

INVISIBLE GOVERN

Meier Documents Might

(Editor's note: Former Howard Hughes aide John Meier tells of documents he possesses which he claims proves the billionaire is "intimately connected" with the CIA, in Part Three of The Invisible Government.)

By GERALD BELLETT
SUN Special Correspondent

Shortly after John Meier left Howard

Hughes the relationship between them was still cordial.

Meier says he occasionally did jobs for the billionaire, one of which was to pass on to Hughes a slip of paper a CIA agent had given him.

In an interview at his home on the outskirts of Vancouver, Meier revealed for the first time that the piece of paper would cause a sensation within U.S.

political circles if made public.

On the paper was a list of some 30 politicians which the CIA wanted funded for the 1970 elections and wanted Hughes to do it for the agency.

Meier flatly refused to give details of the names except to say that some of the politicians promoted by the CIA "are also on various investigative committees now involved in the investigating of the CIA

MENT—PART III

Link Hughes To CIA

One particular name on the list would shock Americans, if made public, says Meier.

The list which is safely hidden will one day be released, he promises. Also handed to him at the same time was a list of about 50 firms the CIA used from time to time which Hughes was asked to patronize when letting subcontracts. Again, this list is being kept close to Meier's chest.

Based on these documents plus conversations Meier says he had with six CIA agents over a period of time, the former aide said it was a "farce" to think that Hughes and the CIA weren't "intimately connected."

Referring to claims made by former Hughes Nevada operations chief Bob Maheu that the organization steered clear of CIA connections although urged

to accept them by Hughes, Meier said: "The statements don't fit the facts."

The only CIA agent Meier is prepared to name as meeting face-to-face is Mike Mirhage whom he told Watergate investigators he met Aug. 5, 1969.

The meeting took place in Las Vegas and Meier said that Maheu had told Mirhage to get in touch with him. The purpose was for Meier to smooth the

(See MEIER, Page 4)

Meier Reveals Documents May Link CIA, Hughes

(Continued From Page 1)

agent's entry into Ecuador by passing him on to Jaime Duran, the acting agriculture minister and one-time head of the country's intelligence service.

Meier says he doesn't know why the CIA was interested in Ecuador but at the time the country was going through a general election which brought with it all the uncertainty and trauma associated with political upheavals in Latin America.

Meier says he had no idea that Mirhage was in the CIA until the agent admitted what he was. Meier claims he was shocked by the revelation.

In his recorded Watergate testimony Meier said: "He (Mirhage) just sat there and told me right out as if I was expected to know."

Another agent Meier has had contact with is the elusive Virgino Gonzales the author of the Gonzales affidavit, now on the run from his former employers in the CIA.

Meier says that Gonzales phoned him last January and mentioned some of the things the CIA was interested in when the former agent was assigned to watch him.

"Gonzales said the CIA wanted to know what I'd told the Democrats about Hughes, Nixon and the CIA. They were especially interested in the list of

politicians they'd handed me and what I'd done with it.

"They knew how close Hughes and the CIA were and this worried them. They were also interested in what I knew about Donald Nixon and his brother Richard's relationship with Hughes," said Meier.

Meier says during his days with Hughes he was present when Don Nixon phoned his brother the President and discussed Howard Hughes.

Once again Meier draws a veil over the discussions except to say that he'd like to know what happened to the tapes of those calls.

"I'll bet everything I have that they've destroyed them," he said.

It was perhaps the preoccupation by the CIA with what information Meier had and could use against the administration which explains some of the mystery surrounding Watergate.

It is now generally assumed that the break-in wasn't simply a fishing expedition but was organized from the start to see if the Democrats had specific documents connecting Nixon to a number of questionable deals and relationships.

From the amount of attention given Meier, he was obviously a prime candidate in the eyes of the CIA for handing over some of this information.

The man who had once been a card-

carrying Republican had switched to the Democrats in 1972 to seek office as a senator from New Mexico.

And when it is known that Meier was a friend of Democratic Party chairman, Larry O'Brien from the days when the pair worked for Hughes, it is not stretching reason too far to speculate that the CIA went into the Watergate Hotel to find out what Meier might have passed on to O'Brien.

Undoubtedly there were other reasons for Watergate and other sources of information on Nixon, but Meier must be regarded as one of the causes behind the debacle.

Ironically, while Watergate fever was gripping the U.S. in late 1972, Meier had left his homeland to settle in Canada. Faced with increasing pressure, Meier had taken Harry Truman's advice and quit the kitchen.

Unfortunately, such was the power of his opponents that Meier and his family would find little peace in their new home. In fact the worst was yet to come.

(Tomorrow: John Meier moves to Canada to escape the vindictive power of the Hughes empire, only to find that power stretching across the border to find him through Intertel, Hughes' quasi-police force, in Part Four of The Invisible Government.)