

Julius Klein PR Inc.

The Image Builder Was Always His Own Best Client

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Public relations has been defined as the craft of calculated lily-gilding. It offers made-to-order images, tailored to the specifications of the client.

As an international PR craftsman, Chicago's Julius Klein has always been his own best client. Julius Klein Public Relations, Inc. has accordingly created an image of Julius Klein that Walter Mitty might envy.

He emerges, under the agency's handling, as a "distinguished" war correspondent in Germany at age 13, a "dough-boy" in the American expeditionary forces at 17, and, at 18, a "member" of the U.S. Military Commission in Berlin.



JULIUS KLEIN

In the 1920s, he married a countess and lived the glamorous life of a Hearst "editor" during the brawling and boozing era of Chicago journalism. The next stop was Hollywood as a "\$75,000-a-year" movie executive. Then came World War II, service with Gen. MacArthur, medals for "heroism" in the Pacific and, finally, the two stars of a major general.

At the war's end, he began a new career as a cold war "consultant" and "adviser" to Congress, to foreign officials, and to the Republican Party. He acquired "more friends in the Senate and House of Representatives than any man I know," said Sen. Hubert Humphrey in 1962 in a statement that Julius Klein PR, Inc., has distributed throughout the United States and Europe.

In the process of this full career, Klein found time to compose "important works" of literature, to supply the Defense Department with its "first dossier on subversion," and to serve, at some undefined point in his career, as a "Washington correspondent."

The image of Julius Klein, in short, was almost too good to be true. It commanded for him fees of \$150,000 a year as a professional image-maker and armed him with such real or imagined influence that he is now suspected of having made an "errand boy" of a sovereign Senator of the United States, Thomas J. Dodd (D-Conn.).

The curious nature of the Klein-Dodd relationship will be explored this week by the Senate Ethics Committee. The Committee will want to know whether the

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Senator performed any improper services for Klein or merely seemed to have done so.

The more interesting (if less momentous) question, however, involves Klein himself. Is the image real?

It begins with the listing in "Who's Who" of his career as a "war correspondent." It is a fact that Klein was in Germany when World War I began. He was a 12-year-old schoolboy at the Sophien Gymnasium in Berlin.

It is also a fact that he was a "correspondent" because he wrote an article for the school newspaper about Kaiser Wilhelm's declaration of war. "The Kaiser," young Klein wrote, "spoke glorious words to his people in this dreadful hour of need." Klein has produced no other record of his wartime writings.

The next phase of his career involves his service as a "doughboy" and as a "member" of the U.S. Military Commission in Berlin in World War I.

Pentagon records reveal that Klein—by lying about his age—got a job with the U.S. Army in Berlin as an office boy approximately one month after the war ended. He was employed by the U.S. Military Commission for the next eight months—in an undefined clerical capacity—but there is no record at the Defense Department that he was ever a "member" of the Commission or that he was ever a "doughboy" except in the technical sense that he was in the Army.

His career as an "editor" for Hearst is likewise hazy. Hearst representatives here have no records of his service on the now-defunct Herald-Examiner in Chicago. But Walter Trohan, the white-haired Washington bureau chief for the Chicago Tribune, remembers Klein well.

"He was a promoter," said Trohan, and one of his promotion stunts got him a punch in the face.

As part of its campaign to win readers, the Herald-Examiner sponsored a relief train for victims of a Florida hurricane in the late 1920s. Klein managed to plant in one edition of the Tribune—Hearst's bitter competitor in Chicago—a picture of the train draped in a banner: "Herald-Examiner Mercy Train."

This stunt almost cost a Tribune picture editor his job. It infuriated Trohan who knocked Klein down the next time he saw him.

One of the many alumni of Julius Klein Public Relations, Inc. recalls that Klein relishes the story of his beating by Trohan and told it often as evidence of their happy days together as drinking buddies in the Roaring 20s.

Another of Klein's stories from that era is that after being fired by the Herald-Examiner one day he set out to get his job back through William Randolph Hearst. Klein traveled to New York, rented a dress suit, and crashed a party Hearst was attending. The publisher was so impressed by Klein's brass that he rehired him on the spot and took him back to Chicago in his private railroad car.

