

ENTERTAINMENT FOR MEN

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PLAYBOY

PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: H. L. HUNT

a candid conversation with the ultra-right-wing texas multibillionaire

"As rich as Croesus, as shrewd as a river-boat gambler, as tight as a new pair of shoes" . . . "an alchemist under whose hand everything turns to gold or to controversy" . . . "king of the wildcatters" . . . "last of the real individualists"—these are some of the kinder descriptions of Dallas multibillionaire Haroldson Lafayette Hunt, who even J. Paul Getty concedes is the richest man in the world. Some of the unkind descriptions: "It isn't just that Hunt is to the right of McKinley; he thinks communism started in this country when the Government took over distribution of the mail" . . . "If he had more flair and imagination, if he weren't basically such a damned hick, he could be one of the most dangerous men in America."

While Hunt's enemies of the center and left see him as the sugar daddy of the right, his compatriots on the right grumble that he's free with his advice but not with his cash. An archconservative adversary of liberalism, he voted for John F. Kennedy in 1960. A registered Democrat, he supported Barry Goldwater in 1964. Thus, to friend and foe alike, the 77-year-old billionaire is an irritating enigma. No one—not even his own family—professes to understand him; no one—not even the partners he's made rich—seems to have any idea what drove him to amass his vast fortune; and no one—not even Hunt himself—seems able to explain just what he's trying to accomplish in the political arena.

Perhaps the best clue to the Hunt rid-

dle is his improbable life. Born and bred on a 500-acre farm near Ramsey, Illinois, the youngest of eight children in a prosperous family, he could read and write at three and was adept at the subjects taught in grade school by the time he was old enough to attend—thanks to the tutelage of his mother, the well-bred daughter of a Union Army chaplain whose forebears were French royalty. But he never went to grade school—except during recess periods to play with his friends.

By the time he turned 15, the bucolic charm of farm life had begun to pall, and young "June" (for Junior) packed a saddlebag and set out to seek his fortune. He found it—in spades—but for the first few years, flophouses and hobo jungles were his home, and freight cars his transportation as he roamed the West from one odd job to another: dishwasher, cowboy, lumberjack, laborer, sheepherder, carpenter, mule-team driver. But his main source of livelihood during this picaresque period was his extraordinary skill with a deck of cards. At one point in his wanderings, he hummed a train ride to Valparaiso, Indiana, where, on a whim, he talked his way into some courses at what is now Valparaiso University; within weeks he ranked second in his class, though most of his time was spent on poker, not on study. Quitting after three months, however, he hit the road again, returning to Illinois to run the farm when his father died in 1911. But he didn't stay long. His father

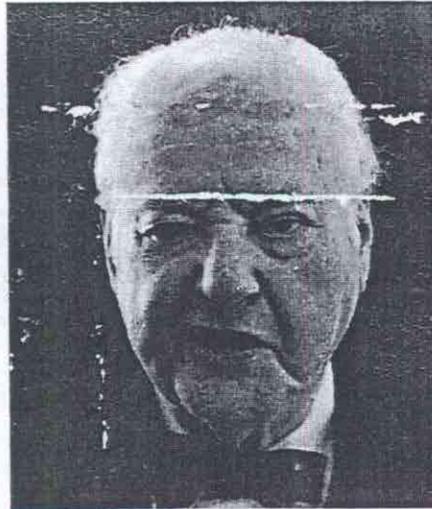
had often spoken about the rich soil around Lake Village, Arkansas, and the next year Hunt, then 23, took his inheritance of a few thousand dollars and bought plantation lands there.

It was then that he began to display his legendary Midas touch—a skillful blending of boldness and timing that led to one coup after another in big-league land speculation. Nine years later, he was a landowner of baronial proportions—and a very wealthy man. But there was a land panic in 1921, and, although he retained his property holdings, Hunt suddenly found himself, for all practical purposes, broke. Undaunted, he got wind of an oil boom near El Dorado, Arkansas, and went down to investigate. By acting as a middleman there between farmers who had leases to sell and newcomers who wanted to buy them, Hunt built up enough capital to drill a well where he felt he would strike oil. He was right. In 1930, Hunt—already a millionaire—went to east Texas to look over another oil strike. The big oil companies looked, too, and decided there wasn't much to it. But Hunt had a hunch there was, and made a deal to acquire the discovery well and adjoining properties; it turned out to be what was then the greatest oil discovery in the history of the world. The mania began to come in faster than the gushers: By 1940 he had become a billionaire; and by 1960 he was the richest man in the world.

Today, Hunt rules an empire that is almost as ramified as the operations of



"I carry my lunch to the office. I'm not comfortable having anyone drive me around. I don't like traveling by private plane. And I prefer ready-made suits. I don't go in for a lot of luxury."



"The Communists need not invade the United States. Pro-Communist sentiment in the U. S. is already greater than when the Bolsheviks overthrew the Kerenski government and took over Russia."



"Calvin Coolidge turned in the last successful Administration. He reduced the national debt about 18 percent. And there was no subversive build-up whatever during Coolidge's term in office."

the Federal Government. Financially, he is the equal of at least 2000 millionaires—and perhaps as many as 4000 or 5000; he says he isn't really sure. The Hunt Oil Company, of which he owns 87 percent (his family owns the rest), produced more oil during World War Two than the entire Axis output. Eighty-five percent of the natural gas piped to the Eastern United States to alleviate the 1946 fuel shortage belonged to him. While petroleum remains Hunt's principal source of wealth—he is the largest independent petroleum dealer in the United States—it is far from his only one. He is also the nation's largest farmer, and his businesses—spread all over the world—include not only oil and food products but also real estate, cotton, cattle and timber. What makes Hunt's empire even more remarkable is the fact that it's pretty much a one-man show: He has no stockholders and no board of directors—extraordinary, considering that the Hunt assets are equal to those of such corporate complexes as General Electric.

Although money flows into his coffers at an estimated rate of \$10,000 to \$12,000 an hour, Hunt spurns the life of ease and luxury. He works hard—six days a week—doesn't "throw money around," as he puts it, and prefers to do things himself that most executives delegate to subordinates or secretaries. The one extravagance he allows himself is his home, which he affectionately calls "Mount Vernon," and which is, in fact, modeled after George Washington's famous home. Hunt's is situated on considerably less land than the first President's—only ten acres—but is roughly four or five times larger, though Hunt denies it. True to form, he acquired the mansion during the Depression for a bargain \$60,000.

Oddly enough, in view of his flamboyant financial predilections, Hunt is an extremely shy man, as indicated by his refusal, until age 66, to appear in "Who's Who." He dislikes the limelight, and tolerates it only out of a sense of duty to promote his conservative convictions. "After all," as someone put it, "he has a lot to conserve." It is only since the early Fifties that he has emerged as a public figure. In 1951, he conceived and financed "Facts Forum," a series of radio and television broadcasts, disbanded in 1957, that purported to present both sides of public issues, but which critics said favored the conservative view. "More forum than fact" was the way one commentator characterized the program's anti-Government, anti-foreign aid, anti-UN bias. Hunt's present-day political activities center around "Facts Forum's" even more conservative successor, "Life Line," an admittedly one-sided series of 15-minute right-wing radio broadcasts carried daily on 409 stations throughout the country. He also writes, and syndi-

cates himself, a five-times-weekly column for daily newspapers and a once-a-week column carried by some 30 weekly papers. And he has written four books—all political, and all published by H. L. Hunt Press—the most notable of which is "Alpaca," about a mythical emerging country with a constitution that provides, among other things, for upper-bracket taxpayers to have several times the number of votes granted to lower-income citizens. Hunt's critics call him the country's most powerful propagandist for the extreme right; he probably is. Others claim he's the moneybags behind every reactionary group from the John Birch Society to the Ku Klux Klan; both he and they deny it. And some have even charged him with playing an unspecified conspiratorial role in the assassination of President Kennedy; but there is no evidence whatever to indicate that he did.

