

CLASSIFICATION NO.

44-561

Volume Number

Serials

Newspaper Clippings

Department of Justice

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DO NOT DESTROY
FOR SELECT COMMITTEE
ON ASSASSINATIONS

BUREAU

INVESTIGATION

Bureau File Number 44-38861

9
Labarta 4-22-68

FORM 10-31713

FBI - CENTRAL RECORDS CENTER

SI - SPRINGFIELD SI-0044-0003B: SI

Class / Case #	Sub	Vol.	Serial #	
0044 561	A	1	1	OPEN

8/08/449113



RRP000RCC9

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

See also Nos.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

FBI Presses Hunt For Galt

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — The FBI pressed one of the most massive manhunts in its history Thursday for shadowy Eric Starvo Galt, charged in the sniper slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

But little more was known publicly about the alleged assassin of the civil rights leader than when his name first arose a week ago. It was learned, however, that a man registered as Eric S. Galt in a Memphis motel a day before King was killed.

Police agencies continued their "no comment" handling of queries-including questions about a newspaper report that the search had spread outside the country, to Mexico or Cuba. And they were silent on any details at all about a man with whom Galt may have conspired in the slaying.

A murder warrant was issued here Wednesday night for the 36-year-old Galt, five hours after the FBI charged him with conspiracy to violate the civil rights of King. The FBI warrant charged him with conspiring with a man "whom he alleged to be his brother."

The FBI said Galt had used the names of Harvey Lowmyer and John Willard. A man registered as "John Willard" checked into the hotel just three hours before King was killed.

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

Page 1

ILLINOIS STATE
JOURNAL

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

Date: 4-19-68

Edition: MORNING

Author:

Editor: ROBERT L. WOODS

Title:

JAMES EARL RAY

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: SI

☐ Being Investigated

44-361-Sub 1-1

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
APR 22 1968	
FBI - SPRINGFIELD	

Robert L. Woods

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

FBI Uncovers Identity Of Alleged King Slayer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The elusive Eric Starvo Galt, who is wanted for the killing of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., was identified by the FBI Friday as a 40-year-old drifter and ex-convict named James Earl Ray.

The FBI said Galt's real identity was traced through "a sys-

tematic and exhaustive search of latent fingerprints" developed in the King case against the fingerprints of more than 53,000 persons for whom wanted notices are on file in the bureau's identification division.

Galt is only one of the names Ray has used in brushes with

the law which began, according to the FBI dossier, when he was 21.

At the time King was shot and killed by a sniper in Memphis, Tenn., April 4, Ray was being sought on a jail breaking charge.

The FBI said he escaped on April 23, 1967, from the Missouri State Penitentiary at Jefferson City, where he was serving a 20-year sentence for armed robbery in St. Louis.

Ray, who is now being sought on a Tennessee murder charge in the King slaying, has an arrest record dating at least to 1949 when he served time in Los Angeles on a burglary charge.

The bureau's dossier on Ray indicates he has been a drifter since he left school in the 10th grade at Alton, Ill.

He has worked as a baker, laborer and color matcher.

In 1952, according to the FBI, he was convicted in Chicago for armed robbery and served two years in Joliet and Pontiac, Ill. state prisons. In 1955, the FBI said, he was convicted of forging U.S. postal money orders in Missouri and was confined to Leavenworth penitentiary until 1958.

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

Page 1

ILLINOIS STATE JOURNAL

Springfield, Illinois

Date: 4-20-68

Edition: Morning

Author:

Editor: Robert L. Woods

Title:

James Earl Ray

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: SI

☒ Being Investigated

*Open Sub File
For Press Clipping
Put all press clippings
in this sub*

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
APR 22 1968	
FBI - SPRINGFIELD	

44-561-Sub A-2



The FBI identified the suspect in the killing of Martin Luther King Jr. as James Earl Ray, an escapee of the Missouri State Prison. Ray is shown when he was arrested in St. Louis for the robbery of a grocery store.—UPI.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Name Change Adds New Twist To Galt Trail

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (AP) — FBI agents have been given a new identification for the man they seek in the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, but

the new identification seems to have muddled even more the mystery of who fired the single shot that killed King here the night of April 4.

The FBI had issued a conspiracy warrant last Wednesday for Eric Starvo Galt. Two days later the agency said a comparison of fingerprints found in the King investigation revealed that Galt in reality was James Earl Ray, a 40-year-old escapee from a Missouri prison.

A murder warrant issued here in Galt's name subsequently was amended to carry the name of Ray.

The second identity was only the latest in a series of puzzles which have surrounded the few known facts of the investigation.

Witnesses who said they saw the alleged assassin run from the flophouse from which the fatal bullet was fired said he appeared to be between 26 and 32 years of age. The FBI's Wednesday announcement said Galt had given his birth date as July 20, 1931 — which would make him 36. Friday the FBI said Ray was 40.

The FBI also said Galt was said to be an avid dancer and took dancing lessons in New Or-

leans in 1964 and 1965, in Birmingham during September and October 1967 and in Long Beach, Calif., from December 1967 to February 1968.

But during the time Galt allegedly took dancing lessons in New Orleans, Ray was serving part of a 20-year term for armed robbery in the Missouri State Penitentiary at Jefferson City.

At the time Galt was attending a bartending school in California, a duplicate Alabama driver's license was mailed to him at a rooming house in Birmingham.

The woman who runs the flophouse here said the man to whom she rented a room just three hours before King was slain had a Southern drawl. The FBI said Galt liked country and Western music and drank beer and vodka.

Galt seemingly was a free spender. Aside from the dancing lessons, which cost him about \$500 in California alone, he paid \$2,000 cash for a white Mustang that is now impounded in Atlanta, and attended the bartending school.

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

PAGE 1

ILLINOIS STATE JOURNAL

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

Date: 4-22-68

Edition:

Author:

Editor: ROBERT L. WOODS

Title:

JAMES EARL RAY, aka,
ERIC STARVO GALT

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: SI

☒ Being Investigated

44-561-Sub A-3

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
APR 23 1968	
FBI - SPRINGFIELD	

Robert W.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Man Wanted In King Slaying Identified As Illinois Native

The Portrait Of A LONER

A loner.

That description, which was applied to Lee Harvey Oswald, the assassin of President Kennedy, is now being used again—in another slaying.

The FBI says the terms fits James Earl Ray, alias Eric Starvo Galt, the target of a massive manhunt in the killing of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Yet Ray is known as an "avid dancer."

The conflicting personality traits were sketched by the FBI as it reported Friday that a "systematic and exhaustive search" through its fingerprint files revealed Galt and the 40-

year-old Ray, a drifter and prison escapee, as the same man.

In its first positive identification of the man hunted in the April 4 assassination of King in Memphis, Tenn., the FBI further pictured Ray as a man in trouble with the law since his youth.

"He should be considered armed and extremely dangerous," the FBI said.

Ray is an Illinois native who has served time in two state prisons and in jails in Chicago, Alton and Quincy.

