

FBI

Date: 4/26/68

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL _____
(Priority)

Mr. Tolson	✓
Mr. DeLoach	✓
Mr. Mohr	✓
Mr. Bishop	✓
Mr. Casper	✓
Mr. Callahan	✓
Mr. Conrad	✓
Mr. Felt	✓
Mr. Gale	✓
Mr. Rosen	✓
Mr. Sullivan	✓
Mr. Tavel	✓
Mr. Trotter	✓
Tele. Room	✓
Miss Holmes	✓
Miss Gandy	✓

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (44-38861)
ATTN: THOMAS E. BISHOP
CRIME RECORDS DIVISION

FROM: SAC, HOUSTON (44-1509) (P)

SUBJECT: MURKIN

Enclosed are three copies of an editorial entitled, "FBI Loses Some of Its Shine" which was in the Houston Chronicle evening of 4/25/68.

I immediately contacted Mr. EVERETT D. COLLIER, Vice President and Editor of the Houston Chronicle and discussed this editorial. I told Mr. COLLIER that I was at a loss to understand his reason for the editorial and wanted to set the record straight on just what had been done. Mr. COLLIER immediately stated that as the SAC well knew, he was an outstanding admirer of the Director and of the FBI, and his main reason for writing this editorial was because he was just upset about the entire case. He stated that everyone knows that the Attorney General talks too much, and he could not understand why the Attorney General kept saying on a day-to-day basis right after it happened, that "We are very close." Mr. COLLIER stated he believed it would have been much better if Mr. HOOVER would have made daily statements concerning the progress of the case because of the respect with which the Director is held by all Americans. In addition, he stated he was still concerned about the recent policy adopted by the American Bar Association against pre-trial publicity and

- 3 - Bureau (Enc. 3)
- 2 - Houston (1-44-1509)
- (1-80-188)

WTW/cbl
(5)

REC-104

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Approved: _____
Special Agent in Charge

Sent _____ M

Per _____

CRIME RECORDS

HO 44-1509

felt this might have unduly influenced the FBI's releases. I told Mr. COLLIER in no uncertain terms that this matter had been handled promptly and releases given when the facts warranted same. I told him Mr. HOOVER had never approved releasing of information concerning possible suspects, but always insisted that the full facts be furnished when a subject was identified and warrant obtained. COLLIER stated he realized this and appreciated the reason for same. He said it was hard for the public to understand why it took so long to identify the fingerprints of GALT and RAY. I explained the manner in which the latents were obtained, the great investigative time taken to identify the latents, and here again I felt that our Identification Division had done an outstanding job in doing this so promptly. After these facts were presented to Mr. COLLIER he stated he understood.

He also believed that we had identified GALT and RAY the same day, but had released the information on GALT and two days later released it on RAY. Here again I pointed out the facts that were released, and had been set forth in his newspaper, that a warrant was obtained on the person using the name of GALT on 4/17/68, and after an exhaustive search of over 53,000 fugitive prints, RAY was identified on 4/19/68, just two days later. Of course, at the Director's instructions he was promptly placed on our "Ten Most Wanted Fugitives List."

It was obvious at the conclusion of the conversation that Mr. COLLIER was impressed with our results and appreciated being straightened out on the matter. In conclusion I told Mr. COLLIER that if he had any further questions in the future about our operations, all he had to do was to let me know and I would give him the full facts. He stated he certainly appreciated this and could reassure us that he would call the SAC in the future. He restated many times during the conversation that he had the greatest respect for Mr. HOOVER and realized that no other investigative agency could have done such a thorough job of investigating.

*Collier should have taken
his ire out on a. g. & not
the FBI*

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

FBI loses some of its shine

The hunt for the assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. has taken some odd turns, and one of the more unusual ones is the way the Justice Department and its agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, have been behaving.

Immediately after the killing Atty. Gen. Ramsey Clark exuded optimism about an arrest. "We are very close," he said. A few days later he said he hoped to provide a picture of the suspect. But it was not until a week after the murder that the FBI inadvertently disclosed the name of Eric Starvo Galt.

And so it has gone since April 4. Clark's optimism has faded, and the FBI has seemed almost intent on keeping the public confused.

The FBI's image as the smoothest man-hunting agency was tarnished by the length of time taken to identify the fingerprints of Galt as those of ex-convict James Earl Ray. It was 15 days after the assassination. In question is

whether it really took that long or whether the FBI was withholding the information.

It was not until Sunday that the FBI put Galt or Ray on its most wanted list. The success of the list in apprehending wanted persons over the years has been good. It is hard to understand why the description and photo of Galt were not released as soon as they were uncovered.

The FBI could never be accused of being loose-lipped, but the most wanted list was a creation of its director, J. Edgar Hoover. He has always been proud of the role it has played in apprehending those unfortunate enough to be listed.

We wonder if the recent policy adopted by the American Bar Assn. against pre-trial publicity has unduly influenced the FBI. If this is the case, the results are plain enough. The public linking of Galt and Ray was made about two weeks after the killing, and no one has yet been apprehended.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

"THE HOUSTON CHRONICLE"
HOUSTON, TEXAS

Date: 4-25-68
Edition:
Author:
Editor: EVERETT D. COLLIER
Title:

Character:
or
Classification: 44-1500
Submitting Office: HOUSTON
 Being Investigated

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