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Joachim Joesten's

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" TRUTH LETTER "  
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Editorial: Stuntmanship is no substitute for statesmanship.

Their Pal in the White House

In quick succession, Nixon, around the turn of the year, released two top mobsters from federal prisons: Jimmy Hoffa and Mickey Cohen. Just in time to shatter the pious fiction that this clemency was prompted by humanitarian reasons or a sense of justice, a book has come out that throws a dazzling light on the long, close and cozy relationship between organized crime and That ran in the White House. The book, simply titled "Lansky", was written by Hank Messick and published by Berkley Publishing Corporation, an affiliate of G.P. Putnam's Sons. It is a real shocker - not because it documents the well-known fact that "The Mob Runs America and Lansky Runs the Mob," as the publisher's blurb puts it, but because it reveals for the first time the full extent of Richard Nixon's involvement with gangsterdom. A few quotes are in order.

"(Meyer) Lansky first heard of young Richard Nixon in 1940. at Duke University where he studied law, Nixon was something of an introvert. He read love stories instead of dating girls and dreamed of becoming an FBI agent. When J. Edgar Hoover turned down his application, he opened a law practice in Whittier, California, a suburb of Los Angeles, and was named police prosecutor. Bugsy Siegel (a top henchman of Lansky's who, after committing countless murders, was rubbed out himself in 1947 - J.J.) had his headquarters in Los Angeles and had a keen interest in all things relating to crime, police, and courts. In 1940 Nixon married, but his restlessness grew. according to his biographer, Earl Mazo, "during a brief trip to Cuba he spent a bit of his vacation time exploring the possibilities of establishing law or business connections in Havana."

"The circumstances can be dismissed as a coincidence. The fact that Lansky's partner bossed crime in California and that in Cuba Lansky himself sat at the right hand of Batista may mean nothing. Yet Whittier is a long way from Havana for a young lawyer in search of new connections. In any case, with the war approaching, there was little opportunity for either Nixon or Lansky in Havana. But people had their eyes on the young lawyer. Before the war ended, he was tapped to run for Congress. Murray R. Chotiner, later to be involved in a messy scandal concerning influence peddling and a man who represented top gangsters, was one of those who helped select Nixon.

"Later, Mickey Cohen, the man who succeeded Siegel in the West, was to boast that he and assorted mobsters gave money and other aid to Nixon in the early stages of his political career... Years later, when columnist Drew Pearson published Cohen's comments, Nixon's press aides denied them. No libel suit was threatened, however." (emphasis added throughout - J.J.)

Nixon, of course, would have sued Drew Pearson had he not been satisfied that the columnist could back up his charges. The fact that he did not sue speaks as loudly as does the scandalous clemency shown, some 30 years later, by the same Richard Nixon, as President of the United States, to the same Mickey Cohen, convicted moblord.

I cannot deal, in this limited space, with all the incriminating facts and circumstances involving Nixon which Hank Messick has dug up and lays on the line in his book, nor can I quote from it as extensively as I should like to. One of the most interesting points the author makes concerns the long and cordial association between Nixon, the Republican, and Senator George Smathers of Florida, nominally a Democrat. Smathers, one of the most unscrupulous wheeler-dealers ever to disgrace the Senate, is notorious, among other things, for his shady business deals with Bobby Baker, LBJ's favorite crook. (as birds of a feather flock together, it is no wonder that Nixon is also a great personal friend of LBJ, across nominal party lines).

"Nixon became chummy with Smathers even before being elected to the Senate," Messick writes... "Upon winning election, Nixon went to Florida for a vacation. To make sure he had a good time, Smathers turned him over to Charles G. 'Bebe' Rebozo, a somewhat mysterious figure who had made his fortune recapping tires during the war and invested it in real estate. Nixon had served as an attorney in the tire-rationing section of the Office of Price Administration before joining the Navy (curious coincidence, isn't it? - J.J.). Along with Smathers, they eventually entered into several profitable business deals. In time, Rebozo became Nixon's closest confidant, and vacation trips to Miami and the Caribbean became frequent."