He was born March 10, 1928, in Alton, the eldest of three children whose father, James, a railroad switchman, died in

1947. His mother, Lucille, died about nine years ago in Quincy, Ill., where she moved after her husband's death.

Melba Ryan, Ray's sister, lives at the Virginia Hotel in Quincy. She told authorities she knew nothing of her brother's whereabouts, but thought he had gone overseas.

Miss Ryan said her name differed from her brother's because her mother changed it after leaving Alton.

Between 1928 and 1955, Ray's record shows he wandered from one end of Illinois to the other, leaving intermittently only to be arrested for crimes elsewhere.

Known to the FBI as an enthusiastic dancer, agents in Chicago recently checked five north and west side dancing schools for information on Ray.

The schools were in areas he was known to have frequented when he lived in Chicago in the early 1950's.

A 10th grade dropout, Ray's arrest record is long and varied. It includes convictions for armed robbery, burglary, auto theft and forgery.

On May 6, 1952, he was arrested in Chicago, and charged with robbing a Yellow Cab driver. He listed his Chicago address then as 853 W. Fullerton St.

Ray pleaded guilty and he was sentenced June 4, 1952, to serve one to two years in Joliet State Prison.

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

Page 1 and 2

ILLINOIS STATE
REGISTER

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

Date: 4-20-68

Edition: EVENING

Author:

Editor: EDWARD H. ARMSTRONG

Title:

JAMES EARL RAY aka
ERIC STARVO GALT

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office:

☒ Being Investigated

44-561-Sub A-4

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
APR 23 1968	
FBI - SPRINGFIELD	

Robert [Signature]

On July 7, 1952, he was transferred to Pontiac State Prison where he was assigned to work in the kitchen, and later was sent to an honor farm kitchen outside the prison walls.

He was turned down once in a bid for parole and was discharged March 24, 1954, having served his full sentence.

Three months later, he was arrested in Alton on a charge of burglarizing a cleaning shop in East Alton. However, an indictment by the Madison County grand jury was removed from the record with leave to reinstate.

Police Chief William H. Petersen in Alton said Ray had a local record dating back to 1949.

Other arrests in Alton were for not having a drivers license in 1951, and vagrancy in 1951 and 1955. Petersen also charged that Ray held up a food store just six blocks from the police station in 1959.

There was no indication the FBI was any closer to catching Ray than it was Wednesday when it put the name Galt on a fugitive warrant charging him "and an individual whom he alleged to be his brother" with conspiring to deprive King of his civil right to travel from state to state.

Ray fled the Missouri Penitentiary—where he was serving the seventh year of a 20-year sentence for a 1959 market holdup and auto theft in St. Louis—on April 23, 1967.

Prison officials, who said a 1966 escape try by Ray was thwarted when he was discovered in a ventilator shaft, indicated he succeeded the next year by hiding in a truck carrying bread from the penitentiary bakery to its honor farms.

The earlier escape attempt landed Ray in a Fulton, Mo., prison hospital facility for a mental checkup.

"We gave him our Grade A, Class I workup," recalled Dr. Donald B. Peterson, hospital superintendent. "We found no mental disease or defect within the law."

But Missouri Penitentiary Warden Harold Swenson said Ray was "an evasive type person. I don't think anybody either liked him or disliked him."

To Alton Police Chief Petersen, Ray was "a dirty-necked thief who slept all day and stole all night. His record is as dirty as he is."

He was a "mean, vindictive individual" to a St. Louis policeman, and to an instructor who taught Ray dancing in Los Angeles, he was a man who had "a way" with people.

The FBI said Eric Starvo Galt was one of a string of aliases favored by Ray in frequent brushes with the law beginning when he was 21.

In addition to the aliases John Willard and Harvey Lowmyer listed on the FBI fugitive warrant, the bureau said Ray has also called himself James Mc-

Bride, James Walton, W. C. Herron and James O'Connor.

John Willard was the name used by the man who checked into a shoddy Memphis rooming house overlooking the Lorraine Motel, where King was fatally shot as he stood on a balcony and talked with friends.

The FBI has said Eric Starvo Galt purchased a 30.06 rifle in Birmingham five days before the assassination. That rifle, with a telescopic sight intact, was recovered outside the rooming house just after the assassination.

The FBI did not make clear where it got the fingerprints which it matched against its files to show Galt is actually Ray.

But speculation was the prints may have been left in the rooming house, on the rifle or on a 1966 white Mustang—since impounded in Atlanta—that witnesses reported seeing leaving the vicinity of the shooting.

While some details remained fuzzy, the portrait sketched by the FBI showed Ray as a rather average-looking ne'er-do-well of conflicting personality traits.

He was described as 5-foot-10, and 163 to 174 pounds, with brown hair, blue eyes and small scars on his forehead and right palm. He's said to have a habit of tugging on an ear when nervous. His left ear protrudes slightly further than his right ear.

Ray was said by authorities to have worked at various times as a laborer, baker and color-matcher. In addition, persons who came in contact with him while he was outside prison said he spoke of having worked as a merchant seaman and riverboat cook.

The FBI said the fugitive's acquaintances called him a loner who likes beer and vodka, fa-

vors country and western music and speaks with a rural twang.

In more obvious conflict was the FBI's Wednesday statement saying Galt "took dancing lessons" in New Orleans in 1964 and 1965—a time when Ray was still imprisoned in Missouri.

A bureau spokesman said, the earlier Galt description should have said he "reportedly" took the dancing lessons, rather than stating flatly that he had.

