

## RAY'S ODD ODYSSEY



RIVERS & FAMILY  
Calhounian counterpart.

the war and on integration—although, as the son of an impoverished turpentine distiller from Gumville, he has voted frequently for Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programs. His constituents were not unsympathetic 18 months ago when he proposed that the U.S. "flatten Hanoi and let world opinion go fly a kite." In 1948 he cried that Harry Truman's anti-lynching bill would "lynch the Constitution," and as late as 1956 was defining N.A.A.C.P. as "the National Association for the Advancement of Communist Propaganda."

**Hero's Style.** Only once in the past have the First District's Negroes—43% of the population—challenged the chairman. Rivers trounced their 1950 candidate, a Negro attorney, in that year's Democratic primary. This year, in the aftermath of Martin Luther King's assassination, another Negro attorney, George Payton Jr., 39, decided to try. Scraping together the \$2,000 registration fee with loans from relatives, Payton attacked Rivers as a "warmonger and superhawk," stumped for a \$2 minimum wage, expanded social security, and liberal federal housing programs.

Almost inexplicably, Rivers, who wears his silver mane in the style of his South Carolinian hero John C. Calhoun, ran scared, plastering Charleston with billboards and TV spots. Ten days before the primary, Rivers arranged to have 15 members of his committee flock to Charleston along with Admiral Hyman Rickover to inspect a Polaris missile facility and laud Mendel.

The militant campaign was hardly necessary. Last week Rivers' Democrats, along with several thousand Republicans who crossed party lines, gave the chairman 65,842 votes against 18,883 for Payton. The G.O.P. will not even bother to oppose Rivers in November.

AS a thief, James Earl Ray's specialty was botching his getaway. After heisting \$190 from a St. Louis supermarket in 1959, Ray left tracks that the most flat-footed cop could follow: he even parked a car used in the stick-up outside his lodgings. That was characteristic of Ray, whose most profitable known caper, grossing only \$2,200, was bungled when the escape car crashed. The cruelest of his convictions was for the \$11 stick-up of a Chicago cab driver in 1952.

After he escaped from the Missouri State Penitentiary in 1967, Ray's style changed; he seemed to have become a *cum-laude* graduate in criminality. Flush with unaccustomed cash and astute at espying loopholes in the law's vigilance, he rambled across the country using a collection of aliases. Then, after a .30-'06 bullet killed Martin Luther King Jr. in Memphis on April 4, spurious radio messages sent Memphis police chasing the wrong way after Ray's 1966 white Mustang.

From that day, until a British detective politely questioned a Brussels-bound passenger at London's Heathrow Airport on June 8, Ray eluded a worldwide professional manhunt fortified by a \$100,000 reward for his capture. Last week, with the accused assassin immured in a maximum-security cell in Southwest London's Wandsworth prison, policemen unraveled the nexus of plastic faces, borrowed identities and bogus papers that he had woven for two months across two continents.

**Canadian Pattern.** Four days after King's murder, Ray had hightailed across the Canadian border, and was renting a \$10-a-week room from Mrs. Fela Szpakowsky on Toronto's polyglot Ossington Avenue. Just why Ray chose Canada is not entirely clear, but, almost surely, one reason was the knowledge—widely circulated among convicts in the U.S.—that it is ridiculously easy to get a Canadian passport. All that is needed is the gall to ask for one and a birth certificate—and the certificate is not strictly necessary.

In a consistent if bizarre pattern over several months Ray had appropriated four aliases from Torontonians, all from men who live around the suburb of Scarborough and bear varying degrees of likeness to Ray. In July 1967, Ray took the name of Warehouse Supervisor Eric St. Vincent Galt, 54, whose signature

*Eric St. Vincent Galt*

he had apparently misread as Eric Starvo Galt. As does Ray, Galt has scars on his forehead and right palm and could pass for 40, Ray's age. John Willard, 42, the name used by the man who rented the room in Memphis 13 paces away from the bathroom where

King's assassin hid, is an insurance adjuster who is shorter and slighter than Ray's 5-ft. 9-in., 175-lb. frame, but looks not unlike him. Paul Bridgman, an educator, and Ramon George Sneyd, a policeman, whose names Ray used after he arrived in Toronto, are both 35 and have Ray's build. Police are still puzzling over how they were chosen.