"The hour for which Lansky waited came at last in November, 1968, with the election of President Nixon," Messick writes elsewhere. It was, indeed, a great moment for the assorted crooks and mobsters that make up the National Crime Syndicate. One notorious stock swindler, Louis E. Wolfson, under indictment in New York, when advised his case could be fixed with Nixon for a \$ 20,000 contribution to the Republican National Committee, promptly wrote out the check. It is immaterial that the "adviser" in this case was a conman "who, just as promptly, blew it all on his current girlfriend." What matters is that a smart fellow like Wolfson believed his case could be fixed with Nixon.

After disposing of Wolfson, U.S. Attorney Robert Morgenthau in New York went after several distinguished board members of the Lansky Group. "He was becoming something of a problem (to the gangsters -J.J.)" as Messick puts it. And then he goes on to say: "The Nixon administration took care of the problem. Morgenthau, despite being recommended by a special Republican task force as the best prosecutor in the nation, was abruptly fired by Attorney General John Mitchell..."

That's law and order for you, Nixon style.

#### READER'S FORUM

From Mr. A.L. Thomas, Liverpool, England:

"Dear Mr. Joesten,

With reference to the quote from my letter which appeared in TL, Vol. IV, No. 10, I had in mind when writing the note statements made in recent years by American critics to the effect that the world outside the U.S. knows the truth about the assassination of JFK. This belief is obviously erroneous, but what I really meant was that in Britain we seem to be even worse off than other Europeans, as there has apparently been considerable doubt cast on the official 'truth' on the Continent, whereas we have been consistently subjected to slanted news items. In addition, these reports have been rather sporadic and also very brief with the result that people here still seem to believe in the Oswald fantasy simply through ignorance. Surely this is different from the American situation where most people appear to prefer to believe in the lone-assassin theory, not because of the 'evidence', but because the implications of a conspiracy are too frightening to consider?

I know I should have explained my point more fully, but I'm sorry if you thought me so unrealistic as to expect honest reporting in the U.K.

Yours sincerely,

A.L. Thomas."

How Garrison Was Framed (ctd.)

Before going into the details of the scheme devised by the Nixon Maladministration for the purpose of discrediting and possibly eliminating from public life the man who has come closest to revealing the true facts of the Kennedy assassination (which was essential to the eventual ascent of Nixon to the White House), let me remind my readers that the Government's case against Garrison rests solely on the testimony of Pershing Gervais who has been exposed by a paper as hostile to the DA as the New Orleans States-Item is as a crook and conman of the first water. The principal ingredient of a frameup, to wit perjured testimony by a malleable "witness" was there, then, from the start.

It is worthy of note that the 113-page affidavit by Floyd V. Moore, Chief of the Intelligence Division of the Louisiana IRS District, which forms the basis of the charges against Garrison, includes the name of Pershing Gervais in a list of individuals "who have been and are engaged in illegal gambling businesses in the State of Louisiana." Elsewhere in the same document it is stated that Gervais, besides operating a number of bars and lounges in New Orleans, "has also owned and operated bally in-line gambling type pinball machines and has placed such gambling devices in public places for use by the general public." In other words, Gervais himself is a notorious gambler who has been up to his ears in illicit business. He got caught and wriggled out of his predicament by becoming a "cooperative witness" - against a close and generous friend. It's a classic pattern of deceit, betrayal and frameup.

On June 24, 1969, Moore met with Gervais and enlisted his help allegedly "to assist the Internal Revenue Service in the investigation of violations of federal law," but in reality for the purpose of procuring false evidence against Garrison. An IRS agent named Arlie G. Puckett was assigned by Moore to work with Gervais on this noble task. On July 27, 1970, Gervais was introduced by Moore and Puckett to John Hall, "attorney-in-charge of the Justice Department's Organized Crime Strike Force in New Orleans."

Evidently well-coached by that time, Gervais at that meeting and again at another on Aug. 31, 1970, told his official sponsors all they wanted to hear. He stated, according to the Moore Affidavit, "that the relationship between Garrison and the pinball dealers began in the year 1961 when the pinball dealers gave Garrison \$ 10,000 during his campaign for the office of district attorney for Orleans Parish." Needless to say, not a shadow of proof for this libel was offered or asked by anyone at the meeting.