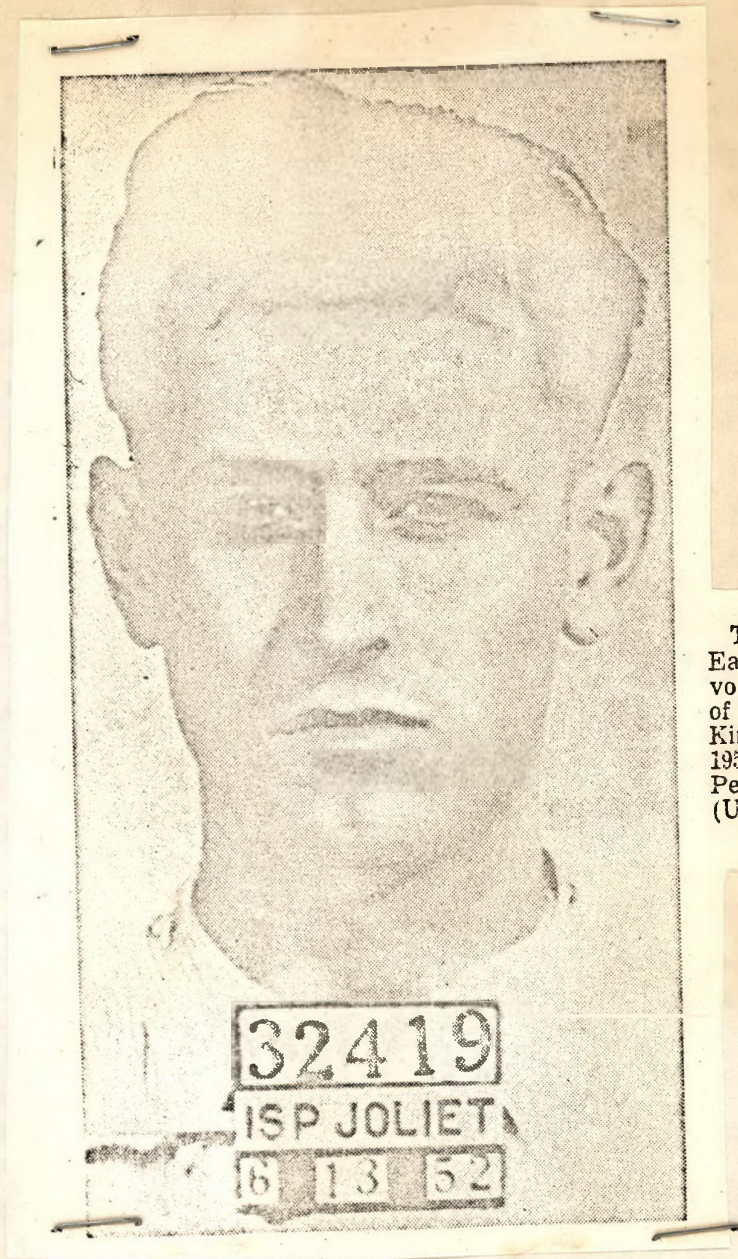
The FBI said Ray was first arrested in 1949 in Los Angeles, where he drew an eight-month jail term for burglary.

All told, the records show Ray has spent 13 years and 5 months behind bars—not counting delinquent on charges of which he wasn't convicted.

Also not included in that total is the three-month stretch at hard labor he received for being drunk and "breaking arrest" while in the Army from February 1946 to December 1948.

The Army washed Ray out on a general discharge, saying he was inept and couldn't adapt to military life.

Today Ray was placed on the FBI's "most wanted" list.



This photo of James Earl Ray, alias Eric Starvo Galt, accused slayer of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., was taken in 1952 at the Illinois State Penitentiary at Joliet. (UPI Facsimile)

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Ray Makes FBI Most Wanted List

WASHINGTON (AP) — What may be the nation's most intensive manhunt gained fresh pressure Saturday when the FBI placed on its "most wanted" list a fugitive convict accused of murder in the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

James Earl Ray, a 40-year-old habitual criminal, is being hunted by police from border to border and beyond for the April 4 sniper slaying in Memphis, Tenn., of the Negro civil rights leader from Atlanta.

The FBI always has limited its list of most wanted criminals to 10 names but Saturday it lengthened this roll of dishonor to 11 by adding Ray, a white loner known also by the name of Eric Starvo Galt and by six other aliases.

In addition to a state first-degree murder warrant issued in Memphis, Tenn., Ray is wanted on federal charges of conspiracy to deny Dr. King his civil rights and of flight to escape confinement. The latter traces to his April 1967 escape from Missouri prison at Jefferson City where he

was starting his eighth year on a 20-year sentence for armed robbery.

In announcing the unprecedented step of adding an 11th name to the "10 most wanted" list, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover announced it was done "to insure the widest possible dissemination of Ray's photograph and description to help effect his earliest possible location."

As usual, the FBI is appealing to the public for help in spotting its man and—as usual — gives implied warning against any effort by a plain citizen to apprehend the criminal unaided.

The official language puts it this way:

"Ray should be considered armed and extremely dangerous. Anyone with information concerning this fugitive is requested to immediately contact the nearest office of the FBI, the telephone number of which may be found on the first page of local telephone directories."

Reportedly a native of Illinois, Ray is described as about 5 feet, 10 inches tall, weighing from 163 to 174 pounds. He has blue eyes and brown hair usually worn short. Forehead and right palm bear small scars. His nose is narrow and straight, teeth even. And he has a noticeably protruding left ear, the lobe of which he reportedly tugs at when nervous.

By way of further help in the search which the FBI described Saturday as "massive and intensive," Ray is reported to speak in a "rural" manner and in a fashion indicating limited education. He is described as neat in dress and as an avid dancer with a taste for vodka and beer.

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

PAGE 1

STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

Date: 4-21-68

Edition: MORNING

Author:

Editor: JOHN P. CLARKE

Title:

JAMES EARL RAY

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: SI

☒ Being Investigated

44-561 Sub A-5

SEARCHED.....	INDEXED.....
SERIALIZED <i>mp</i>	FILED <i>mp</i>
APR 23 1968	
FBI — SPRINGFIELD	

Robert

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

THAT WASN'T RAY WHO JUMPED FROM TRAIN An 'Incident' At Clinton

CLINTON — A man jumped from an Illinois Central freight train — and into temporary trouble here Friday.

He matched the general description of James Earl Ray, hunted in the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The FBI in Springfield—learning the man was on the train—had asked DeWitt County Sheriff Claude Barrett to hold him for questioning.

Barrett said the man identified himself as Paul Stanley Boothby, 36, of Lima, Ohio, and his fingerprints showed he was not Ray.

The freight train was en route from St. Louis to Chicago.

Authorities would not reveal the source which had informed the FBI that Boothby was on the train.

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

Page 1

ILLINOIS STATE
REGISTER

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

Date: 4-20-68

Edition: EVENING

Author:

Editor: EDWARD H.

Title: ARMSTRONG

JAMES EARL RAY, aka
ERIC STARVO GALT

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: SI

☒ Being Investigated

44-561-Sub A-6

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
APR 23 1968	
FBI - SPRINGFIELD	

Roberts

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

DID KING'S ASSASSIN GET \$1 MILLION?

The Bounty Mystery

DALTON, Ga. (UPI)—Fugitive James Earl Ray once said he would collect a "million-dollar bounty" put up by a mysterious "businessmen's association" for the death of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., according to a prison friend.

Ray, an escapee from the Missouri state prison, has been charged with conspiracy and murder in the assassination of King at Memphis April 4.

Raymond Curtis, in jail here awaiting an appeal of a murder conviction, said he had served with Ray in jail once and in prison twice and the matter of King first came up shortly after President Kennedy was assassinated in 1963.

"Well, somebody made a pretty penny on that," Ray told Curtis after hearing of Kennedy's death.

About a week later, in the yard of the Missouri State prison at Jefferson City, a "new man just in off the street" told them "the businessmen's associ-

ation has a million-dollar bounty out for Martin Luther King," Curtis said Tuesday.

He said Ray smiled and said "If there's a million dollars out on King, I believe if I ever get out I'll collect it."

Curtis said the subject of King came up "a couple of times" thereafter. Curtis finally was freed and Ray fled the prison last year by hiding in a bread truck.

Curtis said he had no idea what the "businessman's association" was. Authorities said

Tuesday they were pursuing several reports—some circulating in prisons—that there was a "contract" out for King's death.