**In the Library.** On April 16, Ray paid \$8 for a Canadian passport in the name of Sneyd. "He blended into the wallpaper," recalls Lillian Spencer, manager of the Kennedy Travel Bureau, who handled the simple declaration that Ray signed, affirming that he was a Canadian citizen. Next day, on Miss Spencer's say-so, Travel Agent Henry Moos notarized the form and forwarded it to Ottawa.

Ray was also aware of Ontario's lackadaisical procedure for issuance of birth certificates and mailed off \$2 money orders for certificates for both Bridgman and Sneyd. For these, he needed the maiden names of their mothers. Announcements of their births in library copies of old newspapers supplied the information Ray required.

Ray never collected the birth certificate mailed back for Bridgman—who, as Ray apparently learned, already had a valid passport. On April 18, the fugitive got a phone call and next day moved three blocks away to a Chinese-run boardinghouse on Dundas Street West, where he had rented a room in advance for \$9 a week from Mrs. Yee Sun Loo. On May 2, Ray picked up his new passport and paid \$345 in cash for a return excursion flight to London. Four days later, he left Canada.

"Nice Guy." On May 8, Ray flew from London to Lisbon, perhaps in the hope of a payoff, perhaps in an attempt to contact recruiters for white mercenary fighters in Africa, or else to

POLICE VAN CARRYING





try to reach the white-supremacist breakaway state of Rhodesia, which maintains a mission in the Portuguese capital. Indulgent officials, spotting a discrepancy between the spelling of his name "Sneya" on his passport and his adopted signature, nevertheless allowed him to pass "like any tourist."

Husbanded his funds, Ray checked into the third-rate Hotel Portugal, hung out at cheap bars, and even wheedled a \$7.02 discount on a prostitute's routine \$17.55 fee for half an hour's dalliance. "He was a nice guy," declared Maria, a comely adjunct to the Texas Bar. Ray-Sneyd also obtained a new passport from the Canadian embassy by pointing out that his surname was misspelled on his original document.

On May 17, Ray flew back to London, finding anonymity in one of the city's 5,500 hotels and back-street rooming houses. His tracks become visible again on May 28, when he checked into the \$5-a-night New Earl's Court Hotel. On June 5, after telephoning the London Daily Telegraph to inquire about mercenary forces in Africa, Ray was again on the move, holing up in the unlisted Pax Hotel, run by Swedish-born Mrs. Anna Thomas, 54. For the next three days, Ray never left his room for more than 20 minutes, and refused to emerge for four telephone calls, two of them from an airline. On June 6, Ray again telephoned the Telegraph's Ian Colvin, asking about mercenaries. Colvin offered to send him an address in Brussels.

The search that caught up with Ray started when the FBI—taking into account the easy passport procedure in Canada—asked the Canadian police to go through their passport applications. They combed 300,000 of them and tipped off Scotland Yard to Sneyd's true identity. Held on charges of possessing false passports and a loaded .38 revolver, Ray's first appearance in London's famed Bow Street Magistrate's Court lasted 82 seconds before he was

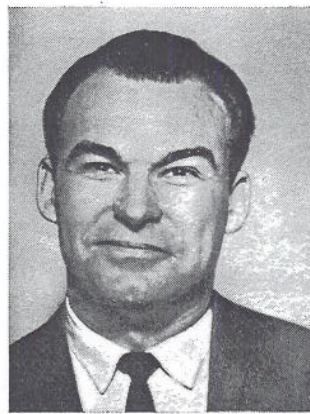
RAY FROM BOW STREET



LONDON DAILY TELEGRAPH



SNEYD



BRIDGMAN



GALT

A way to blend into the wallpaper.

hustled back to a cell. Meanwhile, U.S. Assistant Attorney General Fred Vinson Jr. began the slow, tortuous procedure of extraditing Ray to face a possible death sentence for murder or finish the last 13 years of his 20-year Missouri sentence for robbery. Fighting all the way, Ray's lawyers could delay his return to the U.S. for months.

**Help & Conspiracy.** Ray's elusive odyssey could not fail to suggest that he had had help. Where did the money come from (at times he flashed a roll of \$20 bills)? This, of course, galvanized the artisans of conspiracy theories.

To Crime Buff Truman Capote (*In Cold Blood*), it seemed conceivable that Ray, as well as Lee Harvey Oswald in Dallas and Sirhan Sirhan in Los Angeles, might all be cogs in a single, stupendous murder machine. The killers, Capote suggested on NBC's *Tonight* show, might all have been intensively trained, brainwashed triggermen of a type envisaged by Novelist Richard Condon in *The Manchurian Candidate*; their purpose could be to drive the U.S. to its knees by assassinating public persons—a theory, Capote claimed, that was once expounded by 19th century Theosophist Helena Blavatsky. (Sirhan, Capote noted, asked for a copy of Madame Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine* soon after his arrest.)