Trohan recalls that during this period Klein had other business interests. He pub-

lished, said Trohan, a German-language newspaper that appeared only at election time and was circulated primarily in the Republican campaign headquarters.

Whether this advanced Klein's political ambitions is uncertain, but he was in any event, Republican candidate for Congress in Illinois in 1932 and like most Republicans that year had no luck at the polls.

(He was no more successful 12 years later when he ran ninth in a field of eleven candidates seeking the Republican nomination for the Senate.)

Klein's career in Hollywood, by his own account, involved jobs as "story editor" of Universal Studios and RKO studios, and I used to make \$50,000 to \$75,000 a year as an editor." The motion picture encyclopedia produced by the copyright office of the Library of Congress contains no picture credits for Klein. His name, in fact, is not even listed, although the Motion Picture Association here remembers him as a sometime public relations man for the late Louis B. Mayer, head of MGM.

The biographies Klein and Julius Klein PR, Inc. have prepared of Klein's military service in World War II are in harmony with the records of the Defense Department. But there are implications in Klein's recital of events susceptible to misinterpretation.

Awarded Soldier's Medal

He was an officer with the quartermaster corps and was engaged in the task of storing and moving supplies. Whether he ever saw any combat in the Pacific is unclear but it is true, as Klein has reorted that he was awarded the Soldier's Medal for "heroism" and "bravery." This medal is ordinarily awarded, according to the Pentagon, to soldiers who perform lifesaving feats in peacetime or outside zones of combat.

In Klein's case, the medal was awarded for saving one of more trucks from destruction on New Caledonia. By accident, an American ammunition dump caught fire and shells began to explode. Klein went to the scene and, according to his citation, rescued "military vehicles."

Klein earned other decorations for Administrative efficiency and in 1946 was attached for several months to the office of Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson as a public relations man.

The following year Klein was elected national commander of the Jewish War Veterans, a happy circumstance that seems

to have been a political and economic turning point in his career.

As the head of one of the national veterans lobbies (100,000 members in 1966), Klein was welcome in various important offices in Washington. Among the people he called on at that time was Gen. Dwight Eisenhower who was later to send him a congratulatory telegram in connection with the proceedings of the National Convention of the J.W.V.

(This telegram, like so much of the correspondence Klein received, was subsequently reproduced by Julius Klein Public Relations, Inc. and was widely circulated in pamphlet form.)

Another friend acquired by Klein at this time was Hubert Humphrey. They met in connection with J.W.V. affairs while Humphrey was the Mayor of Minneapolis. "I have had a personal friendship with him ever since that day," Humphrey said in 1955 and demonstrated his affection by praising Klein in a Senate speech: "(He) enjoys the good will and respect of both Democrats and Republicans."

Klein's position with the J.W.V. and the fact that he was a Republican led to his appointment in 1948 as a "defense consultant" to the Republican National Committee and to his selection that year as a delegate to the Republican National Convention. He endeared himself then, and again in 1952, to Robert A. Taft by sticking loyally to the Senator's cause. Taft didn't get the nomination either time but Klein got Taft's support and the support of other Republican conservatives, such as the late Sen. Styles Bridges, in ventures that were yet to come.

Campaign Contributions

Klein still calls himself a "Taft Republican" but is not politically prejudiced so far as money is concerned. His campaign contributions have gone to such diverse figures as Dodd, Sen. Jacob Javits, an anti-Taft Republican from New York, and, in 1961, to the "President Kennedy Birthday Dinner."

Klein once made a spur of the moment offer to Tennessee's liberal Democratic Sen. Albert Gore to "call on me at any time as long as we can't elect a Republican in Tennessee. . ." Gore declined the offer.

In any case, Klein cemented himself with Taft, Bridges and others by his performance as a convention delegate and by his performance in 1951 when Gen. Douglas MacArthur was fired by President Truman.