"I didn't think much about it at the time," said Curtis. "In prison, you hear all sorts of hellacious ideas." FBI agents have questioned him about his talks with Ray.

Curtis said Ray never mentioned racial matters. "He didn't have any prejudice. He didn't care if a man was white or colored," Curtis said. "He was only interested in money."

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

PAGE 1

ILLINOIS STATE
REGISTER

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

Date: 4-24-68
Edition: EVENING
Author:
Editor: EDWARD H. ARMSTRONG
Title:
JAMES EARL RAY, aka
ERIC STARVO GALT

Character:
or
Classification:
Submitting Office: SI

☒ Being Investigated

44-561-Sub A-7
SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED FILED
APR 25 1968
FBI - SPRINGFIELD



Raymond Curtis, 40, talks with his lawyer on the telephone in Dalton, Ga., after telling newsmen he was in jail three different times with James Earl Ray, accused assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and Ray talked of killing King "for a million-dollar bounty." (UPI Facsimile)

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Justified In King Case

CAN THERE be many Americans who do not know much about Eric Starvo Galt, alias John Willard, alias Harvey Lowmyer and also apparently known as James Earl Ray?

In recent weeks we have learned that this person, sought in connection with the insane slaying of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., is an escaped convict from Missouri.

We have learned through the press and electronics media that he is a hard drinker, likes to dance, has aggressive tendencies, where he lived, the kind of car he drove and where he visited, the guns he purchased, his political leanings, his occupations, what his cellmate thought of him and many other things.

Much of the information represents the hard, traditional work of the press. Much of it, including photographs, was released by law enforcement agencies.

The purpose of this proper volume of information and publicity is to bring Ray before the bar of justice to question him about the slaying of Dr. King.

It is a legitimate purpose, an excellent and traditional co-operative effort between the press and law enforcement. If history is an indicator, the publicity will eventually lead to the arrest and a fair trial for Ray.

Ironically, if more recent history also sets a pattern the informational spigot regarding Ray will be turned off abruptly after he is arrested.

And the authority for the silence likely will be the Reardon Report of the American Bar Association. In that report, the ABA group recommends that law enforcement officers give little more than the name, "rank and serial number" of persons arrested.

The case of Eric Starvo Galt or James Earl Ray is a dramatic one and public interest is high. The public has been asked to co-operate in apprehension of the suspect and has a right to the information.

This does not mean in any sense, however, that Galt-Ray will not be able to get a fair trial in the United States of America. We submit that Americans who have not heard of Ray probably could not be on a jury that eventually hears his case.

We have the utmost faith that he will be able to get an impartial trial on the basis of the evidence submitted in court, regardless of the publicity that is essential for his apprehension.

And when Ray does come to trial the Reardon Report and the American Bar Association's penchant for denying the public its right to know crime news also will be before a jury — the American people.

People should see clearly the illogic of saying a fair trial is not possible with widespread publicity. In the Ray case this is not locking the barn door after the horse is gone. The door was never closed and never should be.

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

Page 12

Illinois State
Journal

Springfield, Illinois

Date: 5-8-68

Edition: Evening Morning

Author:

Editor: Robert L. Woods

Title:

JAMES EARL RAY

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: SI

☒ Being Investigated

144-561-Sub A-8

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED

MAY 10 1968

FBI — SPRINGFIELD

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

FBI Presses Search For King's Assassin

WASHINGTON (AP) — More than a month and a half after the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., FBI agents across the nation are reported still actively searching for the man accused of the killing — James Earl Ray.

FBI headquarters has been silent for weeks on the case, except to say that it still is being actively investigated — and that the bureau is not simply waiting for Ray to turn up some place.

Ray, 40, escaped April 23, 1967, from the Missouri State Penitentiary at Jefferson City where he had served eight years of a 20-year sentence for armed robbery.

The last official statement from the FBI on Ray was a one-paragraph description issued May 7 along with two new photographs of him.

One, said to be the best photo yet made public of Ray, shows him wearing a dark-checked sport jacket. It was taken earlier this year in California. The others, showing Ray wearing dark glasses, was taken last November as he sat in a night club in Mexico.

MEANWHILE, reports continue to appear that Ray has been spotted at a number of places.

Just Thursday, officials in Pottsville, Pa., asked the FBI to supply a dental chart of Ray to determine if he might be a corpse found there.

Although there have been several reports that Ray may be dead, Justice Department officials have pointed out continually that there is no evidence to support or refute this.

There have been several cases in which individuals have been questioned by police, who thought the individuals resembled the description of King's accused assassin.

King was shot to death April 4 as he stood on a balcony of a Memphis motel.

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

Peoria Journal
Star Pg A-3

Date: May 25, 1968

Edition: Evening

Author:

Editor:

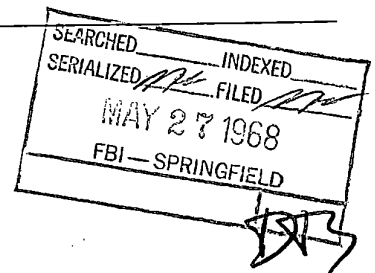
Title:

Character:

or

Classification: 44-561

Submitting Office:



44-561 - Sub A - 9

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Officials Expedite Extradition Of Ray

LONDON (AP) — Asst. U.S. Atty. Gen. Fred M. Vinson Jr., arriving in London to "expedite the extradition" of James Earl Ray, visited the accused killer of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at a heavily guarded police station Sunday, but declined to estimate how long it will take to get him back to the United States.

Talking to newsmen on the steps of the American Embassy, where about 200 persons waited to sign a condolence book for Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, Vinson said: "I would not want to go into any details about court procedure."

Ray, 40, was being kept under tight security at Cannon Row police station in preparation for his appearance Monday morning at Bow Street Magistrate's Court. He will answer there to two charges growing out of his arrest Saturday at Heathrow Airport — traveling under a forged passport and illegal possession of a firearm.

Ray, who disappeared for two months after King's assassination April 4, had a fully loaded

pistol in his hip pocket when immigration officers seized him trying to catch a plane for Brussels while in transit from Lisbon.

Vinson also declined to say if he would seek to extradite Ray on the federal charge of conspiring to deny King his civil rights or on a Tennessee charge that he murdered King.

In Memphis, Tenn., where King was killed, Phil M. Canale, Shelby County attorney general, said Ray would be returned to stand trial for first-degree murder with all "deliberate speed."

A U.S. Embassy spokesman said Vinson talked during the day with Thomas Butler, Scotland Yard's ace detective who worked on the Ray case, about speeding up procedures and setting a timetable for Ray's transfer to the United States.

The suspect was booked under the name of Ramon George Sneyd, the name which appeared on his false Canadian passport, but the Justice Department said he definitely was Ray.

An American Embassy official said Ray's extradition papers would include "all his known aliases," and that the name Sneyd would raise no problems in that respect.