To find out how he feels about these and a wide range of other issues, PLAYBOY dispatched a correspondent to Dallas for an exclusive interview with the controversial billionaire. Though he has a reputation for chilly unapproachability—one ex-associate summed up his personality with the remark "How do you warm up to Fort Knox?"—our man found him folksy, friendly, easygoing and even wryly humorous. He was also, however, both ambiguous and evasive in his replies to many of the more probing questions. But the interview was the longest he's ever granted—the first, in fact, ever published in interview form—and we feel that it affords a revealing glimpse of its complex and contradictory subject.

Surprisingly spry, fit (a sturdy 200-pound six-footer) and mentally alert for a man of his age, Hunt is a health-food faddist who neither smokes nor drinks. He used to chain-smoke cigars, he told us, but gave them up because "it was costing \$300,000 of my time per year just to unwrap them." After a pleasant supper at Hunt's Mount Vernon, followed by a family hootenanny of hymns and barbershop-type ballads—with the billionaire himself leading some of them—we sat down in the den, waited patiently for Hunt to arrange the fireplace logs just the way he wanted them, and opened our interview by quoting something another famous billionaire had once said about him.

PLAYBOY: J. Paul Getty has been quoted as saying, "In terms of extraordinary, independent wealth, there is only one man—H. L. Hunt." Are you really the richest man in the world?

HUNT: I think that Mr. Getty uses me as an alibi for the people who are trying to smear him as being the wealthiest man in the world.

PLAYBOY: Why do you say "smear"? Do you consider it insulting to be called the wealthiest man in the world?

HUNT: Well, the way I was thinking, I don't think that anyone attributes me with being wealthy because he might admire me. I know that nearly all the opponents of liberty exaggerate my wealth and how I use it. Even about my home, Mount Vernon. They say it is five or ten times as large as George Washington's Mount Vernon, but as a matter of fact, my house isn't any more than five or ten percent bigger than George Washington's.

PLAYBOY: Drew Pearson once described you as "symbolic of the lusty Texas tycoon who flashes \$1000 bills, drapes his women in mink, and turns in his Cadillacs when they get dirty." What's your reaction to this description?

HUNT: Those things that Drew Pearson says are just about as truthful as some of the other things he is noted for saying.

PLAYBOY: Do you flash \$1000 bills?

HUNT: Never.

PLAYBOY: Do you carry any on your person?

HUNT: I'm not that foolish, but thanks for a helpful credit rating.

PLAYBOY: Do you drape your women in mink?

HUNT: Mrs. Hunt and my daughters are my women, and they don't seem to think I do. But we live in a warm climate, so they never complain.

PLAYBOY: What about trading in your Cadillacs when they get dirty?

HUNT: The only times I've had a Cadillac were when the office bought one for me—once or twice. I would drive it two or three hundred miles, but would not continue. I like smaller cars.

PLAYBOY: Is it true, as rumored, that you have no chauffeur; that you always fly on commercial airlines, never by private plane; that you have no tailor-made suits; and that you carry your lunch to work in a brown paper bag?

HUNT: I do carry my lunch to the office, because it saves me a lot of time and it enables me to eat the special health foods I enjoy. I'm not comfortable having anyone drive me around; I enjoy driving myself. I don't like private planes. And I prefer ready-made suits.

PLAYBOY: Why don't you live like a billionaire, or even like a millionaire?

HUNT: I feel like I'm living high.

PLAYBOY: What do you like to spend your money on?

HUNT: Food and clothing.

PLAYBOY: Anything else?

HUNT: No, I don't think so. I don't drink. I haven't smoked for about 15 or 20 years. I don't go in for a lot of luxury. I don't throw money away.

PLAYBOY: You have a reputation as a gambler. How much gambling do you do?

HUNT: I haven't bet as much as ten cents in the past eight years. I used to bet for fun. It was a diversion.

PLAYBOY: One of your employees was once quoted as saying that you are "probably one of the ten best poker players in the country." Is he right?

HUNT: Well, I quit playing poker in 1921, and as far as I know, I was the best.

PLAYBOY: Some people say that you won your first oil lease in a poker game, others that you won it in a dice roll. Did gambling luck give you your big start?

HUNT: No, not at all. When I made my first oil play, I had already made and lost big money in business transactions.

PLAYBOY: How did you get your start?

HUNT: I grew up out West working on ranches and in the woods as a lumberjack. Then I inherited some money when I was 22 years old.

PLAYBOY: How much?

HUNT: Quite a lot. Five or six thousand dollars.

PLAYBOY: What did you do with it?

HUNT: I went South and bought plantation land. The country where I bought in the Mississippi Delta in Arkansas hadn't overflowed for 35 years, but it overflowed the first year I was there. And the next year it overflowed again. The year after that was 1914, and I was making a bale of cotton to the acre, but World War One started and cotton dropped to five cents a pound. Then, in 1918, a great land boom started, and I sold the first land I had bought and bought another plantation. Then I bought and sold farm, timber and plantation lands. Later, when all the land values collapsed—including mine—I left my plantations temporarily and went to an oil strike in El Dorado, Arkansas, and got in on the oil boom. I began trading in leases there.

PLAYBOY: If the value of your properties had collapsed, how could you afford to trade in oil leases?

HUNT: I would contact someone who was not leasing, get a price from him, and then see if I could sell the lease to someone else at a small profit.

PLAYBOY: What did you do with the profit you accumulated?

HUNT: At the end of about five or six months, I acquired a half-acre lease, paid freight and demurrage on an old rotary drilling rig and drilled a well. It finally paid out just about what it had cost me. In the meantime, I had acquired other leases in the fields south of El Dorado. The reason I played southeast of the discovery was because the prices northwest, where most people expected the field to extend, were too high for me. Anyhow, I drilled three or four wells there and brought in gushers.

PLAYBOY: Is that where you made your first million?

HUNT: Well, I don't know. It's pretty hard to tell.

PLAYBOY: You don't remember when you became a millionaire?

HUNT: It's hard to tell. Later on, I drilled in the West Smackover fields, north of El Dorado, and drilled about 40 wells. They were nice, small wells. During that time, I had one man in the office, and I

did the field work with one superintendent. I sold half interest in those 40 wells for \$600,000. It was mostly in notes, but the notes were bankable. So I may have been worth a million dollars around that time.

PLAYBOY: When you went to east Texas in 1930, you were said to have paid a flat \$1,000,000 for "Dad" Joiner's famous discovery well, the Number One Daisy Bradford. Is that true?

HUNT: No, that is not exactly the sequence. From 1921 to 1929, I operated in north Louisiana, south Arkansas and Oklahoma, where I had more than a hundred oil wells. Then, when the Joiner discovery was made, I went over there and saw it drill-stem-tested. I believed in drill-stem-testing, and I spent all the money I had and could raise for leases on the well's east side, which was higher geologically, but was dry. Later, I bought the Joiner property.

PLAYBOY: If you had already spent all the money you had or could raise on leases, how did you pay for the property?

HUNT: With credit. I borrowed \$30,000 from a storekeeper who liked to lend me money. He was urging me to buy Joiner's properties. The large companies wouldn't buy them, because he didn't have any abstracts. They didn't think much of the east Texas strike. The storekeeper said he would take a 20-percent interest with me, and so our joint account borrowed \$30,000 cash plus some short-term notes for \$45,000, and the rest of the payment was about \$1,200,000 in oil, if and when produced. Unexpectedly, it produced on the low side.

PLAYBOY: When did you make your first billion?

HUNT: A billion dollars sounds like a lot of loose talk. A person like me is not apt to make a billion dollars frequently.

PLAYBOY: Did you make your first billion in oil?

HUNT: Mostly. I also bought or invested in some other things—real estate and a food company with its own brand name, which is not connected in any way with Hunt Foods. But mostly I made it in the oil business.

PLAYBOY: What ambition drove you to amass such a vast fortune?