More plausibly, Capote argued that a cheap crook with Ray's dismal record of bargain-basement villainy could not have traveled so far without extensive help from experts. In Capote's view, Ray was the low man in an elaborate and many-tiered plot—the pigeon paid to leave his fingerprints on a rifle and then decoy pursuers away from King's real assassin. The plotters allowed Ray to live, Capote hypothesized, because he had no knowledge of the conspiracy's inner core.

**Botched Again.** Law-enforcement men working on the case tend to discount such theories. A senior Justice Department lawyer is conducting an undercover search for leads to a plot among Memphis underworldlings, but local police and FBI agents—who first hunted the suspect as a member of a conspiracy—are working on the assumption that Ray, a known racist and

always a loner in prison, killed alone.

Ironically, after skillfully eluding capture for so many weeks, Ray can be said to have botched his last getaway. He apparently left Lisbon in a hurry because he sensed that the police were on his trail. But under a 60-year-old treaty with the U.S., Portugal—which abolished the death penalty in 1867—will not extradite any criminal sought on a capital charge. Senhor Ray could have stayed there indefinitely.

### Building a Biography

The accused assassin of Robert Kennedy sat passively in his 12-ft. by 12-ft. maximum-security cell at Los Angeles County's Central Jail for Men, reading works on theosophy. Meanwhile, bits and pieces of Sirhan Bishara Sirhan's personality and past began falling into place. Most of the insights came with last week's release of testimony taken by the grand jury, which had convened the day after Kennedy died.

Vincent T. Di Pierro, college student and part-time waiter at the Ambassador Hotel, recalled seeing Sirhan at the moment of the murder. "The minute the first two shots were fired," testified Di Pierro, "he still had a very sick-looking smile on his face. That's one thing—I can never forget that."

Three others in the serving kitchen where Kennedy was shot also testified to seeing Sirhan, who crouched on a tray rack and asked repeatedly if the Senator would come that way. But it was not the innocuous-looking Jordanian that attracted attention; it was a svelte, mysterious girl in a polka-dot dress, who was seen joking with the accused and who reportedly later rushed past stunned campaign workers shouting, "We shot him!" Though a number of publicity-hungry females turned themselves in to police, a worldwide woman hunt had failed to uncover the real Miss Polka Dot.

**Mixed Bag.** Another witness claimed that he had seen Sirhan at a suburban gun club twelve hours before the assassination. Contrary to range policy, which calls for a pause between shots, Sirhan snapped off up to 300 rounds in rapid-fire succession with an Iver Johnson .22-cal. revolver, the same type



as that used in the killing. The Los Angeles County coroner testified that Senator Kennedy was struck with three bullets, rather than two as originally thought. The third landed in back of the right armpit, near the second. The shots had apparently been fired at point-blank range, at least one of them only two or three inches from the victim.

The week also produced a mixed bag of claims from people who said they had some special knowledge of the sullen defendant. A former Castro commandant, José Duarte of Miami, said he had scuffled with Sirhan a month ago in Los Angeles when he heard Sirhan tell a group of leftists: "What the U.S. needs is another Castro." In London, Journalist Jon Kimche, who is known mainly for his sensational anti-Arab diatribes, wrote in the *Evening Standard* that Sirhan had returned to the Middle East twice, in 1964 and 1966. The story was flatly denied by the FBI and State Department. In fact, the peripatetic Sirhan to whom Kimche was alluding may be an American citizen named Sirhan Selim Sirhan, ten years older than the accused and no kin, who frequently visits the Middle East.

**Every Scintilla.** While all this second-guessing was going on, Los Angeles officials were diligently scrutinizing every scintilla of evidence, mindful of the 1963 mess made by their counterparts in Dallas. Twenty-three of L.A.'s top cops have been assigned full time to the case, while a special three-man legal team, whose members have handled 200 homicide cases for the D.A.'s office, will make sure that neither Sirhan's rights nor potential evidence is perjured. Interviewing the defendant are two court-appointed psychiatrists. A trial date will be set at a June 28 hearing, and Sirhan will plead either guilty, no contest, not guilty, or not guilty by reason of insanity.