Klein flew out to San Francisco upon MacArthur's return, got near enough to him to invite him to Chicago where Klein promised him a hero's welcome and a 17-gun salute from the Illinois National Guard. By that time Klein, had gotten an appointment from a Republican Governor as a Brigadier General in the guard. But the MacArthur salute never took place. It was called off by National Guard officials and soon thereafter Klein's Guard unit was abolished.

Accuses Stevenson

This gave Klein the opening for one of his most celebrated gambits. He charged that Adlai Stevenson, who was then Governor of Illinois, had abolished his unit (and Klein's job as a general) in retaliation for Klein's

loyalty to MacArthur. He further charged that Stevenson's action had stripped Chicago of her air defenses and left the city helpless against a potential enemy attack.

The Republican Party, eager for campaign issues in 1951 and 1952, repeated these charges and demanded that Klein be restored to his command. Even Hubert Humphrey, by then a Senator, was critical of the Illinois action.

Another version of what happened to Klein was later given in Washington by Maj. Gen. Harry L. Bolen, commander of the 44th Division of the Illinois National Guard.

Klein's story, said Bolen, was a "damned lie." The unit Klein commanded "couldn't shoot at a kid's box kite . . . we need (that unit) like I need a damned buggy whip on my jeep . . . that kind of man (Klein) is dangerous and we can't have him in the Illinois National Guard and I threw him out. Stevenson didn't and I am a Republican."

Promoted in Guard

Stevenson left the governorship in 1952 and was replaced by a Republican, William Stratton, who gave Klein his National Guard job back and promoted him to major general.

Whatever the reasons for Klein's firing by Bolen in 1951, the incident strengthened his ties to Taft and Bridges.

As chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee in 1954, Bridges appointed Klein an unpaid "consultant" to the Armed Services Subcommittee. Wearing that title, Klein embarked on a 10-week tour of Europe, wrote a report on global affairs, and recommended—among other things—that the United States should re-examine its policy on the seizure of German property in the United States after World War II.

By coincidence, perhaps, Klein developed in this period a professional interest in the status of German assets in this country.

He was hired at \$40,000 a year plus expenses by the "Society for the Promotion and Protection of Foreign Investments," located at Cologne, Germany. His task, Sen. George Smathers (D-Fla.) declared in 1957, was to "promote through public relations . . . the spirit of the protection of private property." Smathers said Klein was able to plant in the journal of International Investment Law Conference a plug for the "sanctity of private property" and within two weeks got the same plug printed in the

Congressional Record on March 9, 1956.

Klein later denied for a Senate Committee that he had done more than promote the concept of "sanctity" for private property and insisted that he had never directly lobbied for the return of German assets. But his position in this affair was sufficiently ambiguous that it caused a furor in the Jewish War Veterans, which had taken a strong position against any repatriation of assets to the Germans. In the end, Klein quit the J.W.V.

The loss of that connection was compensated by the gain of new clients in Germany, who were evidently attracted by the image Klein and Julius Klein Public Relations, Inc. could offer—Major General, war hero, journalist, confident of the mighty, past commander of the J.W.V.

His first big German client (other than the Society at Cologne) was Bayer Aspirin, at a reported fee of \$25,000 a year. Bayer was followed by Daimler-Benz (\$35,000), Mannesmann of Dusseldorf (\$50,000), and the Flick company (about \$35,000).

Klein's services to these clients had little to do with the craft of public relations or image making. His company—Julius Klein PR, Inc.—and his Washington office in particular represented them primarily as commercial representatives.

Klein's image-making talents came into play later, when the Society for German-American Co-operation was formed in Wiesbaden. Its function has never been made clear and Klein has often said he has never been entirely sure who he was working for except that his employers were neither Nazis nor Communists.

The Society's organizers were not all strangers to Klein, however. They included some of his commercial clients and some of the men who had been involved in the old Society for the Promotion and Protection of Foreign Investments.

Meeting With Sponsors

They were persuaded by Klein that he was needed to advise them but the Germans were never entirely sure what it was that Klein was doing for them. At a meeting with the Society's sponsors in 1963, a banker told Klein he didn't understand the difference between "PR" and advertising.