The narrow street leading to Cannon Row police station, about 200 yards from the House of Parliament, was deserted Sunday, in marked contrast to the crowd which milled there after word of Ray's arrest was announced Saturday.

The iron gates leading to the station and the former headquarters of Scotland Yard were open and guarded by a pair of tall London bobbies. They denied entrance to newsmen, saying: "The desk sergeant is not available."

Hundreds of tourists passed by the entrance to Cannon Row, but none was seen venturing down the narrow street. Police signs blocked the path of automobiles.

Ray was seized by immigration officials at Heathrow

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

Page 1 & 4

ILLINOIS STATE JOURNAL

Springfield, Illinois

Date: 6-10-68

Edition: Morning

Author:

Editor: Robert L. Woods

Title:

James Earl Ray

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: SI

☒ Being Investigated

44-561-Sub B

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JUN 11 1968	
FBI — SPRINGFIELD	

TC

port after he stopped over at 6:40 a.m. Saturday on a British European Airways jet from Lisbon. He was headed for Brussels.

At the immigration barrier for transit passengers, officials asked Ray to enter their office "for further inquiries" on suspicion that his Canadian passport was false.

Searching him they found the loaded revolver.

Police made their formal arrest at 11:15 a.m. five hours after Ray's arrival. But they kept a close security clamp on him and repeatedly denied that they were holding him even after the announcement of his arrest came from Washington.

Scotland Yard confirmed the arrest later but a police statement gave the arrested man's name only as Ramon George Sneyd.

Chief Inspector Butler said: "Although the man claims to be Sneyd, his physical description is in fact identical to that of James Earl Ray."

Vinson told newsmen at London airport earlier that people

in America were "delighted" at Ray's arrest and that was greeted with "a great feeling of relief."

"We have been looking for him for a long time," Vinson said.

Vinson was asked whether he would apply for a voluntary or a compulsory extradition order.

"The easiest way is always the best one," he replied.

He gave the impression he did not anticipate any difficulty or much delay in bringing Ray back to the United States for trial.

It was learned that Ray had

flown from Canada to London May 6 with a round-trip ticket but cashed in the return portion in exchange for passage to Lisbon and went right on to Portugal getting off in the British Capital.

The FBI, with the help of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, had picked up Ray's trail in Canada — apparently after he left — and officers satisfied themselves a few days ago that the man bearing a passport in Sneyd's name was Ray.

It then became a matter of intercepting the bearer of the passport.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Scotland Yard Seizes James Ray In London

By L. EDGAR PRINA
Copley News Service

WASHINGTON — James Earl Ray, alleged killer of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., was seized Saturday by New Scotland Yard detectives at London airport.

The detention of the 40-year-old Ray, an escaped convict, was announced here by Attorney General Ramsey Clark and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover. It ended a 65-day global manhunt for the suspect.

King was felled by a rifle shot while standing on the balcony of a motel in Memphis, Tenn., on April 4.

At the time of his seizure, on charges of carrying a concealed, loaded revolver and fraudulent passports, Ray was enroute from Lisbon, Portugal to Brussels, Belgium.

Ray, who also used the name of Eric Starvo Galt and other aliases, was traveling under the name of Ramon George Sneyd and had two Canadian passports in that name in his possession, Hoover said.

The suspect was picked up as he was being processed through British immigration at 11:15 a.m. London time (6:15 a.m. EDT) and submitted to arrest without a struggle.

Hoover reported that Ray was being held at London's Cannon Row police station under maximum security conditions. Ray will have a hearing on the British charges Monday.

According to state department officials, extradition proceedings are not expected to begin before Monday.

It was not immediately clear whether the federal government or the state of Tennessee would initiate the action. The attorney general of Tennessee could begin the proceedings and the state department would then formally request extradition under a 1935 bilateral treaty with

The Shelby County Grand Jury in Memphis indicted Ray for first degree murder of King on May 7.

On April 17, the FBI filed a complaint in Birmingham, Ala., charging Ray, under the name of Eric Starvo Galt, with conspiring to violate King's civil rights. Three days later, the FBI added him to its "most wanted" fugitives list.

Fingerprints led to the FBI determination that Galt and Ray were one and the same man and an exhaustive passport photo search led to the suspect's arrest in London.

Hoover announced April 19 that a search of latent fingerprints uncovered in the King case against those of the more than 53,000 persons for whom "wanted notices" had been posted in the files of the FBI's identification division led to the determination that Galt and Ray were identical.

The break that led to Ray's capture Saturday came after an examination of at least 100,000 passport photos here and in Ottawa, Canada.

Shortly after the King assassination, the FBI launched its search of U.S. passports issued since April 4. It turned up nothing. It was known, however, that Ray once had visited Canada, and, so, the FBI asked the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to start a similar examination in Ottawa.

Some days ago, a Canadian passport bearing Ray's picture, but under the name Ramon George Sneyd, was found. There is a real Raymond George Sneyd in Toronto — and he is a 35-year-old city policeman — and authorities quickly deter-

mined that he knew nothing of the passport application.

Ray (alias "Sneyd") was traced to a rooming house in Toronto where he arrived April 8, according to officials.

He later arranged with a travel agency to obtain the passport and a roundtrip airline ticket to London. The passport was issued April 24.

Ray flew to the British capital May 6 and promptly turned in for cash the other half of his ticket and bought passage to Lisbon. While in Portugal, on May 16, he obtained a second Canadian passport.

After the passport break of a few days ago, an alert went out to Portuguese and British officials and airline employees to be on the lookout for anyone with a Canadian passport bearing the name Ramon George Sneyd. Yesterday morning, the hunt ended.

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

Page 1 & 2

STATE JOURNAL -
REGISTER

Springfield, Illinois

Date: 6-9-68

Edition: Sunday

Author: L. Edgar Prina

Editor: John P. Clarke

Title:

James Earl Ray

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: SI

☒ Being Investigated

SEARCHED INDEXED
SERIALIZED FILED
JUN 10 1968
FBI — SPRINGFIELD

44-561-Sub A-11
44-561-266

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

ACCUSED ASSASSIN OF MARTIN LUTHER KING

James Earl Ray Captured In London

WASHINGTON (UPI)—James the United States will be ~~man~~ who had posed as Eric Starvo Galt on the West Coast and in Memphis prior to the murder.

Earl Ray, the accused assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., The FBI said one of the passports Ray was carrying had been issued April 24 in Ottawa, He had previously been by Scotland Yard detectives, the Canada. The other had been hunted by the FBI for escaping Justice Department announced. issued May 16 by the Canadian from Missouri State Penitentiary at Jefferson City on April 23, 1967. He was serving a 20-year sentence for armed robbery when he escaped by concealing himself in a truck.

Atty. Gen. Ramsey Clark said Embassy in Lisbon, Portugal. Ray was carrying two Canadian passports under the name of as he passed through British Ramon George Sneyd. FBI immigration, planning to fly to director J. Edgar Hoover said Brussels, Belgium.

the hunted man was armed with He was reportedly wearing a fully loaded pistol when he glasses and attired in a light colored raincoat over grey trousers and a sports jacket. A native of Illinois, Ray had served previous jail sentences in Los Angeles, Illinois state prisons in Joliet and Pontiac and the Federal Penitentiary in Leavenworth, Kan.