HUNT: Well, I don't go in for a lot of luxury, as I told you. And I don't care anything about power; I don't think I've really had that much anyway. I just like to do things. When I got to transacting business for myself, I just wanted to do more of whatever I was doing.

PLAYBOY: You mean you acquired a fortune because you like to keep busy?

HUNT: Well, it's been interesting and a diversion. I don't have any hobbies.

PLAYBOY: You once said that you wanted to use your wealth "for the greater benefit of mankind." Do you feel that you have?

HUNT: I have never been very sanctimo-

nious along those lines. And so I doubt that I said that, because I feel that people who have wealth should not throw their money around; to do so makes good propaganda for the Communists. When someone who has a reputation for having a lot of money spends it foolishly, the Communists can use that as an argument against private enterprise, capitalism and the incentive system.

PLAYBOY: Is it foolish to spend your money for the benefit of mankind?

HUNT: People who have wealth should use it wisely, in a way that will do society the most good. They should be careful that in making supposedly charitable gifts their money will not be used to destroy or impair the American system and promote atheism.

PLAYBOY: How and by whom are charitable gifts used in this way?

HUNT: The answer to that can be found by anyone who investigates the situation a little. I don't want to go into it. Anyway, as I was saying, rather than give money away where it will often do more harm than good, people with property should provide gainful employment and take pride in their personnel. I don't feel the Communists can make much propaganda if this is done. By furnishing employment to a good number of people, I think I perform the greatest philanthropy I could engage in.

PLAYBOY: Do you believe in any other form of philanthropy?

HUNT: My contributions and donations are not large and they are not publicized. I don't think you can do much good by giving money to people—and that applies to nations giving money to other nations as well. It's just contrary to human nature.

PLAYBOY: We gather that you don't give much to charity, then.

HUNT: I don't specialize in it. Many of the foundations which I think are trying to destroy freedom are widely considered charities.

PLAYBOY: In what way are they trying to destroy freedom?

HUNT: Foundations might try to destroy our country as Alger Hiss and Harry Dexter White were trying to destroy it. Nearly all the foundations are influenced by those who seek to destroy our country.

PLAYBOY: Who? How?

HUNT: I don't feel like naming names, so I won't, but these men often command and use money paid to the Government in taxes. The liberty side is outfinanced a thousand to one.

PLAYBOY: You are often credited with financing a great number of right-wing groups. What political groups do you help support?

HUNT: None. I have made contributions to persons running for office when I thought they were running against someone pretty bad. I donate to individuals rather than to groups.

PLAYBOY: You were a friend of the late

Senator Joseph R. McCarthy. Did you ever support him financially?

HUNT: No. I was reported to have done so, but I did not.

PLAYBOY: Were you in sympathy with his views?

HUNT: I was very much in favor of his opposition to communism.

PLAYBOY: Do you disagree with those who claim that McCarthy was irresponsible in his charges and destroyed reputations on the basis of inadequate evidence?

HUNT: I highly approve of anyone dedicated to opposing and fighting communism. I do not pick minor faults they may have, nor do I quarrel with their methods. When someone is accused of pro-communism, his reputation is not endangered unless he is pro-Communist. If he is not guilty, and really loves his country, the falsity of that appellation will amplify his true worth and redound to his credit. McCarthy himself was smeared a great deal. He was called, for example, a stooge of *Facts Forum*, a group I helped support. At the same time, *Facts Forum* was called a front for McCarthy. Actually, McCarthy appeared on *Facts Forum* programs once or twice, whereas liberal Senator Sparkman of Alabama was on about two dozen times. If we had men in the Senate today like Pat McCarran and Joe McCarthy, South Vietnam would not be in such bad shape, because they would have kept the Senate and the nation constantly alerted to the Communist menace in that part of the world—years ago, when we should have known what was coming there.

PLAYBOY: You became actively involved in national politics in 1951 with *Facts Forum* and other projects. You were in your 60s then. Why didn't you start when you were younger?

HUNT: When I was a cotton planter in Arkansas, I made the trip all the way to Illinois to vote for Teddy Roosevelt for President. That was when I was 23, so I guess I have been interested in public affairs for quite some time now. As I became older, and maybe wiser, I became increasingly concerned about losing our freedoms, so I have tried hard to help halt that trend.

PLAYBOY: What freedoms have we lost?

HUNT: I have no persecution complex and no inclination to recite freedoms I have lost. Nearly anyone who has reached the age of reason can name many freedoms he is losing, among them the right to contract.

PLAYBOY: How is the right to contract being lost?

HUNT: Ask some people you know in business; they'll tell you.

PLAYBOY: What will they tell us?

HUNT: Ask some of them.

PLAYBOY: What are the other freedoms you feel we're losing?

HUNT: We are also losing the right to keep a fair share of the money we earn and a fair share of the profits we make.

Wage earners pay about 80 percent of the personal income taxes and Social Security taxes collected by the Government.

PLAYBOY: Let's discuss income taxes and Social Security later. You said you've tried to help halt the trend toward loss of freedom. How?

HUNT: I have constructively campaigned against communism since 1933. I succeeded in a one-man campaign to get the states to ratify the no-third-term amendment, the 22nd Amendment, the only amendment ratified four years after it had been submitted to the state legislatures. I started *Facts Forum*, as you mentioned, to which TV and radio gave \$5,000,000 of free time per year. *Facts Forum* carried debates between outstanding national figures and was aired on two thirds of the TV stations in existence at the time. Senators Sparkman, Kefauver, Humphrey and Kennedy appeared on *Facts Forum*. The pro-Communists complained bitterly about this series, which presented both sides of public-affairs issues. *Facts Forum* was the predecessor of *Life Line*, which presents religious and public-affairs programs, and adheres closely to the constructive side. I have also written some books—*Alpaca*, *Fabians Fight Freedom*, *Why Not Speak?* and *Hunt for Truth*, a collection of my newspaper columns. I also write columns for dailies and weeklies.

PLAYBOY: How would you label yourself politically?

HUNT: I am a registered Democrat who often votes Republican.

PLAYBOY: What would you call yourself—a middle-of-the-roader? A conservative?

HUNT: A constructive.

PLAYBOY: What's that?

HUNT: A constructive is simply someone who is trying to do the best that can be done in public affairs and elsewhere.

PLAYBOY: You really don't consider yourself a conservative? Most people do.

HUNT: Not a particle. The word "conservative" puts a weight around the necks of the liberty side.

PLAYBOY: What do you mean by liberty?

HUNT: Freedom for the individual to do whatever he likes consistent with organized society and good taste. Now about the word "conservative"—I think it's an unfortunate word. It denotes mossback, reactionary and old-fogyism.

PLAYBOY: How does the word "constructive" differ?

HUNT: You can say of anyone or any principle that he or it is "too conservative," and, of course, you can label persons or ideas as being "too liberal." But you can't defame anyone or any idea by saying that the person or the idea is "too constructive." A constructive wants to go forward and do the best which can be done in all events and at all times.

PLAYBOY: To which do you give more of your attention these days—your business interests or your political activities?

HUNT: They're not political activities; they are public-affairs activities. I am nonpartisan, and anything I do along political lines I just do in the hope of getting better people elected to public office and encouraging all officials to serve better.

PLAYBOY: Didn't you support the MacArthur-for-President movement in 1952?

HUNT: I supported him in every way I could. As far as I know I headed the effort.

PLAYBOY: Why do you think he should have been President?

HUNT: MacArthur's rehabilitation of Japan without permitting Communist infiltration, and his known integrity and mental capacities, ensured that his Administration as President would have been an outstanding success. General MacArthur was truly the man of this century. If he had been elected in 1952, this would be a completely different world. Few know how close we came to having it. I had a real fine MacArthur-for-President Committee headquartered in the Conrad Hilton Hotel in Chicago. About two days before the nominating speeches were to be made, I was awakened by Carroll Reece, General Wedemeyer and other top leaders of the Taft campaign staff, informing me that Senator Taft was transferring his delegate strength to General MacArthur and that I should alert my committee and get them working. The committee members were delighted to be aroused at two A.M. and began redoubling their efforts, but at six-thirty A.M., I was notified that Senator Taft had changed his mind and decided to take one ballot before making the transfer. I knew and told the constructive leaders that the one ballot could not be successfully taken and a stampede toward Ike would develop. Polls revealed that the two war heroes were quite evenly matched in popularity. Therefore, MacArthur, if nominated, would have won as easily as Eisenhower won. Therefore, it may be said that General Douglas MacArthur, who was unwilling to deprive Senator Taft of the nomination, came within four and a half hours of becoming President—and the free world came within four and a half hours of being saved.

