

Washington Merry-Go-Round

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Big Arab Loan Spurned by Mayor Beame

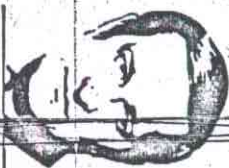
Washington — New York City's embattled Mayor Abraham Beame, in desperate need of money to save the city from bankruptcy, nevertheless turned down a secret \$2.8 billion loan offer in Arab petro dollars.

We have traced the mysterious financial proposal from the Persian Gulf to London and New York. George Meisner, a private attorney, approached the mayor with the offer about two months ago. The \$2.8 billion could be made available through London and New York. George Meisner, a private attorney, approached the mayor with the offer about two months ago. The \$2.8 billion could be made available through London's Burlington Bank, he said.

The city used the American Bank and Trust to verify the offer. Stanley Kreitman, the bank president, acknowledged his role in the negotiations. The terms, he said, called for a compounded 8.8 percent interest, with all principal and interest payable in 20 years. The money would have been paid out in increments of \$950 million every 90 days.

A MAJOR STUMBLING BLOCK. According to other sources, was that four large New York City banks had to guarantee repayment. The city failed to obtain the guarantee, but a source close to the negotiations blamed Mayor Beame's "uncooperative attitude."

For example, a lender's agent waited two weeks in a New York City hotel for Beame to contact him, but the mayor never bothered to get in touch



Jack Anderson with Les Whitten

The loan offer was finally withdrawn Oct. 20, although it could still be reopposed if the mayor acted quickly.

Our sources asked us not to identify the Arab nation which offered to bail out New York City. They speculated that the mayor, who must answer to a large Jewish population, considered it impossible politically for him to accept Arab petrodollars.

ASSASSINATION MEMO: In earlier columns we reported that the FBI had withheld hundreds of internal documents about the John F. Kennedy assassination from the Warren Commission. An FBI spokesman, while acknowledging that certain documents hadn't been delivered, insisted that no facts had been covered up.

One of the suppressed documents, now in our possession, is a summary of the FBI's interview on Dec. 11, 1963, with Gov. and Mrs. John Connally at St. David's Hospital in Austin. This document was routed by the FBI's criminal chief, Alex Rosen, to Director J. Edgar Hoover's personal assistant, Alan Belmont. Connally stated, according to the

memo, that "the lapses of time between the shots... was 'unbelievably quick.' He stated that he saw 'no gun,' but felt 'the shots came from a building behind them.'"

The summary follows closely the information that the FBI submitted to the Warren Commission. But it seems subtly to play down Connally's uncertainty about the source of the shots.

In the original report, Connally seems in doubt about which of three buildings was the source of the firing. But in the summary, only a single building is mentioned. This coincides with the version of the shooting then being circulated by the FBI.

Sources who have seen most of the suppressed documents, however, say they don't contradict the Warren Commission's final verdict.

RED SMEAR: A secret cable from the days of the Truman Administration shows that character assassination of newsmen did not begin with Richard Nixon and his crew.

In 1947, CBS had approached correspondent David Schoenbrun and offered him a top news job in Paris. But right-wingers in the U.S. Embassy there, furious over Schoenbrun's criticism of U.S. cold war policy, tried to torpedo the appointment.

Over Ambassador Jefferson Caffery's signature, a secret cable was sent to Secretary of State George Marshall seeking falsely to brand Schoenbrun as a Communist.

The correspondent and his wife, said the secret message, maintained "close relations with important mem-

bers of the French Communist Party." This is exactly what newsmen are supposed to do: keep close ties with all kinds of news sources.

But Caffery went on to say that the Schoenbruns "have reputations of being at least fellow travelers; if not members of the Communist Party..." In conversations, Schoenbrun is reported to follow the straight Moscow line.

The secret cable, which only now has come to light, subtly suggested that Marshall intervene with CBS to keep Schoenbrun from getting the job.

"The use 'which a person of such tendencies could make of the very important post of CBS representative in Paris is too obvious to require comment,'" cabled Caffery.

But the fair-minded Marshall, who himself was later a target of McCarthyism, responded to the embassy's poison pen cable by inviting Schoenbrun to a cocktail party.

WORLD EVENTS proved how scurrilous was the Caffery attack. A few years later Schoenbrun was denounced by the Communists and at one time reportedly marked for death.

Footnote: Schoenbrun, who brilliantly served CBS for 16 years and is still an active TV commentator, had heard of the cable but never knew its exact contents until we reached him. We have confirmed from intelligence sources that government files are full of such slanderous material on newsmen and others, and nothing is being done to purge them.