Then he declared that he had been since 1962 the conduit, through one John Aruns Gallery, for payoffs from pinball machine dealers to Jim Garrison, and that these ranged from \$ 2,700 to \$ 4,400 bi-monthly. He said that as a rule he retained \$ 700 from each bi-monthly payoff and passed the balance on to Garrison; on a \$ 4,400 payoff he allegedly retained \$ 1,400, passing off \$ 3,000 to the DA.

Again, Gervais had no proof whatever to offer to back up these allegations, so in the best frameup tradition the Government now told him how to manufacture "evidence" that could be used against Garrison as a trial. This "evidence" was to consist of two elements: (a) tape recordings, which can of course be manipulated, and certainly were in this case; and marked bills, which create a presumption of guilt, though they do not indicate for what purpose a specific payment has been made.

The Government, in its case against Garrison, made a lot of the apparent fact that a batch of \$ 10 bills, the serial numbers of which had been noted, was found in the DA's possession, after these bills, which had been furnished by the IRS, had been handed to Gervais as a substitute for other bills allegedly received from the pinball dealers. This was a sure-fire trick of entrapment which was almost bound to succeed because Gervais had access to Garrison, who still considered him a good friend. What Gervais did not tell his sponsors - or what, if he told them, they kept assiduously under wraps - was the fact that he owed Garrison a lot of money which he had received from the DA as a personal loan.

(to be continued in the next issue)

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New Light on the Robert Kennedy Murder Fraud (ctd.)

Going back now to the key question as to whether or not Sirhan could have killed Senator Kennedy, the answer hinges on two factors:

- (a) What was the distance from which the fatal bullet was fired into Kennedy's head?  
and (b) What was the direction of that shot?

Dr. Noguchi, in his testimony to the Grand Jury, hedged a bit at first when asked by Deputy District Attorney John W. Miner (Transcript, p. 27):

"Doctor, from the tattooing that you described on the edge of the ear as to bullet wound Number 1, do you have any opinion as to what might have been the distance from which that bullet was fired?"

A. "Yes, I do have an opinion, sir."

Q. "And what is your opinion, Doctor?"

A. "May I - before I would express my opinion, I would like to qualify myself that this area may be area called criminalistic or firearms identification, and without having an opportunity to test the suspected firearm, using similar cartridge and bullet, and it will be very difficult for forensic expert to express in a distance by how many inches (sic)."

"However, the position of the tattooing and the powder on the edge of the right ear indicate that gunshot wound was inflicted, and I would say that the muzzle distance was a - very, very close."

Q. "Do you believe this was a contact wound, that is, the muzzle was actually up against the body of Senator Kennedy?"

A. "I would like to study further, since there are - continuous examination must be conducted because the surgeon had removed the fragments of the skull, which may contain the powder, however -"

Q. "Let me put it this way, can you give - do you have an opinion as to the maximum distance the gun could have been from the Senator and still have left powder burns? How is that? Can you give us an opinion on that?"

A. "Well, yes, I think so. I can express an opinion. Allowing a variation, I don't think it will be more than two or three inches from the edge of the right ear."

The doctor's hesitation is understandable. Undoubtedly he was already aware at the time that his scientific conclusion that the gun was held to Kennedy's head at almost contact distance would conflict irreconcilably with the fact - established by all the eyewitnesses closest to the Senator, as we shall see - that Sirhan never got closer to Kennedy than three feet.

Subsequently, a series of test firings were conducted on June 11, 1968, which are described in detail on pp. 39-40 of the autopsy report. For some reason, which is not likely to be innocent, considering all the fraudulent moves already exposed in the case, a weapon and ammunition supplied by the LAPD were used, which were, in the words of the report, "of the most nearly identical manufacture possible to that of the fatal weapon."

Why wasn't Sirhan's gun, which the police had in their custody, used for that purpose? In other experiments conducted about the same time, ballistics expert Dwayne Wolfer, as we have seen, did use - or at least claimed to have used - Sirhan's revolver to fire bullets into a water tank for comparison purposes. Why use another weapon, no matter how similar it may have been, for the test firings, in which Wolfer also took part, along with a Sgt. William J. Leo and Drs. Noguchi and Holloway?

The final chapter paragraph of this chapter reads as follows:

(to be continued in the next issue)