PLAYBOY: Are you implying that Eisenhower lost the free world?

HUNT: He was an unfortunate choice. He made a lot of mistakes—such as pulling back and not taking Berlin, setting up that city as a tinderbox that might start World War Three. His "salt-of-the-earth" manner enabled him to retain his popularity, dominate Congress and do great harm. I think he was advised by the same school of advisors that had advised Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman—the same school of thought.

PLAYBOY: What school of thought is that?

HUNT: Alger Hiss, Harry Dexter White and Lauchlin Currie—who once lived in

the White House and who is now handling United States foreign aid funds in Colombia—can safely be mentioned as being in the early school of Presidential advisors. If he looks hard enough, anyone interested can easily ascertain the names of many in this solid phalanx of Presidential advisors who supplant the influence of the voters electing the President of the United States.

PLAYBOY: By mentioning Alger Hiss, Harry Dexter White and Lauchlin Currie, do you mean to imply that this "school" of advisors is leftist in its leanings?

HUNT: Well, they certainly aren't right-wing extremists.

PLAYBOY: You said that Eisenhower had the same school of advisors as Roosevelt and Truman. What did you think of them as Presidents?

HUNT: F. D. R. was the first President to institute the struggle of class against class. He managed our entry into World War Two after pledging to the mothers of America again and again and again that he would not send their sons into foreign wars.

PLAYBOY: In view of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, do you think Roosevelt can be taken to task for violating a pledge to the mothers of America?

HUNT: This is a big subject that would require much more time than we have to discuss it.

PLAYBOY: All right. You were giving us your appraisal of Roosevelt as President.

HUNT: In addition to the misjudgments I mentioned, he also broke the two-term tradition, attempted to pack the Supreme Court, and created a myth which must be broken if our country is to survive.

PLAYBOY: What myth?

HUNT: The myth of the indispensable man.

PLAYBOY: What did you think of Truman?

HUNT: Truman knew little and did little and consequently did not do much harm, except to recall MacArthur. But all Presidents since diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union in 1933 must share the responsibility for the surrender of hundreds of millions of people into Communist domination, because the United States has been capable of dictating the policy of the world since before it entered World War Two. If anyone tells you that since 1933 the number of human beings dominated by communism has increased from 160,000,000 backward Russians to more than a billion human beings, he is not necessarily a right-side extremist crank. It's the duty of the communications media to keep us informed regarding such vital things as this often-forgotten subject.

PLAYBOY: Who do you think was our last good President?

HUNT: I think that Calvin Coolidge turned in the last successful Administration. There was no subversive build-up

whatever in Washington during Coolidge's term in office. As small as the national debt was, he reduced it about 18 percent. Also, he fulfilled Thomas Jefferson's admonition that the government is best which governs least.

PLAYBOY: President Kennedy was a firm believer in the necessity for a strong Federal Government. How did you rate him as President?

HUNT: I rated him high enough as a prospect that I supported him. I expected Kennedy to be as constructive as the philosophy of his Catholic religion should lead him to be, and as constructive as the philosophy of his father should cause him to be.

PLAYBOY: How constructive is that?

HUNT: Catholics are known for being anti-Communist. And I had never seen any evidence of fiscal irresponsibility in the Kennedy family.

PLAYBOY: Did Kennedy turn out to be as "constructive" as you expected?

HUNT: Well, I know that he deplored the betrayal of China to the Communists. He once made a very fine speech about it in which he said, "What our young men had saved, our diplomats and our President have frittered away." I was for practically everything that Jack Kennedy did in public life. I think that his assassination was the greatest blow that ever befell the cause of freedom.

PLAYBOY: But Kennedy was a liberal Democrat. Weren't many of his policies contrary to your views?

HUNT: Well, there were a few things he did that were *different* from my opinions. He made some mistakes, for example, regarding communism—but in general, I thought he was a good official.

PLAYBOY: What mistakes did he make?

HUNT: You've got me. It becomes difficult to try to enumerate particular mistakes which Jack may have made.

PLAYBOY: As a conservative, weren't you disappointed by his endorsement of deficit spending, civil rights legislation, the test-ban treaty, and so on?

HUNT: Unless there is a turn toward constitutional government and a decrease in pro-Socialist legislation forced through Congress, the Kennedy Administration is likely to appear highly constructive when compared to the Administrations yet to follow.

PLAYBOY: In what way is President Johnson's legislative program "pro-Socialist"?

HUNT: The Administration's program is widely publicized, and everyone is entitled to their own views, whether or not it is pro-Socialist.

PLAYBOY: Which of President Johnson's policies do you consider pro-Socialist?

HUNT: Nearly all of his domestic policies, I fear. I just don't like the whole big trend toward letting the Government do everything. We hear a lot of talk about needing big government because the country is so complex today. It just seems

so complex because we have given up so many of the simple, though hard-to-practice, truths that once made sense of our lives. I'd like to see the Government less centralized, closer to the people.

PLAYBOY: How would you accomplish that?

HUNT: We could easily abolish a good number of bureaus in favor of private enterprise. I am now rewriting my book *Alpaca*, which, in presenting a constitution for emerging nations, provided for an annual review of bureaus by a permanent bureau review board for the purpose of terminating all bureaus which were no longer required and curtailing the activities of the remaining bureaus as much as practical.

PLAYBOY: What Government departments or bureaus do you think should be abolished?

HUNT: All services to the public should be abolished in favor of personal enterprise, where they can be more efficiently and economically performed.

PLAYBOY: How do you feel about the efficiency and economy of the Government's War on Poverty?

HUNT: I feel that it has been wastefully mismanaged, has undermined confidence and is a complete failure.

PLAYBOY: Do you think it should be abandoned?

HUNT: If it can't be made workable, yes.

PLAYBOY: Do you feel the same about Federal welfare programs?

HUNT: I thought them all right in writing my book *Alpaca*, where the people were to try to govern themselves. But they may do more harm than good in the United States.

PLAYBOY: Why?

HUNT: Through mismanagement and the catering for votes and political advantage, they are harming the general public and giving some persons and groups an advantage over others.

PLAYBOY: Do you favor any of President Johnson's Great Society programs?

HUNT: I favor the society, with its gradual improvements from July 4, 1776 up to November 22, 1963, which made this the greatest of all nations. The Great Society is expensive to the nation, and it is at variance with the constantly improving society that made America great.

PLAYBOY: In what way?

HUNT: I think it's robbing a lot of people of the pride of accomplishment and the feeling of self-sufficiency by putting them on the dole.

PLAYBOY: How do you feel about the recent increase in Social Security taxes?

HUNT: The Social Security money paid into the Government is illegally spent on other projects. Senator Harry F. Byrd has always said that the Social Security fund was bankrupt.

PLAYBOY: Would you elaborate?

HUNT: Social Security is in the nature of insurance, although it is compulsory, and the diverting of funds from proper

reserves to keep Social Security solvent is illegal. They are diverted into the general fund, which underwrites thousands of frivolous projects. Social Security owes hundreds of millions of dollars to the beneficiaries who have paid for insurance, and has no reserve from which to pay them. Beneficiaries are dependent upon taxes yet to be collected.

[According to the Office of Research and Statistics of the Social Security Administration, Social Security tax funds are deposited not in any general fund but in the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund, and can be used only to pay Social Security benefits and administrative expenses.—Ed.]

PLAYBOY: In any case, you'll never need Social Security money yourself.