Klein's reply, contained in a summary of that meeting, was a classic statement in which he took pride:

"J.K. (Klein) considered this the most important question of the evening and stated that in Germany the true nature of public relations was not yet adequately understood. J.K. tried to translate P.R. as public acceptance. He said it was an expensive technique and one of its most important aspects was preventive P.R.

"J. K. told how in America the public relations director of any given firm occupies an important position on the Board of his firm . . . He also told how in addition to inside P. R. most firms employ outside P. R. just as in addition to a legal house counsel, outside attorneys were employed or, for that matter, outside physicians.

"J. K. explained further the wisdom of large American firms which during the war,

even though they did not have the merchandise to sell, continued with their P. R. activities and thus were the first ones to be successful after the war when merchandise again became available."

For this, the Germans agreed to pay him between \$125,000 and \$150,000 a year. What they thought they were getting is suggested by a prospectus Klein's office prepared for another potential client:

"General Klein is well known to persons high in the Executive and Legislative branches of the United States Government, as well as of the government of the Federal Republic of Germany. This personal, respected standing, along with those of his American and German executives, who enjoy close contact with the top echelons of government

and business, assures a client the most receptive attention from those who form policy and render decisions."

In support of this image as a political mover and shaker, Julius Klein PR, Inc. prepared at various times elaborate publicity packages containing reproductions of all the famous autographs Klein had collected, as well as reprints of laudatory articles put into the Congressional record at Klein's behest.

Klein's benefactors in this image-making effort included Rep. Emmanuel Celler (D-N.Y.), Sen. Edward V. Long (D-Mo.), Sens. Javits and Keating of New York, Humphrey, Bridges, Dodd, and the late Sen. Estes Kefauver (D-Tenn.), who also was a frequent Essex House guest of Klein.

Whether their favors demonstrated Klein's influence is uncertain. But in any case, there is no evidence that Klein ever attempted to use "influence" on behalf of his clients. He only used it, his associates have said, on behalf of Julius Klein.

Lunches Arranged

Helen Batherson, who managed his Washington office for twelve years, recalls performing no particular services for the Society for German-American Co-operation.

"We didn't do anything for them, that I can recall," she told The Washington Post, "except to arrange lunches with Senators and people when they would visit here. Senator Bridges used to let us use the private dining room of the Appropriations Committee but General Klein paid the bills. Senator Dodd and Senator Javits were co-hosts at one luncheon but the General paid for it."

No matter, the Society paid Klein \$502,706.86 between 1960 and 1963. For their money, they got, according to Klein's reports to the Justice Department, several visits a year from the General (at the Society's expense), occasional reprints of articles praising Klein's patriotism, and sporadic copies of the "Overseas Report," a house organ put out by Julius Klein PR, Inc. The House organ, Klein has said, was a "self-serving" document, designed to "let my clients and readers think it is in their interest, but it is really in my interest."

By 1963, Klein's image was beginning to

erode. He was called before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to explain what he did to earn his money. When the inquiry ended, Sen. J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.) held up Klein as an example of a man who "by exaggeration or misuse of his relationships with members of Congress can, for his own purposes, create for government officials and business interests a mistaken and sometimes unflattering picture of how our government institutions function."

Klein's pride was hurt and so was his purse. He lost the Bayer account, the Mannesman account, the Flick account, and Daimler-Benz. The Society for German-American Co-operation developed second thoughts about PR and about Klein and held up payment of his fees.

It was then that Klein turned to Dodd, to Javits and to others for help. He wanted them to assure his German employers that his old image was real, that he was an important and influential man. He tried repeatedly to get Humphrey after he became Vice President, according to Miss Batherson, but Humphrey wouldn't answer the calls or agree to see Klein. "We had worn out our welcome," she said, "and it got to be embarrassing to keep calling but the General insisted on it." Javits' office began referring to the General as "a pest."

But Javits did go to Germany and so did Dodd. Klein claimed to Dodd that Javits had helped repair the Klein image and that Dodd should do no less. Whether Dodd helped him is for the Ethics Committee to determine.