently appear on the "Top Ten" list, the Bureau on one previous occasion briefly carried eleven subjects on the list of "Ten Most Wanted Fugitives" and such an unusual situation naturally generates extraordinary public and press interest. (Richard Laurence Marquette, charged with a brutal butcher murder in Portland, Oregon, was added to the "Top Ten" list on 6-29-61 as its eleventh member. He was caught the following day in California.)

With the identification today of Ray as being identical with Galt and the resultant intensified press interest in the Bureau's manhunt, it appears most timely to promptly announce Ray's addition to the "Top Ten" list, as an additional means of expediting his prompt location.

A proposed press release announcing Ray's addition to the FBI's list of "Ten Most Wanted Fugitives" is attached, along with copies of his photographs.

EX-115

REC-71

44-38861-1738

RECOMMENDATIONS:

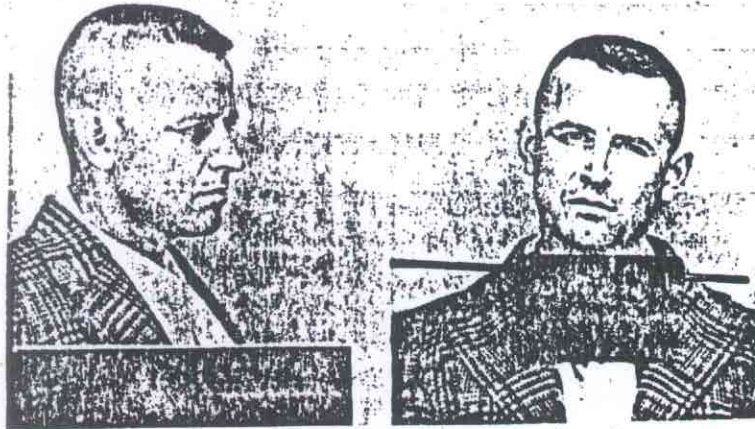
(1) James Earl Ray be approved as a special addition to the list of "Ten Most Wanted Fugitives."

(2) This memorandum be returned directly to my office for further expeditious handling.

Enclosures (3) ENCLOSURE

- 1 - Mr. DeLoach - Enc.
- 1 - Mr. Bishop - Enc.
- 1 - Mr. Gale - Enc.
- 1 - Mr. Rosen - Enc.

Handwritten signatures and initials:
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JAMES EARL RAY

44-38861-77
ENCLOSURE



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20535

In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 20, 1968

JAMES EARL RAY, also known as
Eric Starvo Galt, Harvey Lowmyer,
John Willard, James McBride, James
Walton, W. C. Herron and James
O'Conner

FUGITIVE

CIVIL RIGHTS - CONSPIRACY;
INTERSTATE FLIGHT - ARMED ROBBERY

"TEN MOST WANTED FUGITIVES" PROGRAM

James Earl Ray, a Missouri prison escapee who has been sought under the alias Eric Starvo Galt in connection with the gunshot slaying of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., has been added to the FBI's list of "Ten Most Wanted Fugitives."

FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover ordered the special addition of Ray to the "Ten Most Wanted Fugitives" list, which already contains ten fugitives, to insure the widest possible dissemination of Ray's photograph and description to help effect his earliest possible location.

Ray has been the subject of a massive and intensive search since the brutal gunshot slaying of Dr. King on April 4, 1968, as he stood on the balcony of a Memphis, Tennessee, motel. One rifle bullet, believed fired from the window of a nearby rooming house, felled the victim.

ENCLOSURE

44-38861-1738

An exhaustive FBI fingerprint search, comparing latent fingerprints uncovered in the Dr. King case against fingerprints of over 53,000 persons on whom wanted notices have been posted in the FBI's Identification Division, succeeded in determining that Galt and Ray are identical.

A Federal warrant, issued at Birmingham, Alabama, on April 17, 1968, charges Ray, under the alias Eric Starvo Galt, with conspiring to interfere with a Constitutional Right of a United States citizen. Ray is also sought for unlawful interstate flight to avoid confinement after conviction for armed robbery, based on a Federal warrant issued on July 20, 1967, at Jefferson City, Missouri. He had been confined at the Missouri State Penitentiary, Jefferson City, Missouri, in March, 1960, with a 20-year sentence following conviction for armed robbery and operating a motor vehicle without permission of the owner. In September, 1966, while serving the sentence, he was confined for a time in the maximum security ward at the State Hospital, Fulton, Missouri. He was reported missing from the Missouri State Penitentiary since April 23, 1967.

Ray, who has an arrest record dating back to 1949 and has been convicted of burglary, armed robbery and forging United States Postal Money Orders, has also been confined in the Los Angeles County Jail, the Joliet and Pontiac, Illinois, State Prisons and the United States Penitentiary, Leavenworth, Kansas.

He served in the Army between February, 1946, and December, 1948, received a three-month sentence at hard labor for being drunk and breaking arrest and was given a General Discharge due to ineptness and lack of adaptability for military service.

Ray is a 40-year-old white male, reportedly born in Illinois on March 10, 1928. He is approximately 5'10" inches tall, weighs from 163 to 174 pounds, has blue eyes and brown hair which he has worn cut short. He has a small scar on the center of his forehead and a scar on the palm of his right hand. He has been described as having a straight, narrow nose and straight and even teeth and to have a nervous habit of occasionally tugging at an ear lobe. His left ear protrudes noticeably.

Acquaintances describe him as a "loner" and "drifter" whose language and diction reflect a "rural" quality and indicate he has had limited education.

He is reportedly a fan of western and country music, drinks vodka and beer, dresses neatly and claims past employment as a merchant seaman and cook on Mississippi River vessels. He is known to have worked as a baker, laborer and color matcher.

He is known as an avid dancer who has taken dancing lessons. He also completed a course at a school of bartending in the Los Angeles area early in 1968.

Ray should be considered armed and extremely dangerous.

Anyone with information concerning this fugitive is requested to immediately contact the nearest office of the FBI, the telephone number of which may be found on the first page of local telephone directories.