HUNT: You never can tell.

PLAYBOY: Do you think the present system of graduated income taxes is equitable?

HUNT: I am not a tax expert and have not tried to effect any tax reforms, but I take it for granted that the present schedule could be improved. In general, however, I would say it is likely that the more money the Government raises, the more poorly it will be administered.

PLAYBOY: You've been quoted as saying that upper-bracket taxpayers should have seven times as many votes as those in the lower 40 percent. Wouldn't that be unjust, to say the least?

HUNT: This graduated suffrage you are talking about is from the model constitution in my book *Alpaca*. I have never suggested that the United States adopt this. *Alpaca* was written to stimulate people in the emerging countries to adopt a constitution whereby they would try to govern themselves instead of yielding to a dictatorship. The purpose of graduated suffrage is to persuade the landed gentry and others close to the powers that be to participate in a republic where otherwise they would not take an equal vote with the less provident.

PLAYBOY: It has often been charged that you—and other very wealthy persons like you—get off with paying very little in income taxes because of extensive business deductions. What's your reaction to this charge?

HUNT: If I am on trial, I plead "not guilty" until the charges are made more specific.

PLAYBOY: Doesn't the oil-depletion allowance save you several million dollars in taxes every year?

HUNT: I haven't calculated the amount.

PLAYBOY: There's been some talk in Congress about revoking the allowance. How do you feel about that?

HUNT: Depletion allowances are necessary for all irreplaceable resources. Adequate equipment would not be installed if there was no depreciation allowance. Adequate production of irreplaceable resources would not be developed for

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the benefit of mankind if there was no depletion allowance.

PLAYBOY: Do you think there is much danger of its being eliminated?

HUNT: Not if it is understood. The increased net income for the Government from its elimination would finance the Government three or four days per year. Its elimination would be the equivalent of placing an additional tax between the producer and the consumer. The Government itself would have to take over the job of drilling and producing oil—and at its costs, which are always prohibitive compared with private business costs under the incentive system. The Government would collect far less tax to underwrite these costs than it already does from a healthy oil industry.

PLAYBOY: How much in extra taxes would you have to pay if the depletion allowance were eliminated?

HUNT: Maybe none, for we would have to confine our activities to other business; as I said, the Government would have to produce the oil.

PLAYBOY: Wasn't your radio program, *Life Line*, a big deduction before its tax exemption was withdrawn last year?

HUNT: Its patrons and those who use it for religious and political education are punished with the loss of *Life Line's* tax-exempt status. It was not a tax exemption for me. The cancellation of *Life Line's* tax-exempt status as an educational program was due largely to the misinformed and politically inspired actions of Congressman Wright Patman and Senator Maurine Neuberger, who crusaded to bring pressure on the Internal Revenue Service because they fear an informed public at the polls.

PLAYBOY: Why should they fear an informed public?

HUNT: Those who do the least good for the populace are those who would like most for the populace to be poorly informed.

PLAYBOY: It's been reported that you endorsed Barry Goldwater's Presidential candidacy in 1964. How much good do you think he would have done for the populace as President?

HUNT: My first choices for the Republican nomination were Senator Hruska of Nebraska and Bob Taft, Jr., but I couldn't get either of them to make a move. As far as Goldwater is concerned, his campaign was very, very poor, and if he would have made no better a President than he was a campaigner, I don't think he would have been a very good President. His service in the U. S. Senate, however, was the very best.

PLAYBOY: Do you include his vote against the civil rights bill in this appraisal?

HUNT: He was voting his convictions. I know some have tried to infer that Goldwater was anti-Negro because of this vote, but that's not true. He did much for Negroes in Arizona years ago, long before it was a politically popular issue.

PLAYBOY: Contrary to the claims of his campaign managers, the record indicates that Goldwater did little for Negroes in Arizona either during his years in the Senate or before. But where do you stand on civil rights?

HUNT: That statement regarding Goldwater's record will be interesting to your readers. Regarding my stand on civil rights, my views on the matter are reflected by those of the Negro publisher S. B. Fuller and his great columnist George Schuyler, who ask positions for members of their race only as fast as they are qualified to hold them.

PLAYBOY: What must they do to qualify?

HUNT: To be a bookkeeper, one needs to qualify himself to do the work which a bookkeeper has to do. To be a stenographer, one has to take dictation and type. I believe that nearly any employer will tell an inquirer that he is seeking competent Negro personnel. At the moment, however, there are more positions available than Negroes are qualifying themselves to fill. In regard to the Negro push for equal rights, it should not be forgotten that law-abiding white people are good people and should be treated as such. There are ethnic groups such as Poles and Italians who are seeking only to be treated as respectable, law-abiding citizens should be treated. There are also other Caucasians who are pretty good people and not without merit, regardless of the color of their skin. They look upon the U. S. A. as a land of golden opportunities. There are ample employment opportunities in this country for all those who wish to work. In the freedom of the U. S. A., no one needs to live in an undesirable environment; anyone can improve his living standards and place of residence whenever he wishes.

PLAYBOY: Most civil rights leaders wouldn't agree that this is true for Negroes.

HUNT: Anyone can uplift his lot in life—anyone who really wants to.

PLAYBOY: With a helping hand, perhaps. Are you in favor of integrated schools?

HUNT: They may not be best for Negro pupils and teachers, but I am for whatever the society involved decides.

PLAYBOY: Why wouldn't they be best?

HUNT: Many Negro teachers prefer to teach in Negro schools, and many Negro students prefer to attend Negro schools.

PLAYBOY: Nationwide demonstrations to integrate schools would seem to indicate that the majority feel otherwise. How do you feel about demonstrations?

HUNT: Demonstrations are not the proper way to enact laws. They should not be incited by agitators seeking power and votes.

PLAYBOY: Don't you think Negroes should have the vote?

HUNT: I favor suffrage for all 21 years and older.

PLAYBOY: Even for illiterates?

HUNT: Yes. No one was barred in the

mythical country *Alpaca*.

PLAYBOY: Do you regard Martin Luther King as an "agitator seeking power and votes"?

HUNT: I share J. Edgar Hoover's opinion of him.

PLAYBOY: Are you saying that you agree with Hoover that King is "the biggest liar in the United States"?

HUNT: I cannot detect that King has any regard for the truth, religion, sincerity, peace, morality or the best interest of the Negro people.

PLAYBOY: What effect do you feel the civil rights movement is having on the South?

HUNT: The South is upset. There is prejudice throughout the nation aimed at the South, although the South has handled its problem much better than New York and California. The South is great and will survive.

PLAYBOY: If the South has handled its racial problem better than New York or California, why do you think most civil rights leaders agree that the South has the worst race relations in the nation?

HUNT: Because agitators devote their attacks mostly against the South.

PLAYBOY: If you were President, what actions would you take in the field of civil rights?

HUNT: I don't think one man should decide the relations to be followed in civil rights. He could develop a mania of desiring for all of the white people in the world to be ruled by colored people. The United Nations, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, the United States and Red China apparently intend to enforce that all Caucasians in Africa shall be ruled by non-Caucasians.

PLAYBOY: You have frequently been called a bigot. What's your answer to this charge?

HUNT: I suppose a bigot is whatever someone wants to say of another who disagrees with him. A bigot is expected to be biased, intolerant and have a closed mind. Well, I have a consuming curiosity and always like to hear the different viewpoints. I consider myself open-minded, and therefore not a bigot.

PLAYBOY: You're not anti-Negro?

HUNT: No. I like the Negroes I have known and I believe nearly all of them like me.

PLAYBOY: You've also been called anti-Semitic. Are you?

HUNT: There is no basis for any of this. Just about all my life some of my very best friends have been fine Jewish people. Jews should protect the profit-motive system and oppose all trends toward dictatorship. Under totalitarian government, they would be persecuted as they have been for centuries. I have worked to keep alive the Synagogue Council crusade against anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union. I think I've done more against anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union than anyone else in the United States.

