

KING KILLING SUSPECT RAY

IN CITY LAST DECEMBER

The man charged with conspiracy and murder in the slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was registered in a French Quarter motel from Dec. 17 through 19 of last year.

This was confirmed after Louis Lomax, a newsman

writing for the North American Newspaper Alliance, reported that the suspect, James Earl Ray, met a man Lomax identified only as "a major New Orleans industrialist" at the Provincial Motel, 1024 Chartres, Dec. 17.

The States-Item has not been able to establish the identity of this "industrialist" or whether he actually exists.

HOWEVER, records of the motel show that Ray, now on the FBI's 10 Most Wanted list, stayed there during the Dec. 17-19 period, driving a Mustang auto with an Alabama license. (Authorities in Atlanta are holding a white Mustang which witnesses reported seeing leaving the scene of Dr. King's shooting in Memphis April 4.)

Lomax reported that investigators are searching for the "industrialist" (whose name still is unknown to them) in the light of a disclosure from a Missouri prison inmate, who served time with Ray, that Ray expressed interest in an offer of \$100,000 put up by "Southern businessmen" for anyone who would kill Dr. King.

Time magazine reported this week that New Orleans was the payoff point for the man hired to kill Dr. King. This, the magazine said, was based on a conversation overheard by a Memphis businessman.

LOMAX ALSO reported that on Feb. 17, 1968, Ray called

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an unidentified New Orleans family and delivered to them a package sent by their laughter in Los Angeles.

Asked about the possibility that criminal acts leading to Dr. King's death took place in New Orleans, District Attorney Jim Garrison said today, "We're very interested in the case."

However, the DA said, "we have no data at present. The federal people have not given us any information."

He added that federal authorities have not refused the information—they have not yet been asked for it. "Now that it's getting this specific, we'll be very much interested."

GARRISON STRESSED that he means no criticism of federal investigators in this instance. "They have their own problems," he said.

Ray is charged with conspiracy and murder in the King slaying, under the name of Eric Starvo Galt. The FBI says Ray and Galt are the same man.

Ray registered at the motel here under the name of Galt.

Lomax is a regular reporter on Negro affairs for NANA, a wire service which provides news to the States-Item and other newspapers around the nation. The news syndicate said Lomax has established contact with the underworld and has been able to elicit facts not known to others interested in the King assassination case.

HIS STORY, datelined Beverly Hills, Calif., said that in a startling new development, the hunt for the persons responsible for King's death now focuses on a mysterious Hollywood blonde and a New Orleans industrialist.

The story, as written by Lomax, continued:

The FBI let it be known Monday that they were in search of the Hollywood blonde but could not locate her. The report was that she has "disappeared."

This reporter located the blonde in question late yesterday afternoon. She is in her mid twenties as reported and, as suspected, was a close confidante of Ray, then known as Eric Starvo Galt and the suspected killer of Dr. King.

INVESTIGATION by this reporter revealed that the young woman was a habitue of the Sultan Room and the Rabbit's Foot, bars along a sleazy section of Hollywood

Blvd. She used several names but was known as "Jerri."

She spent several nights, perhaps weeks, with Ray (Galt) and on the day Ray left Los Angeles on the trip that led him to Memphis he purchased "Jerri" an airplane ticket to a Midwestern city where she is now visiting with her parents. There is some evidence that Ray arranged to visit with the girl and her parents in the Midwestern city "after I take care of some business in the South." This was the way Ray explained his mission to the girl in question. The FBI's search for the girl still continues and there is no indication that the agency is aware of the girl's whereabouts.

"JERRI" IS important to the investigation because of her close relationship to Ray while he was in Los Angeles. Ray (Galt) kept this quiet and, on the whole, remained to himself. However, "Jerri"

was in his apartment on several protracted occasions and the conviction is that she may well have information about the various contacts Ray was known to have made in the South, particularly in New Orleans.

As important as "Jerri" is to the stalled investigation, she is overshadowed by additional information uncovered by this reporter about Ray's New Orleans contacts. These are the facts that can now be published:

—On Dec. 16, 1967, Ray was in telephone contact with a major New Orleans industrialist, a man who is considered the economic and political "killer" of the community.

—On Dec. 17, 1967, Ray met in person with this New Orleans industrialist. On the day of the meeting, Ray was registered in a motel in New Orleans. The contact between Ray and the industrialist was made from this motel and the meeting with held in "downtown" New Orleans.

Investigators are attempting to zero in on the "industrialist" in the light of a disclosure from an inmate out of Missouri Prison, where Ray once served time and where Ray expressed interest in an offer of \$100,000 put up by "Southern businessmen" for anyone who would kill Dr. King. This reporter has also been able to establish a timetable for Ray that leads up to a few days to Dr. King's assassination:

(conclusion missing)

Lomax killed in auto accident 30 Jul 70, near Santa Rosa, New Mexico. See this file 1 Aug 70.