His capture ended an intensive 65-day manhunt that began when King was killed by a rifle shot as he stood on a motel balcony in Memphis, Tenn. Ray was placed on the FBI's list of 10 most wanted criminals on an emergency basis on April 20—16 days after the civil rights leader was assassinated.

Hoover said extradition proceedings for Ray's return to

Tenn. The 40-year-old fugitive was identified by fingerprints as the

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

Page 1

ILLINOIS STATE
REGISTER

Springfield, Illinois

Date: 6-8-68
Edition: Evening
Author:
Editor: Edward H.
Title: Armstrong

James Earl Ray
Character:

or
Classification:
Submitting Office: SI

☒ Being Investigated

44-561-663

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SERIALIZED	FILED
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FBI — SPRINGFIELD	

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44-561-Sub A-172

baker, laborer and color matcher. While on the West Coast early this year, he took a course as a bartender at a Los Angeles school.

Hoover said Ray was detained by British authorities as a result of his use of fraudulent passport and on the fact that he was carrying the concealed weapon.

Ray was born in Alton, Ill., on March 10, 1928.



(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

ACCUSED KILLER OF DR. KING MAY OPPOSE EXTRADITION

Ray Hints At Legal Battle

By Fred Coleman

LONDON (AP) — James Earl Ray made a two-minute appearance in Bow Street Court today and indicated he would fight the U.S. government's attempt to seek his extradition in connection with the charge that he killed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

London's chief magistrate ordered Ray held without bail for another court appearance on June 18.

There was no mention during the brief preliminary hearing of extradition. But Ray asked the court to appoint an attorney for

him, and this was taken as an indication that he would fight being returned to America.

American legal officials said they were going ahead with the extradition process and hoped to return Ray to the United States "very soon."

The 40-year-old escaped convict, who had been on the run since the Negro civil rights leader was killed April 4 in Memphis, Tenn., was arraigned under the alias of Ramon George Sneyd and was charged with carrying a false passport and a loaded revolver without a license.

A heavy police escort brought

Ray secretly to the court three hours before the preliminary hearing was to begin. A crowd of about 300 laid siege to the courtroom later, and everyone entering it was searched for weapons.

Ray had been under heavy guard since his arrest Saturday. Ray's dark hair was flecked with gray at the temples, and his face was tanned.

A government prosecutor asked that Ray be held in custody, and the judge granted Ray's application request that the court appoint a lawyer for him.

Then he was taken away by a

(Continued On Page 2, Col. 1)

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

Page 1 and 2

ILLINOIS STATE
REGISTER

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

Date: 6-10-68

Edition: evening

Author: FRED COLEMAN

Editor: EDWARD H. ARMS-

Title: TRONG

JAMES EARL RAY

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: SI - 44-561

☒ Being Investigated

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JUN 14 1968	
FBI - SPRINGFIELD	

44-561-Sub A-13

(Continued From Page 1)
large force of plainclothesmen and uniformed police.

Ray had been in Canada, Portugal and Britain before the two-month hunt ended with his arrest at London airport. Informed sources gave credence to reports that he had been hiding out in London since mid-May.

One report was that when picked up he was bound for Brussels, hoping to contact recruiters for mercenary forces in Africa.

Few leads on people who might have had contact with Ray or helped him were turning up, but the police in Toronto, where he spent a month, were checking a lead from the owner of a boarding house where he stayed.

Mrs. Sun Loo said she saw a "fat man" pass a small envelope to Ray about four days before he flew to London May 6. She said she could not give a detailed description of the man and did not know what was in the envelope. Ray got the envelope on the day his rent was due and the day he paid \$345 for an excursion flight ticket to London.

Ray arrived in Portugal May 8 where he stayed in the Hotel Portugal until May 17 paying just over \$2 a day for his room on the first floor. Staff at the hotel recall that he was generally out of his room 15 or 16 hours a day.

Ray is wanted on a Tennessee charge of murder, a federal charge of conspiring to deny King his civil rights, and a Missouri charge that he escaped from prison there on April 23, 1967.

U.S. Asst. Atty. Gen. Fred M. Vinson Jr. flew to London and spoke with Ray in his cell Sunday, but in Washington Atty. Gen. Ramsey Clark said Ray had made no statement.

Clark said he could not estimate how soon Ray might be returned to the United States. It is possible, he said, that Ray might waive extradition or that he might be deported.

If extradition is necessary, legal sources in London said, the

Bow Street Court would require material evidence showing a case against Ray. The procedure normally would take two or three weeks, but if Ray fought the case, it could take much longer.

Scotland Yard said Ray was apprehended as he was about to

board a plane for Brussels and was found to be carrying a loaded revolver.

He was arrested under the name of Ramon George Sneyd, the name on his Canadian passport, but the Justice Department in Washington said the man definitely was Ray.



In photo at left, crowds surge forward to enter Bow Street Police Court in London where James Earl Ray, accused assassin of Dr. Martin Luther King, was arraigned today on British gun and passport violations. Right photo shows picture Ray used in Canadian passport application. (UPI Facsimile)



(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Britain Digs Into Ray Mystery

LONDON (AP) — Scotland Yard delved today into the mysteries of James Earl Ray's stay in Britain as U.S. officials worked on their case for the extradition of the man accused of killing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Ray has been traced to two London hotels between May 28 and his arrest Saturday, but there is an unexplained gap of about 10 days, starting May 17 when he left Lisbon.

FBI agents were understood to be working with Scotland Yard detectives, but British police are doing the spadework since the FBI has no legal authority in foreign countries. Police on both sides of the Atlantic are trying to untangle Ray's travels, which took him to Canada, Britain and Portugal after King was shot April 4.

Ray was transferred Tuesday to a maximum security cell in Wandsworth Prison because Brixton Jail on London's South Side, was not considered secure enough.

Extradition proceedings could last two months if the 40-year-old escaped convict fights all the way through the British courts.

As a first step, American authorities have obtained a provisional British warrant charging Ray with the murder of King in Memphis, Tenn. A State Department spokesman in Washington

said documents to support the extradition request "will be transmitted to London shortly."

The British police are holding Ray on charges of using a forged passport and carrying a loaded gun. On Scotland Yard's records he is officially listed as Ramon George Sneyd, the name on his Canadian passport.

U.S. officials have not tried to question Ray to avoid legal complications resulting from Supreme Court decisions in recent years. And now that he has been charged under British law, Scotland Yard cannot interrogate him outside a courtroom.

While British police were trying to ascertain whether Ray had any contacts in London, detectives in Toronto were searching for a short blond man who reportedly came looking for Ray in a rooming house three or four days after the suspect flew to London.