PLAYBOY: What about anti-Semitism in

the United States? Have you done anything against that?

HUNT: I think so. I try to discourage it in every way possible.

PLAYBOY: You've also been charged with anti-Catholicism. Is there any truth to it?

HUNT: No. Some of my best friends and associates are Catholics, including Cardinal Spellman and the noted Catholic layman Ed Maher of Dallas, who has been treasurer of *Life Line*.

PLAYBOY: The Ku Klux Klan is notoriously anti-Negro, anti-Semitic and anti-Catholic. How do you feel about it?

HUNT: I have had no experience with it. If it practices violence, however, I deplore it, for I deplore all violence.

PLAYBOY: How do you feel about the House Committee on Un-American Activities' investigation of the Klan?

HUNT: I suppose it is to placate pro-Communists who are subversive.

PLAYBOY: How will it placate them?

HUNT: Communists and their tolerators abhor the investigations of Communist activities conducted by the Committee.

If they can cause the Committee to sidetrack its investigations of Communist subversives to investigate people who are highly opposed to communism, pro-Communists might be placated and feel more kindly toward the Committee. If the Committee exposes Klan violence and money-making rackets, however, the investigations will serve a fine purpose.

PLAYBOY: Do you feel that HUAC's anti-Communist investigations have served a fine purpose?

HUNT: It has served well, but is handicapped by Supreme Court decisions favoring communism.

PLAYBOY: What decisions?

HUNT: I don't want to get into a legal discussion.

PLAYBOY: We take it you oppose the Court's decisions in the field of civil liberties.

HUNT: It has acted illegally in ignoring precedents, and is actually legislating. Any court is supposed to observe precedents; otherwise the lawyers of the land who study past decisions can never know what is "the law of the land." If the Supreme Court takes action outside of its constitutional rights, it is acting illegally. It was never contemplated that the Supreme Court could amend the Constitution, as there are regular procedures for its amendment wherein both houses of Congress and legislatures of the states participate.

PLAYBOY: Many conservatives feel that the Court is unconstitutionally hindering police work and "coddling criminals" by protecting the rights of the accused. Do you agree with them?

HUNT: The Court is befriending criminals, Communists and Socialists.

PLAYBOY: Why do you lump them together? And how is the Court befriending them?

HUNT: Communist activities in the

United States are criminal and can be spoken of along with other criminal offenses. Anyone who reads the papers can find decisions whereby the Court befriends them nearly every day.

PLAYBOY: Do you think the threat of communism in America is very serious?

HUNT: Yes, and I do not understand others who doubt it.

PLAYBOY: In what areas of American life do you feel the Communists are strongest?

HUNT: In the most critical areas.

PLAYBOY: Such as?

HUNT: Some of the most critical areas are the State Department, the Defense Department, the large foundations, the communications media and the entertainment field.

PLAYBOY: What makes you think they are strong in these areas?

HUNT: The United States has been in charge of the world since World War Two, during which time the Communists have taken into domination one-third of the world's population.

PLAYBOY: Would the election of a conservative to the Presidency help arrest this trend, in your opinion?

HUNT: I am not a conservative, and as a constructive I am not yet campaigning for 1968. Many may class me as a dangerous right winger.

PLAYBOY: Do you feel that Johnson could be defeated by a conservative in '68?

HUNT: If the inroads of communism cannot be halted, Johnson *should* be defeated by someone who as President could stop the Communist take-over. Unless communism is defeated, it makes no difference who is President. He would be forced to be a stooge.

PLAYBOY: Are you referring to a Communist take-over of the U.S. itself?

HUNT: Yes. The Communist take-over to be feared is the same kind that has taken place in other nations.

PLAYBOY: Do you agree with the Minutemen that there is an actual threat of armed Communist invasion?

HUNT: I shouldn't be asked to agree with the Minutemen. The Communists need not invade the U.S. They are already here in numbers of at least two percent and will rule unless understood and restrained and defeated.

PLAYBOY: How did you arrive at that figure?

HUNT: The pro-Communist sentiment in the United States today is greater than when the Bolsheviks overthrew the Kerenski government and took over Russia, and stronger in the U.S. than in some other countries before the take-over. It has always been agreed that the percent of Communist infiltration prior to their taking over a country has been around two percent or four percent.

PLAYBOY: Whom do you number among this two percent?

HUNT: It would serve no purpose to try to name them, for the people of the U.S.A.

who have all to lose are not sufficiently concerned themselves to find out who they are. Needless to say, however, they are here. The United States cannot afford to permit the Communists to continue taking over from the free world two or three hundred million people per year.

PLAYBOY: Do you think communism has made inroads in the U.S. since Johnson became President?

HUNT: Indeed I do. The demonstrations throughout the nation favoring our Communist enemies and the actions of members of Congress in opposing our war effort indicate Communist inroads. Johnson can be commended in the personnel he is using abroad only in the appointment of Admiral Raborn as the director of the CIA.

PLAYBOY: In general, what do you think of Johnson's foreign policy?

HUNT: I don't approve of Santo Domingo.

PLAYBOY: What don't you approve of?

HUNT: We sent troops in there to prevent the Communists from setting up another beachhead in the Western Hemisphere.

PLAYBOY: You don't think we should have?

HUNT: Of course we should have. But then, after Johnson was advised by McGeorge Bundy and Averell Harriman, the actions that have been taken since then, so far as I can tell—unless changed—will help set up a Communist government there.

PLAYBOY: What actions?

HUNT: Twenty thousand U.S. troops were sent into the Dominican Republic and prevented an immediate Communist seizure of that country. Then President Johnson sent Harriman and McGeorge Bundy to formulate a policy there, and General Wessin y Wessin and other prominent non-Communists were forced into exile.

PLAYBOY: There's been no evidence of a Communist take-over since then. What do you think of Johnson's handling of the war in Vietnam?

HUNT: I think that it would be better to listen to the MacArthur school of thought—General Courtney Whitney, General A. C. Wedemeyer, General Van Fleet, General Bonner Fellers and younger men trained by them. Whatever this school of thought would advise, I think should be followed.

PLAYBOY: What do you think they would advise?

HUNT: That we try to win it, by bombing North Vietnam as much as necessary, by blockading North Vietnam, by using Asiatic troops as far as possible—from South Korea and the Philippines—and by taking advantage of Nationalist China's large and well-trained army.

PLAYBOY: What do you think of our refraining from bombing Hanoi?

HUNT: I think we must do whatever we can to win the war.

PLAYBOY: If we were to bomb Hanoi, do

you think the Red Chinese might enter the war?

HUNT: They're doing an awful lot there now, I suspect. We should do whatever the MacArthur-trained group of strategists thinks.

PLAYBOY: But what if Red China were to send an army into Vietnam?

HUNT: We should do whatever our generals advise us to do.

PLAYBOY: Including bombing China?

HUNT: If that is what they advise, yes.

PLAYBOY: A number of conservatives have proposed that we destroy Red China's nuclear capabilities now, before they become a strong nuclear power. Are you in favor of this?

HUNT: It might not be too bad an idea. Certainly if we had done this to Russia, as General George C. Kenney recommended—which we easily could have done in the 1950s—I feel we wouldn't have nearly as many problems as we do today in the world. Our country would be a good deal more secure. Maybe knocking out Red China's nuclear installations now would prevent China's touching off a Third World War. Five years from now, we might wish we had done it.

PLAYBOY: You wish that we had knocked out the Soviet Union's nuclear capacity?

HUNT: Yes. General Kenney, who was in charge of the Air Force in the Pacific, unfolded a plan to me in 1950 that the U. S. A. should put loaded bombers over Moscow, accompanied by transport planes which could pick up and convey Russia's nuclear material out of Russia, and tell "Joe" that we would drop the bombs unless they placed their material in our transports. At that time we had more than ten times as many bombs as Russia, and the means of conveying them. They would have been forced to surrender their nuclear equipment. This or some similar actions should have been taken then.

PLAYBOY: Even if the plan had worked, wouldn't we have alienated world-wide public opinion?