## RACES

### Black Separatist

Integration has been the aim of the Congress of Racial Equality since CORE was born in 1942. Its intramural squabbles have never been concerned with the principle of desegregation but with its pace. Two years ago, Floyd McKissick replaced Founder James Farmer because he was not moving fast enough. Last week McKissick, in turn, was supplanted by a more aggressive lieutenant. CORE's new chief, however, advocates rigid separation of the races.

Roy Innis, a Harlem-honed black nationalist, will formally replace McKissick next month at CORE's convention in Columbus. Innis, 34, is a bearded manifesto maker who holds that "separation of unlikes is the natural condition of society," and says that blacks generally favor nonviolence, but "not over the achievement of nationalistic objectives." He professes a fear of genocide, not "by the gas chamber but by

BOB ADELMAN



CORE'S INNIS

*Kamikaze, yes; hara-kiri, no.*

the slow taking away of our existence" through racial amalgamation. Appealing to Negroes to improve their own lot rather than die in all-out conflict with the white man, Innis adds nonetheless: "We believe that if we must die, it will not be by hara-kiri but by kamikaze—take as many with us as we can."

By accepting Innis' incendiary view, CORE alienates not only whites but black moderates as well. Thus it joins the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in a militant shift to the left.

## TRIALS

### Cost of Counseling

Pediatrician Benjamin Spock, who is more concerned these days with pacifists than pacifiers, seemed openly to seek arrest in hopes that he could eventually test his crusade against the Viet Nam war before the Supreme Court. Last week at Boston's Federal District Court, he moved closer to that goal. An all-male jury pronounced Spock, 65, guilty of conspiring to counsel and abet young men in evading the draft. Also found guilty: Yale Chaplain William Sloane Coffin Jr., 44, Harvard Graduate Student Michael Ferber, 23, and Writer Mitchell Goodman, 44. The fifth member of "the Boston Five," Marcus Raskin, 34, a former White House disarmament aide, was acquitted.

The trial, which gained notoriety from Spock's presence, had dragged on for 19 days, and would probably have lasted longer had not 85-year-old Judge Francis J. W. Ford pushed the pace by regularly growling, "That's irrelevant." The plethora of evidence gathered by the prosecution included literature and statements, as well as a film of a draft-card burning attended by some of the defendants. The de-

fense sought to counter the conspiracy charge by claiming that the five were acting as individuals (the jury agreed in Raskin's case), and that their approach was a form of free speech.

Coffin greeted the sentence with a droll "I think they have confused the lightning bugs with the lightning." Of the guilty four, draft-age Ferber stands to lose least from the verdict. While appealing the case, he is a free man; had he been let off, he would have faced immediate induction. Presumably, Ferber would have refused to serve, and thereby become liable for prosecution under the Selective Service Act.

## MARYLAND

### Death of a Company Town

Tiny Daniels, Md. (pop. 381), is one of the last examples of that almost vanished bit of Americana, the company town, which once ranged from Western mine and lumber settlements to Southern cotton camps. Somehow, Daniels, nestled in a wooded hollow along a back road eleven miles west of Baltimore, has managed to survive. Its company store, company houses, company-dominated churches and company mill—its *raison d'être*—all remained intact in the age of the megalopolis.

Intact, that is, until last month, when the C. R. Daniels textile company, which wholly owns the 128-year-old community, started demolishing it in line with a decision made last year that it was too expensive to maintain. The \$15-million-a-year mill operation will be unaffected by the policy, since most of those losing their homes are too set in their ways—or too old—to look for new jobs. A good number of the 94 displaced families, accustomed to living in their own homes at \$16-a-month rent, may be forced to move into Baltimore public-housing projects.

Although probably justifiable on economic grounds, the death of Daniels creates a sad and unusual social problem that has prompted several groups to try, unsuccessfully, to save it. Some large families and retired couples will undoubtedly wind up on food stamps and welfare. Oliver Overington, 74, retired from the mill in 1960 and lives with his wife on a company pension of \$6.25 a month and \$1,800 a year in social security. Though their Daniels house had minimal facilities (no hot running water), the Overingtons had taken pains with the painting and papering and were convinced that they would live there the rest of their lives. Last week they moved to a \$75-a-month apartment which they can ill-afford.

At the other end of town lives Richard Landacre, 62, with his wife and grandchild. He makes \$1.60 an hour at the mill, spends much of his leisure time working in his large vegetable garden. "We're both sickly," says Mrs. Landacre. "He takes nine kinds of medicine and me five." Where will they go? "I guess we'll just find a room," she says resignedly, "and sit there."