The landlady, Mrs. Fela Szpakowski, told police about the caller, the second Ray reportedly had during his month-long stay in Toronto after the assassination of King. The first was an unidentified fat man who was reported to have called on Ray at another rooming house.

Mrs. Szpakowski said the blond caller presented a police identification card, but both the Mounted Police and the Toronto police said he was not a policeman.

The Atlanta, Ga., Constitu-

tion, in a copyright article, said that an apartment manager in the Southern city's hippie district reported a man using the name Eric Starvo Galt stayed in his building for more than a week prior to the slaying of King. The name is one of the aliases under which Ray was sought by the FBI.

The manager said the man "looked more like a preacher than a convict."

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

Page 3

Illinois State Register

Springfield, Illinois

Date: 6-12-68
Edition: Evening

Author:
Editor: Edward H. Arms-
Title: trong

James Earl Ray

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: Si 44-561*

☐ Being Investigated

SEARCHED	INDEXED
SERIALIZED	FILED
JUN 14 1968	
FBI - SPRINGFIELD	

44-561-Sub A-14

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

U.S. Legal Experts Push Plan To Extradite Ray

LONDON (AP) — U.S. legal experts worked today on plans to take James Earl Ray quickly and safely back to the United States for trial while police on both sides of the Atlantic continued their investigation to learn whether Ray had help in his four-nation flight.

American authorities took the first formal step toward extradition Monday night by obtaining a provisional British warrant charging Ray with the murder of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Some legal experts suggested the British government might speed up the process by deporting Ray as an undesirable alien. But other lawyers said there is a strong tradition against using this procedure as a substitute for extradition.

The 40-year-old escaped convict was held in Brixton Prison after his two-minute appearance Monday in Bow Street Court on charges of carrying a forged passport and a loaded gun, the charges on which he was arrested at London Airport Saturday under the name of Ramon George Sneyd.

Ray at his first court appear-

ance Monday was assigned a British lawyer at his own request and ordered held without bail for another hearing June 18 on the passport and gun charges.

If extradition proceedings are brought, the court will require evidence of a case against Ray and he will then have 15 days to appeal to the High Court. If Ray's lawyers raised points of law there, a further appeal might be made to the House of Lords and the process could take months.

In the two months American authorities searched for Ray following King's assassination April 4 in Memphis, Tenn., he went from the United States to Canada on April 8, to London May 6 and to Lisbon May 8. He left his Lisbon hotel on May 17 and surfaced again in London on May 28.

Police in those countries sought anyone who might have known or helped Ray, and authorities in Canada also tried to learn how Ray obtained information on the three Toronto men whose names he used as aliases.

All three men have dark hair and are about the same height and weight as Ray.

Ramon George Sneyd, whose name Ray used on his passport, is a Toronto constable. Paul Bridgman, whose name Ray used at one Toronto rooming house, is a consultant teacher with the Toronto board of education.

Ray first was sought under the name Eric Starvo Galt. Eric St. Vincent Galt, a Toronto warehouse foreman, has a signature which looks like Eric Starvo Galt. He uses the middle initials St. V., but with small zeros instead of periods.

Galt and Ray have similar scars, in the middle of the forehead and on the palm of the right hand.

"I don't know what to think," Galt said. "It's a bit more than coincidence. The weight is right, the height range is right and the identification marks are there."

"I've wondered where our paths might have crossed, but I just don't know."

Galt said he was in the Memphis area two years ago and that he traveled regularly to Florida for skin diving in the summer.

Ray, however, was in the Missouri state prison until he escaped in April 1962 with more than 12 years remaining of a

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

Page 2

ILLINOIS STATE
REGISTER

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

Date: 4-11-68
Edition: Evening
Author: Collin Frost
Editor: Edward H. Arms-
Title: trong
JAMES EARL RAY

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: SI 44-5618

☒ Being Investigated

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SERIALIZED	FILED
JUN 14 1968	
FBI - SPRINGFIELD	

44-561-Sub A-15

~~20-year sentence. Missouri also~~
seeks Ray's extradition from Britain on the prison break charge. If he is returned to the United States, the Tennessee murder charge is expected to be given precedence over the Missouri charge and a federal charge that Ray conspired to violate Dr. King's civil rights.

Police believe Ray was the man who checked into a Montreal rooming house last summer under the name of Galt. Galt said he was not in Montreal last summer and that FBI agents told him he was the only Eric S. Galt in Canada.

Canadian police also were checking a report by Mrs. Yee Sun Loo, owner of a Toronto rooming house where Ray stayed, that a "fat man" passed an envelope to Ray on May 2, the day he paid \$345 for an excursion flight ticket to London.

A spokesman for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police said preliminary investigation indicated the man may not have known Ray and may just have been making a delivery.

"Every effort is being made to trace this man, but so far ~~there is no~~ indication as to who he is," the spokesman said.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Conflicting Reports Befog James Earl Ray's Activities

LONDON (UPI)—The mysterious activities in Europe of James Earl Ray, wanted for the murder of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., were clouded in a fog of conflicting reports Tuesday.

While U.S. officials swiftly gathered documents to present a formal request Wednesday or Thursday for Ray's extradition to the United States, both American and British officials declared a news blackout on the enigma of the much-travelled fugitive.

Officials confirmed Tuesday only that Ray had been transferred from ancient Brixton Prison to the maximum security wing at Wandsworth Prison. Two policemen were posted inside Ray's prison cell at all times.

Scotland Yard detectives fanned out across London, interviewing hotel keepers where Ray stayed under the alias of Ramon Sneyd and confiscating registration records.

In an effort to determine if he had any contacts in this city.

Indications were Ray had no contacts in London. Hotels reported he seldom ventured from his rooms and received no phone calls, mail or visitors before his arrest at the London airport last Saturday on a tip from the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation that he was the alleged King assassin.

Because officials offered no explanations for fear pre-trial leaks would prejudice a case against Ray, the London press was in an uproar over the mystery.

The two versions of Ray's movements circulated here were:

—Ray arrived in London from Canada around May 5, flew to Lisbon May 7 and returned June 8 to London to make a connecting flight to Brussels. He was arrested after he walked into the airport transit lounge and questioned for three hours. This version was furnished by police sources within minutes of the announcement of Ray's arrest and continued to be supplied by the FBI in Washington after local evidence

to the contrary appeared here.

—Ray returned from Lisbon to London May 17 and stayed in at least two small hotels until he was arrested at the airport en route to Brussels. But passengers leaving England would not go through the transit lounge, although officials insisted that was where he was apprehended.

Reports circulated Ray had gone to Lisbon and planned to travel to Brussels to pick up money transferred to him from a Swiss bank. Lisbon banks were said to have been asked by Scotland Yard to check all

new accounts and transfers. Unanswered was who had opened any accounts, when and why.

Meanwhile, American officials ordered documents from Missouri, Tennessee and other points to try to establish airtight proof that the sullen man called Sneyd really was James Earl Ray.

