

# Hoffa Will Battle RFK

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One of the first cases the Supreme Court will hear in its new term involves a double agent, assassination plot, code names and payments from a Justice Department secret fund.

It is no James Bond spoof but a classic legal encounter pitting James R. Hoffa, president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, against the investigators commanded by Robert F. Kennedy when he was Attorney General.

Hoffa is seeking to overturn a jury-fixing conviction that he claims was obtained with the unconstitutional aid of a spy planted by Kennedy's men in his innermost circle of legal advisers.

The Justice Department, hoping the high tribunal will not disturb Hoffa's eight-year prison sentence, claims the informer was invited to Hoffa's camp by the Teamsters' chief, himself. Clear evidence of jury-tampering he discovered properly was relayed to Federal officials and led to the conviction, the U.S. Government insists.

The case has attracted wide interest, and arguments set for Oct. 12 are expected to draw a standing-room only crowd to the Supreme Court chamber.

## Slight Favorite

Hoffa appears to be a slight favorite in the early forecasting although lawyers add quickly there is no telling in advance what the High Court will do.

The issue revolves around Edward Grady Partin, a Baton Rouge (La.) Teamster's official who was the chief prosecution witness at Hoffa's jury-fixing trial in Chattanooga, Tenn., in 1963.

Partin's testimony came as a shock to Hoffa, because the big Louisianan had been a doorkeeper in the Teamsters' defense headquarters during Hoffa's 1962 trial on charges of accepting an illegal payoff from an employer. That trial, held in Nashville, ended in a



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TEAMSTER PRESIDENT JAMES HOFFA  
... claims Kennedy planted a spy in his camp

## Investigators

hung jury but formed the basis for the jury-rigging charges that ended in the conviction of Hoffa and three others.

The bizarre story of Partin's double-agent role began four years ago in the Baton Rouge jail where he was being held on a state charge of kidnaping. He also was under state indictments for manslaughter, perjury and assault, and faced Federal charges of embezzling funds from his union.

Then, according to the defense brief, Partin told his captors of an alleged plot by Hoffa to assassinate Robert Kennedy, who was then leading a drive against alleged corruption in the Teamsters. The FBI investigated and a few days later, Partin was released from jail on bond. He called Hoffa and arranged to be in Nashville for the start of Hoffa's trial on Oct. 22, 1962.

## Advised by Grimsley

En route, Partin visited Justice Department Attorney Frank Grimsley in Atlanta and was told to "keep his eyes and ears open" for signs of jury-tampering or other unlawful activity in the Hoffa

entourage. He also was given the code names of "Anderson" or "Andy" and told how to contact Walter J. Sheridan, a Kennedy aide who was in Nashville for the trial.

Partin showed up, checked in with Sheridan, and began making himself useful around the three-room suite in the Andrew Jackson hotel that Hoffa called home during the six-week trial.

He "got people ash trays, moved chairs and acted as doorman" in the suite where Hoffa met with his lawyers to review trial strategy and confer on other legal problems, the defense brief adds. He walked with them to court and ate meals with them, too.

Early in the trial, Partin told Hoffa he was worried about the outcome and quoted Hoffa as replying: "Well, don't worry about it too much because I have got the colored male juror in my hip pocket." Hoffa denied all of Partin's jury-fixing allegations.

Partin frequently returned to Baton Rouge on weekends but stayed in Nashville almost every day of the trial. He reported very often to Sheridan, occasionally meeting him at an apartment or in the Federal investigator's car.

The Government's brief contends Partin was in the Hoffa camp with the consent of the union chief and was not paid or promised anything for his services as informer. His testimony was the key to Hoffa's conviction at the jury-rigging trial.

#### Payment Exposed

Defense counsel, however, exposed a \$1200 payment to Partin's estranged wife from a confidential fund in the Justice Department. Sheridan authorized \$300-a-month payments to Mrs. Partin through Grimsley, who cashed the treasury checks and sent her cashiers' checks in plain envelopes.

Hoffa's brief also noted that Partin never has been tried on the embezzling or manslaughter charges. The kid-

influenced by the accusations against him.

Washington attorney Joseph A. Fanelli, who will argue Hoffa's case, contends that Partin's actions violated the 4th, 5th and 6th amendments and should bar any testimony against Hoffa that resulted from this spying.

His presence amounted to an unreasonable search for evidence, prevented Hoffa from using effectively the right to counsel and forced Hoffa to testify against himself, Fanelli's brief claims.

The Justice Department, which has assigned Assistant Attorney General Fred M. Vinson Jr. the job of arguing the Government case, has not filed its final answer.

In an earlier brief, however, it contended that the right to have a lawyer did not protect every remark made by Hoffa to "a trusted confidant" such as Partin.

Supreme Court decisions on this right, the Justice Department said, "do not entitle a person to the assistance of naping and perjury charges were dismissed. The brief implied Partin's testimony was

counsel while he is engaged in committing an offense . . . "

The American Civil Liberties Union and the Criminal Courts Bar Association of Los Angeles County have filed friend-of-the-court briefs in Hoffa's behalf, contending major civil liberty issues are at stake.