

## SUSPECT'S SISTER BLAMES HIS FRIEND

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### **Body**

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The sister of a man charged in a string of bank robberies in the Midwest said her brother tried to go straight but had the bad influence of another robbery suspect.

Peter K. Langan, 37, was arrested Jan. 18 in Columbus and is in the Franklin County Jail. Richard Lee Guthrie Jr., 37, was arrested on Jan. 15 in Cincinnati. He is in a Covington, Ky., jail.

Langan, Guthrie and a third man are suspected in 18 robberies dating from January 1994 in Ohio, Iowa, Wisconsin, Missouri, Nebraska, Kansas and Kentucky.

Langan and Guthrie are charged in two of the robberies. **Jim Thompson**, whose last address was in Pittsburg, Kan., is wanted by the FBI in the robberies.

Langan's criminal record dates back 20 years. He was 16 when he was sentenced to five years in a Florida prison with adult criminals for robbing a man of \$ 78.

"When he got out, I thought he had kept his nose clean," his sister, Leslie Maloney, told **The Columbus Dispatch** for an article published Sunday.

But he continued to get in trouble, often with Guthrie, his childhood friend. Charges included receiving stolen property, robbery and weapons violations.

Langan moved in with his sister in 1988, working as a handyman and baby-sitting his sister's children while she worked at night.

But in 1992, Langan was charged with receiving stolen property while Guthrie was visiting, she said.

"I can understand now why people say, 'The person I know would never do something like that,' " she said.

Langan, Guthrie and Norman H. Smith became friends in 1964 when they all lived in Wheaton, Md. But a falling out between Smith and Guthrie in 1991 ended the trio's friendship.

"Peter tried real hard to make it (straight)," Smith told the newspaper Friday from a Maryland prison. He is serving six years for assault and larceny.

"But Guthrie was around to influence him and draw him down his path," he said.

During an interview with the FBI, Smith called Langan "a brother" and Guthrie a "sociopath."

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"He was a malcontent on a sacred mission to fight against the system in any way and all costs," Smith said.

Guthrie is suspected of making threats against President Bush in 1992. His criminal record includes grand theft, robbery and weapons charges.

In a 1991 search of Guthrie's motel room, officials discovered a pair of night-vision goggles worth more than \$ 1,000 that had been stolen from Fort Bragg, N.C., where Guthrie had served in the Navy.

Federal agents have told Maloney that the robberies netted about \$ 250,000 and were financing a white supremacy group. Agents are trying to determine the extent of Langan's and Guthrie's connection to right-wing extremist groups and unorganized militias.

On a form filed in a federal court, Langan listed his occupation as a "revolutionary." He has said that he is Commander Pedro of the Aryan Republican Army.

FBI spokesman Ed Boldt told the newspaper that the agency had not heard of the Aryan Republican Army, "but that's not to say it doesn't exist."

## Classification

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