Informed legal sources said the American file would include FBI copies of Ray's fingerprints and an account of his mysterious movements from King's assassination last April until his arrest last Saturday.

American case also will include depositions from persons who saw the alleged assassin shortly before King was shot in Memphis.

As a safety measure, U.S. officials also plan to file a formal request for Ray's extradition on a Missouri bank robbery charge. Ray had served 7 years of a 20-year sentence for the theft when he escaped from prison last year.

If Ray fights extradition and tries all appeals under British law, it could take from one to three months to return him to America.

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

PAGE 4

ILLINOIS STATE JOURNAL

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

Date: 6-12-68

Edition: Morning

Author:

Editor: Robert L. Woods

Title:

James Earl Ray

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: SI 44-561X

☒ Being Investigated

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SERIALIZED	FILED
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FBI - SPRINGFIELD	

44-561-Sub A-16

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Ray Documents Go To Britain

WASHINGTON (UPI) — The State Department said Tuesday it will send documentation to Great Britain shortly in support of its request for extradition of the accused slayer of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

A State Department spokesman said documentation has arrived at the Justice Department from both Tennessee and Missouri for the proceedings involving James Earl Ray.

The spokesman said the documents would be sent to London shortly, possibly by special diplomatic pouch.

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

Page 3

ILLINOIS STATE
JOURNAL

SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

Date: 6-12-68

Edition: Morning

Author:

Editor: Robert L. Woods

Title:

James Earl Ray

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: SI

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SERIALIZED	FILED
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FBI - SPRINGFIELD	

44-561-Sub A-17

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

FBI wrongdoings

need airing

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

— Page 6

— Metro-East Journal

— East St. Louis, Ill.

Date: 12/2/75

Edition:

Author:

Editor: RICHARD L. STEGEMAN

Title:

MURKIN

Character:

or

Classification: 44-561-Sub A-18

Submitting Office: SI

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FBI - SPRINGFIELD	

*original sent
to Bureau
12/4/75
JH*

THE WIDOW of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King says she believes "there are grounds for reopening" an investigation into the slaying of her husband seven years ago.

"I don't have the facts," Coretta King said late last week, "but at this stage I say it appears there was a conspiracy in the death of my husband."

Other prominent civil rights leaders, many of whom were close to the Rev. Dr. King, are similarly calling for a new probe.

And Atty. Gen. Edward Levi now says that he also thinks there is merit in another investigation. He has ordered Justice Department lawyers to re-examine the FBI investigation.

Civil rights leaders have been

suspicious almost from the moment the Rev. Dr. King was slain that all the evidence has not been made available to the American public on what happened that infamous 1968 day on a motel balcony in Memphis, Tenn. There has been much skepticism that James Earl Ray, who pleaded guilty to the killing but now seeks another trial, really was a lone assassin even though that may be true.

The renewed federal interest is a new development. But it is understandable because of recent disclosures by the Senate Intelligence Committee that the FBI and its late director J. Edgar Hoover engaged in a deplorable harassment campaign against the Rev. Dr. King.

Mr. Hoover appears to have

had a personal vendetta against, and a deeply felt hatred for, the Rev. Dr. King and all that he symbolized for so many millions of people around the world and in the United States. FBI aides and agents beholden to Mr. Hoover went along with orders to attempt to discredit and defame the Rev. Dr. King. Apparently, the FBI even had plans to seek to replace the civil rights leader with a black man of their own choosing once the object of Mr. Hoover's hatred had been brought to his knees.

Knowledge of such secret and possibly illegal activities aimed at a pivotal figure in the American civil rights movement by an agency of government means to us that there is more than sufficient reason to take another look at the

circumstances surrounding the assassination and the subsequent FBI investigation.

But we are not satisfied that the Justice Department should be in charge, for the FBI is a part of the department. There is a chance there still are individuals and coalitions within the FBI and the department who might not wish to be entirely honest about the depth and reliability of the investigation. This might evolve into a situation of having new charges of a cover-up, for the FBI could in effect be investigating itself.

A better approach to reviewing the case of the slaying of the Rev. Dr. King would be to have a special committee of the Congress take charge. Such a committee could hire its own investigators, subpoena relevant witnesses and demand answers from agencies such as the FBI and departments such as Justice.

We urge congressional leaders to respond quickly by appointing a special investigate panel.

The findings and recommendations, whatever they are, of such a group would be more reliable and more believable than would conclusions resulting from in-house probes by the Justice department and the FBI.

At the same time, we urge the Justice Department to hasten its investigation of whether criminal charges should be brought against FBI agents involved in the agency's long campaign against the Rev. Dr. King. And we renew our recommendation to the Senate Intelligence Committee that it soon offer legislative remedies which will guard against future defiance by governmental agencies of the basic First Amendment freedoms of every American.

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

FBI cleared in M. L. King assassination

A Justice Department task force found no evidence that the FBI was implicated in the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and concluded that the FBI investigation of the assassination was thorough and honest.

The task force today released a report of its findings after reviewing more than 200,000 FBI documents and interviewing about 40 witnesses.

Former Atty. Gen. Edward Levi launched the probe to clear up questions about the FBI harassment of the civil rights leader and the investigation of his death.

The task force said the evidence virtually rules out the possibility of a conspiracy to kill King, who was shot on a motel balcony in Memphis on April 4, 1968.

The evidence indicates that James Earl Ray, who was arrested and pleaded guilty to the crime, acted alone, the task force said.

"The sum of all of the evidence of Ray's guilt points to him so exclusively that it most effectively makes the point that no one else was involved," he report said.

"Of course, someone could conceivably have provided him with logistics or even paid him to commit the crime. However, we have found no competent evidence upon which to base such a theory."

The task force said the FBI conscientiously checked out leads suggesting a conspiracy but "the results were negative."

The task force "has concluded that the investigation by the FBI to ascertain and capture the murderer of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., was thoroughly, honestly and successfully conducted," the report said. "We found no new evidence which calls for action by state or federal authorities."

The task force members also said they "found no evidence of any complicity" in the assassination by the FBI or the Memphis Police Department.

However, the FBI failed to check some leads which might have erased some still lingering mysteries about the case, the report said.

This included indications that one or both of Ray's brothers helped him escape in 1967 from the Missouri State Prison.

The FBI learned about that possibility after Ray was captured in England on June 8, 1968, but failed to check it out because it was apparently considered unimportant then, the task force said.

The report said it was understandable that the FBI concentrated on learning the killer's identity and catching him and bypassed some leads about his activities prior to the assassination.

As for the FBI's efforts to harass King and discredit him as a civil rights leader, the task force called the campaign clearly improper but recommended against prosecution of anyone involved.

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

Page 13

Metro-East
Journal

East St. Louis,
Ill.

Date: 2/18/77
Edition:
Author:
Editor: R. L. STEGEMAN
Title: MURKIN

Character:
or 44-561
Classification:
Submitting Office: SI
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FEB 23 1977	
FBI - SPRINGFIELD	

*Original Sent
To Bureau
2/21/77
JH*

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