HUNT: It is through weakness—not strength—that we lose esteem in the world. A workable plan of the above nature should be put into use today—to put an end to Red China's nuclear power. Otherwise the lives of millions of Americans will be destroyed.

PLAYBOY: Do you think we would be morally justified in doing this?

HUNT: We shouldn't send our soldiers over to Vietnam to fight in the jungles without supporting them in every way. The very least we can do for them is to face up to the stiff decisions we will someday have to make anyhow.

PLAYBOY: Don't you think bombing Red China's nuclear installations might touch off World War Three?

HUNT: No, I don't think so. The Communists are defeating us without forcing a showdown. Why should they make the same mistake Hitler made? He might



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have defeated the world if he had been more patient; I think that the Communists have learned from his mistakes. Besides, China is helpless against our nuclear power, and I don't believe that the Soviets would come to her aid if we took this move. If they did, they would be aiding a deadly enemy. If the Soviets thought China could destroy the U.S. alone, they would probably aid China, but they know Red China would have no chance with the United States in a war—unless our activities were directed by strange persons with a twisted education who would prefer we be defeated.

PLAYBOY: What "strange persons"?

HUNT: If people would read more anti-Communist literature, they'd find out for themselves that there are some people in Government who always seem to come out on the losing side in their dealings with the enemy.

PLAYBOY: Would you care to name them?

HUNT: I think people should find out for themselves.

PLAYBOY: Isn't there an alternative to war? Might there not be a chance of bringing Red China peacefully into the world community by admitting it to the United Nations?

HUNT: I think that the UN is so nonconstructive that it doesn't make much difference—though I think it soon *will* be admitted, because of the left-leaning tendencies of too many UN members.

PLAYBOY: How is the UN, as you say, nonconstructive? What about its role in settling the Suez and Congo crises, among others?

HUNT: I don't think the settlement of the Suez crisis was favorable to the United States. And in the Congo we ended up furnishing planes to fly UN troops into Katanga to butcher people who were the U.S.'s sincere friends in the Congo. Some UN funds have been used to help Castro's agriculture. We pay out of proportion to support the UN, while some don't bother to pay their dues at all. This has the effect of sometimes conveying our money to our enemies.

PLAYBOY: Would you like to see us get out of the UN?

HUNT: Certainly.

PLAYBOY: What would that accomplish?

HUNT: We would do better in the worldwide struggle against communism, I feel. The UN wasn't organized to help the United States. No freedom-loving nation will gain from participation in the UN. It's controlled by Communists who can win a vote any time they wish.

PLAYBOY: If that's true, why hasn't Red China been admitted?

HUNT: Because, though they pretend they do, the Soviets don't really want them admitted. They are rivals for leadership of the Communist world, and apparently the Soviets feel that keeping Red China out helps them stay on top. Thus it's not the U.S. but the U.S.S.R. that's

keeping China out. The UN is very seldom on the side of the United States. By remaining in the UN, all we do is lend it respectability—and funds. If we would withdraw, it would have little of either. We would become the leader of the freedom forces of the world, instead of being a helpless hanger-on with those who want to destroy us.

PLAYBOY: Do you think we should also withdraw diplomatic recognition from Communist countries?

HUNT: There's nothing to gain by recognizing them. The Communists can't feed their own people and they cannot manufacture and distribute industrial products in a way that makes economic sense. If we would quit helping them out in any way, I think they would become helpless and collapse.

PLAYBOY: Then you're against all trade with Iron Curtain countries?

HUNT: I think it's a sure way for us to destroy ourselves.

PLAYBOY: Even if the trade were restricted to nonstrategic goods?

HUNT: Just about everything is strategic to them. Whatever the enemy wants to buy from us is only what he needs most.

PLAYBOY: Do you consider wheat strategic?

HUNT: The Communist enemy will always need food more than guns and munitions. If we keep them fed, why, they will be able later to fight on full stomachs. I'd rather see the Communists starve than see them killing our boys, like they're doing right now in Vietnam.

PLAYBOY: What do you think of our foreign-aid program?

HUNT: I think that if it were put to a vote, the American people would choose to end it. You know, each billion dollars our Government wastes—and foreign aid is a waste—costs the average American family \$25. So far, we've thrown about 130 billion dollars down the foreign-aid rat hole. That's enough money for each family to send a youngster through college.

PLAYBOY: Don't you think foreign aid has helped rebuild Europe and raise the economies of underdeveloped nations?

HUNT: Not really. Much of it went to build the economy of nations which were becoming Socialist or Communist—Yugoslavia, for example. Foreign aid to other countries often actually hurts the economy of the country to which the aid is given, as has been the case in Bolivia and Laos. Gifts to the slavemasters will never help the slaves.

PLAYBOY: Do you take an equally dim view of Peace Corps assistance?

HUNT: No. I'm under the impression that its conduct abroad has not been the miserable failure that the Job Corps has been at home. In countries where the Peace Corps is helpful, the U. S. taxpayers may be justified in keeping up the assistance.

PLAYBOY: Do you think we have any moral obligation to help other countries?

HUNT: We have an obligation to help those countries that have been of help to us; otherwise there is none.

PLAYBOY: If we don't help other countries, don't you think the Russians will—and win their friendship by doing so?

HUNT: You can't buy friends. In any case, the Soviets don't constructively help the citizens of any country—including their own. They gain their standing with other countries through deceitful propaganda.

PLAYBOY: How do you think the United States is faring in the Cold War?

HUNT: Pretty badly. The Communists are advancing and, at least most of the time, we are retreating. We are happy when we can say that we haven't lost any ground to the Reds in a while, or at least not very much. But we should be asking ourselves where we have advanced freedom's line, where they have lost territories to the free world, where we have liberated people held in Communist slavery. The answer is that our victories are very few, and theirs are plentiful. We are losing the Cold War.

PLAYBOY: Where are we losing?

HUNT: Almost everywhere. Right now we don't seem to be losing to Communist infiltration in Indonesia and a few other countries, but I think this is almost entirely because of Admiral Raborn, whom President Johnson put in charge of the CIA. Wherever we are not aiding our enemies, we are faring quite well.

PLAYBOY: How can we avoid aiding our enemies?

HUNT: For one thing, by ceasing to use personnel in fighting communism who have always been unsuccessful in opposing communism—and that would apply to Harriman, Rusk and Lodge. We should use personnel who have not lost in diplomatic struggles with the Communists.

PLAYBOY: You speak of opposing communism. Do you believe that the aims of all Communist countries are essentially the same, and equally inimical to the U. S., or do you think that they have differences among themselves that we can exploit?

HUNT: They have their petty differences, of course, but they are also capable of putting on a good show. They—the Russians and the Chinese—both want to bury us. What difference does it make to us which one of them does it? Just because the Russians and Chinese spat, we shouldn't forget that both countries are dedicated to destroy us and enslave our people.

PLAYBOY: How can we keep them from burying us?

HUNT: By ceasing to furnish them with the rope with which to hang us, by ceasing to assist them throughout the world in any way, by remaining strong and, as I said, by using Government personnel who are strongly pro-American.

PLAYBOY: Do you think that there is any

likelihood of our reaching a peaceful accommodation with the Soviet Union?

HUNT: Let me say this: If we do, we're gone. If we reach an accommodation with the Soviets, it will be for the benefit of the Soviets and to our detriment. The Soviet leaders have repeatedly explained this to us for more than 40 years.

PLAYBOY: Do you see any validity in the prediction of some ideologists that our political systems could converge—with the Soviet Union's becoming more capitalistic and ours becoming more socialistic—until we develop what some have called "areas of mutual self-interest"?

HUNT: If we get to that point, I think that the freedoms we still enjoy today will have become a thing of the past. If we and the Soviets start having overlapping interests, one thing they certainly won't be interested in is seeing that we remain free. As far as I'm concerned, this so-called peaceful coexistence means that we are peaceful while they try to do us in. It's nothing more than surrender on the installment plan.

