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Precede Birmingham-Washington King 220

MEMPHIS, Tenn. AP - Mysterious Eric Starvo Galt, a March graduate of a bartender school, was charged Wednesday night with murder in the April 4 sniper assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Nobel-prize winning minister and world leader of nonviolence.

A state warrant charging first degree murder was issued in Memphis five hours after the FBI announced a federal complaint charging Galt with conspiracy in the slaying.

King, 39, was shot to death on the second floor balcony of a Memphis motel the day after he returned to lead garbage workers in another march.

Murder is a capital crime in Tennessee.

The FBI complaint charges that Galt, a white man who has been hunted for a week, entered into a conspiracy about March 29 in Birmingham, Ala., with a man who Galt claimed was his brother. The FBI warrant was issued in Birmingham.

There was no indication that other persons would be charged with conspiracy, nor was the second man who Galt said was his brother identified or charged.

A Memphis witness said an FBI photo of the wanted man does not resemble the man who fled the scene after the shooting.

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King killing lead precede Washington 480

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. AP - A federal complaint Wednesday charged the mysterious Eric Starvo Galt, a white man who has been hunted for a week, with conspiracy in the April 4 sniper assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The FBI complaint charges that Galt and a man who Galt claimed was his brother entered into a conspiracy about March 29 in Birmingham. A warrant for Galt's arrest was issued in Birmingham.

There was no indication from the FBI that other persons would be charged with the conspiracy. The second man that Galt said was his brother was not identified, nor charged.

A witness in Memphis, Tenn., where King was killed, said an FBI photograph of the wanted man does not resemble the man seen leaving the scene after the shooting.

"Unless he was wearing a wig or had had a face lift or something, it's not the man I saw," said Charles Q. Stevens, a resident of the Main Street rooming house from which the sniper was believed to have shot King.

"The hair is too full and the face is too young," said Stevens. He said he only got a side view of the fleeing man, however.

The FBI did not indicate when the photograph was made, but a source said it was taken within the past three months.

In Birmingham, Galt's landlord for six weeks last fall, Peter Cherpes, told The Associated Press that the FBI photo might be a picture of Galt. "It's very near, but I'm not sure," said Cherpes. He remembered his boarder's hair being much lighter. The FBI description said, "Galt has brown hair."

The AP reported Monday that Cherpes had identified FBI drawings as the Eric Galt who had lived at the Birmingham rooming house from Aug. 26 to Oct. 7, 1967.

An Atlanta taxicab driver said an FBI picture he identified as

a two-block fare the night after the slaying was different from the one released Wednesday. "That is definitely not the man I picked up," the cab driver said.

Atty. Gen. Ramsey Clark, who went to Memphis after the slaying of the civil rights leader, announced in a statement released by the FBI that Galt was being sought as a fugitive on the charge of conspiring to injure, oppress, threaten or intimidate King in the exercise of a federal right, "namely, the right to freely travel from state to state."

Police director Frank C. Holloman of Memphis said a state warrant would be drawn for Galt as soon as practicable.

The FBI declined to comment on whether there might be an early arrest or if the filing of the charge and release of information indicated little headway was being made in finding Galt.

It was the first disclosure that authorities had evidence of a conspiracy in King's slaying. An early statement by Clark referred to "one man on the run," though this was dropped from a later statement.

FBI director J. Edgar Hoover said in the Wednesday release that Galt bought a rifle in Birmingham about March 30. Only a few weeks before, the statement said, Galt had graduated from a school of bartending in Los Angeles.

Galt had told acquaintances in Birmingham that he worked in shipyards or on ships, and on a driver's license application he put "merchant seaman, unemployed."

In Hollywood, director Tomas Reyes Lau of the International School of Bartending, said Galt graduated March 2 and disappeared after refusing a job. Lau said Galt was an excellent student.

"He never said anything about Negroes," Lau said. There were no Negroes in the class. King, a Negro, was in Memphis to aid striking garbage workers, most of them Negroes.

The FBI said Galt also was known as "Harvey Lowmyer and John Willard." The assassin registered under the latter name.

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