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F. B. I. Studies Order for Books Submitted by 'Eric Starvo Galt'

By HENRY RAYMONT

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is looking into an order for the purchase of a three-volume set on the American Presidency by a man who gave his name as Eric Starvo Galt, an alias used by James Earl Ray, accused as the killer of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

A typewritten order for the boxed set, "The American Heritage History of the Presidents of the United States," was received late last April—presumably after the name "Galt" had been publicized—by the Fulfillment Corporation of America in Marion, Ohio.

The order was processed by computers and the books were sent to the return address, the Lorraine Hotel and Motel of Memphis, Tenn., where Dr. King was shot on April 4. The books were confiscated by the F. B. I.

The bureau has declined any comment on the case. But its interest in the book order appeared to be guided by the hope of closing some of the gaps in Ray's movements after the assassination and determining whether it actually came from a man calling himself "Galt," an associate or a prankster.

James Parton, president of American Heritage, which published the books, said yesterday he was alerted to the purchase order on Wednesday morning by agents of the F. B. I. who visited the offices of the Fulfillment Corporation.

The Fulfillment Corporation, a subsidiary of American Heritage, is a computer billing and distribution service. It handles mail orders for American Heritage magazines and books as well as for several university presses and other magazines, including The Atlantic Monthly and Harper's.

"The order for the three books was a charge order recorded on April 29," Mr. Par-

ton said. "Although the list price on the mailing piece shows as \$35, we offered a pre-publication discount before May 1 which brought the obligation down to \$22.95. The books were shipped and of course their arrival noted by the F. B. I."

A code line on the bill that accompanied the book shipment to Memphis made it possible for the company's computer to trace the order to "Eric Starvo Galt." But Mr. Parton said he doubted whether it would be possible to establish the exact date when the order was mailed because the envelope that contained it had been destroyed.

The possibility that several days might have passed between the arrival of the order in Marion and its being processed by the computer was also raised.

But Mr. Parton suggested that the computer had established one potentially valuable lead: The form filled by "Galt" came from a person whose subscription to the American Heritage magazine expired in April.

"The code on the mailing card clearly established that it must have come from somebody who had just been notified that his subscription was about to expire," he said. "I am not completely sure, but it may be possible to establish precisely to whom it had been sent."

American Heritage, a hard-cover quality magazine, has over 330,000 subscribers who pay \$16.50 a year for six issues. The three volumes on the Presidency is the latest of the company's growing number of book projects. Edited by Marcus Cunliffe, professor of American studies at the University of Sussex, the set was included this month in the Book-of-the-Month Club's special offers.