PLAYBOY: Do you think it's possible that the Soviet Union and the United States might one day find it mutually beneficial to join in a military alliance against Red China?

HUNT: That might be a possibility. Twelve years ago, I began to fear the Chinese Communists more than the Soviet Communists, because I think that their appeal is more effective in some areas of the non-Communist world. I don't rule out the possibility of our joining with Russia against China, but if it ever comes to that, I think we will be destroyed in the process—by Russia, if she can, or by China, if she can.

PLAYBOY: What do you think are the prospects of nuclear disarmament?

HUNT: Very poor, fortunately. I think it would be fatal for us. If we don't have superior arms, why, the superior numbers that are against us will destroy us. Disarmament could work only if all men were saints, and they're not—especially the Communists. Khrushchev once said that the last obstacle to a Communist world was the military might of the United States. I see no reason to remove that obstacle.

PLAYBOY: Your opposition to disarmament, your advocacy of pre-emptive nuclear attack on Russia and Red China, and most of the other views you've expressed here are echoed regularly on your *Life Line* radio series. *The New Republic* once wrote in an editorial that *Life Line* broadcasts "the kind of program . . . that the brooding Oswalds of the left or right wing listen to and sometimes act on." Does *Life Line* incite to violence?

HUNT: *Life Line* can best be judged by its listeners rather than by what I say about it. Oswald was a Marxist and *Life Line* could not incite a Marxist to violence, as they are dedicated to their

own cause—which is to destroy liberty. It is likely that President Kennedy's disapproval of communism, including his speech in Miami three days before his assassination—encouraging Cubans to regain their homeland—cost him his life.

PLAYBOY: Are you implying that the assassination was a left-wing conspiracy?

HUNT: I'm not trying to imply anything, and I really don't know the answer to that question. By the way, you might be interested to know that the UPI quoted Senator Maurine Neuberger a few minutes after the assassination to the effect that if anyone is responsible for the assassination, it is H. L. Hunt of Dallas, Texas. Well, soon after that, my house began receiving a few friendly calls of warning and many threatening calls to the effect that I would be shot next, and also to tell Mrs. Hunt she would be shot. My office force would not consent to either of us going home even to get our clothing. We were sent out of town, and neither the police department nor the FBI would consent to us returning to Dallas until a few days before Christmas.

PLAYBOY: The German magazine *Der Stern* claims that you financed the famous full-page anti-Kennedy advertisement that appeared in *The Dallas Morning News* the day of the assassination. Did you?

HUNT: No.

PLAYBOY: Did you know that the book *Oswald: Assassin or Fall Guy*—and several other books and articles—implied that the assassination of President Kennedy was a right-wing conspiracy in which you were involved?

HUNT: I have heard that. As I said earlier, the assassination of President John F. Kennedy was the greatest blow ever suffered by the cause of liberty. I know of no one who is critical of communism who would have wanted President Kennedy assassinated.

PLAYBOY: In *Oswald: Assassin or Fall Guy*, the author, Joachim Joesten, claimed that President Kennedy intended to make you and other oil millionaires pay a greatly increased amount of income tax. "With that kind of money at stake," Joesten wrote, "murder, even Presidential murder, is not out of the question." That borders on a very serious charge against you. What do you have to say about this?

HUNT: Before the 1960 elections, the Kennedys were in the oil business. Congress, rather than the President, formulates the law applicable to oil products. I was never apprehensive about President Kennedy's attitude. I had never heard of Oswald. After the assassination, I heard that the Justice Department had caused previous charges against Oswald to be dropped—which made it possible for him to be available to shoot anyone he might decide to shoot.

[According to the Warren Commission,

there were no previous charges against Oswald.—Ed.]

PLAYBOY: Are you saying that the FBI, as part of the Justice Department, was negligent in failing to inform the Secret Service of Oswald's presence in Dallas just before the assassination?

HUNT: No, I do not think that the FBI was negligent.

PLAYBOY: The Warren Commission felt it was. What did you think of its report?

HUNT: The Warren Commission followed a demand by *The Worker* three days previous to the appointment of the Commission that such a commission be established and headed by Earl Warren.

PLAYBOY: Are you implying that the Warren Commission was Communist-inspired, or that there should have been no investigation?

HUNT: *The Worker*, in a front-page statement, made a demand that the President appoint a commission. There would have been an investigation in any case, but it's interesting that its formation followed a demand in *The Worker*. The Senate Judiciary Committee, as is customary in highly important occurrences, was setting up a subcommittee to investigate the assassination. This was stopped by the naming of the Warren Commission. The subcommittee would not have tried to protect anyone, including friends of *The Worker*.

PLAYBOY: Are you implying that the Warren Commission did protect anyone, including friends of *The Worker*?

HUNT: The report as released speaks for itself. *The Worker* reported Warren said some disclosures regarding the assassination "may not be released in your lifetime." His first Supreme Court decisions where communism was involved—62 for, 3 against the Communist attorneys' arguments—are on record.

PLAYBOY: Attorney Melvin Belli said that he was offered \$100,000 not to defend Jack Ruby, and some have speculated that the offer came from you. Did it?

HUNT: I never had any contact with Melvin Belli, except that he caused me to be subpoenaed to testify before him, but later caused the subpoena to be canceled.

PLAYBOY: Why did he subpoena you? And why did he cancel it?

HUNT: I do not know why Belli subpoenaed me or canceled the subpoena.

PLAYBOY: Belli also said: "I was absolutely awed by the speed and ruthless efficiency with which Dallas' multimillionaires retaliated against me for my uncharitable remarks to the press about their fair city." Did you participate in any such reprisals?

HUNT: I knew nothing of Attorney Belli and paid no attention to his quarrel with his client, the court or the city. Nearly all of the rumors I have heard regarding me are untrue, and this one is no exception. Some of these malicious stories are started and circulated by per-

sons who don't like or disapprove of me personally, and some are spread by persons who don't like anti-Communists. Some foundations pay good writers for writing stories discrediting active anti-Communists like me.

PLAYBOY: What foundations?

HUNT: Anti-Communists know them, and the general public will eventually learn. I'd rather not get specific.

PLAYBOY: Why not?

HUNT: I often refrain from disclosing the whole truth because most people—including most of the people who will read this interview—are not ready to receive certain facts. I have no inclination to stuff my opinions and information down anyone's throat. In these hazardous times, people owe it to themselves to find out the facts on the important issues. They'll find it a splendid recreation and diversion, I feel. But I recommend to them that they work less hours per day at this job than I do.

PLAYBOY: Why do you work so hard at it?

HUNT: I don't want to retire. When I was a kid in Illinois, I noticed that the old farmers would sell their land and move to town, and they generally died within one or two years. I decided then that it is always better to keep on doing things.

PLAYBOY: Are you a happy man?

HUNT: Yes, quite.

PLAYBOY: What makes you happy?

HUNT: My family and my associates. I take great pride in the people that work for me. I've enjoyed seeing some of them get rich on their own when they left me.

PLAYBOY: Speaking for yourself, could you give it all up? Could you be happy without a fortune?

HUNT: Yes, I could give it all up—though perhaps not gladly. But there is little happiness, and a lot of trouble, in possessing a fortune. Happiness comes from pride of accomplishment. That's the great joy, and it can be realized by a very small entrepreneur or by a wage earner, large or small. This is the reason that private enterprise is so highly preferable to socialism and communism. So long as individual initiative is not sadly hampered with unnecessary regulations and restrictions, communism has a poor chance to win and take over.

PLAYBOY: Apart from socialism and communism, do you fear anything else?

HUNT: No, I have no particular fears. I am a health enthusiast, and I stay quite healthy, and I presume I will live a long time. But if I don't, well, that will be all right, too.

PLAYBOY: Is there some special goal you'd still like to achieve?

HUNT: Well, I think sometimes that I would like to go broke just to see if I could start from scratch and build a fortune again.

PLAYBOY: Do you think you could?

HUNT: It would be fun to try.