

INVISIBLE GOVERN

Damning Knowledge

MENT — PART II

Of Hughes, Nixon

(Editor's note: Once outside of the Howard Hughes empire, former Hughes aide John Meier became a threat and wheels were set in motion to stop him, including interfering with a U.S. Senatorial election, in Part Two of The Invisible Government).

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Few people are naive enough to think that John Meier's supposed \$9 million embezzlement from Howard Hughes and the accusation of income tax evasion are the only reasons for the massive campaign that has been launched against him.

For the past six years, a small army of agents working either for the government or Hughes have been on his trail.

On at least one occasion no less than nine intertel agents — members of Hughes' private police force — jumped Meier outside a government office in Vancouver.

The reasons for the harassment and surveillance have to be hidden somewhere within the events which occurred during Meier's three year employment with Hughes from 1966 to 1969.

Little is known of this period but it is safe to speculate that Meier knew more than was healthy about the billionaire's

business dealings, especially with the Nixon family. This can be deduced from the fact that Meier was a constant visitor to the White House on Hughes' behalf, and had a lot to do with negotiating an end to large nuclear tests beneath Hughes' Nevada empire and was an intimate companion to President Nixon's brother Donald.

He knew all that needed to be known about Air-West and the way the president and Hughes manipulated the company, what the deal was for campaign contributions from Hughes to Nixon so atomic tests could be phaed out of Nevada and into Amchitka and lots more, says Meier.

So when Meier left Hughes and then began to draw away from the ideals of one of the world's most notorious capitalists and show a political streak identified with the liberal wing of the Democratic Party — he was clearly a threat.

His knowledge was a gun aimed point blank at Nixon and Hughes. The trick was to stop him from pulling the trigger.

Meier himself doesn't know when the forces of President Nixon, the CIA and Howard Hughes first got on his tail.

The Gonzales' affidavit — written by self-confessed CIA agent Virgino Gonzales — mentions that Meier came to the attention of the CIA in April, 1969, when he interfered in a plot to em-

barrass Sen. Edward Kennedy with a girl in the Sands Hotel.

This affidavit, which has been filed with the federal court in Reno, claims to show how the CIA and the Hughes organization have attempted to frame and entrap Meier since 1972.

According to the mysterious Gonzales, a full-scale watch was put on the former aide in 1971.

However, Meier says that the Secret Service was after him in 1970 and that presidential aide John Ehrlichman had ordered his and Donald Nixon's phones bugged that year to discover what was passing between them.

Gonzales takes the incidents of surveillance back as far as 1968 in his affidavit but he doesn't mention by which agency Meier was being watched.

In Meier's struggle with the authorities, the years 1969 to 1972 could be classed as his "phony war." It was only after he threw his hat into the ring and contested the Democratic nomination for a Senate seat from New Mexico that Meier felt the weight of his opponents.

His former campaign manager Harry Evans, now living in Los Angeles, said

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Meier's efforts were doomed from the start. His campaign was sabotaged completely by the White House and Hughes, said Evans.

Bugs were picked out of phones in Meier's campaign headquarters in Albuquerque. His offices were broken into and records stolen, said Evans.

Then came the coup-de-grace when Meier was dragged into the Clifford Irving affair as one of the people behind the notorious "Hoax" manuscripts — the fake Hughes biography.

At the time — it was early 1972 — Meier's campaign was running strongly and he looked likely to get into the primaries. It was at this point, said Evans, that the Hughes organization and the government leaked a story to newsmen that Meier was the shadowy George Holmes — the person who gave Irving all his information on the billionaire.

Immediately Meier's political fortune waned. His popularity nosedived as he was implicated in a fraud which made newspaper headlines for weeks.

By the time he cleared himself and proved he'd never met Irving, the campaign was over and Meier had been left

at the political wayside like someone who'd missed a Greyhound and had to wait four years until the next one arrived.

The setup had worked admirably. Meier was stifled. Whatever sensitive information he had on the Hughes-Nixon-CIA trinity could never come out where it would hurt most, on the floor of the Senate.

Obviously the administration was worried just where and when Meier would talk. Already during the fall of 1972 hysteria was building over Watergate. And while at that time there were only vague suspicions that the White House was involved, a few astute minds sensed there was a thread running between Nixon and Howard Hughes which if tugged could unravel the veil of secrecy which had always shrouded this pair's relationship.

John Meier held the end to this thread and more than a year later in secret testimony before Watergate investigators he tugged it. For a while he allowed the investigators to gaze on the pair — but only so much.

Meier admits he never told them everything. That would come later at a time and place of his choosing, he says.

But what he did show them was never made public. The investigation was deflected from probing the real reasons behind Watergate and settled instead for unearthing the coverup. Meier says he wanted to testify publicly, then he would have spilled everything. He was never asked so to date his story remains untold.

Meier rationalizes the decision not to examine him publicly by saying it was yet another attempt to keep him quiet. By explanation he refers to a piece of paper in his possession — a paper which the CIA would move heaven and earth to recover.

(Tomorrow: John Meier tells of his personal knowledge of the Howard Hughes-CIA connection and claims to have documents in his possession to prove the connection, in Part Three of *The Invisible Government*.)