

'The Fall and Rise of Jimmy Hoffa'

By Jack Anderson

The man who sent Jimmy Hoffa to jail has charged that bribery, threats and intrigue were used in numerous attempts to get him out.

Famed investigator Walter Sheridan, who headed the "Get Hoffa Squad" under the late Attorney General Robert Kennedy, nailed the former Teamsters boss on jury-tampering charges. Now Sheridan has written an explosive book, "The Fall and Rise of Jimmy Hoffa," which is loaded with new, documented revelations.

Among those who sought to free Hoffa, charges Sheridan, were such celebrities as White House aide John Ehrlichman, Sen. Russell Long (D-La.), the late movie hero, Audie Murphy, and Mafia godfather Carlos Marcello.

From a bootleg copy, here are the most newsworthy highlights:

- A secret Justice Department team has explored how President Nixon can pardon Hoffa, according to Sheridan, so the tough ex-con can take over the Teamsters again. As early as September, 1969, John Ehrlichman "left word at the White House to go easy on the Hoffa matter because consideration was being given to possible executive clemency action." Bad publicity made it difficult for the President to free Hoffa in 1969, but 27

months later, he commuted Hoffa's sentence. Sheridan suggests a presidential pardon—or alternatively, removal of a 17-year-old-ban against union activity by Hoffa—may be Mr. Nixon's final payoff for Hoffa's political support.

Assassination Plot

- In 1967, Puerto Rican Teamsters Chief Frank Chavez allegedly flew to Washington intent on assassinating then Sen. Robert Kennedy, Walter Sheridan and their prime witness against Hoffa, Ed Partin. Kennedy's men learned of the assassination plot and asked the FBI for help. They were told, however, that the FBI had no jurisdiction. In the end, Hoffa himself dissuaded Chavez, and the would-be assassin docilely surrendered his pistol to Hoffa. A few months later, Chavez was slain by one of his own bodyguards.

- Carlos Marcello, an underworld ally of Hoffa, informed an acquaintance, lawyer Ossie Brown, that he would put up \$150,000 if witnesses against Hoffa would recant their testimony and perjure themselves. Brown's amazing retelling of the Marcello conversation was tape-recorded.

- When Justice Department officials Fred Vinson and Mike Epstein began a federal grand jury inquiry into efforts to gain Hoffa's freedom by bribery, Sen. Russell Long (D-

La.) threatened to get the officials indicted in his home state of Louisiana. The bribes allegedly were intended to persuade witness Partin to change his testimony so Hoffa's conviction could be reversed. Long personally tried to put the heat on Partin by getting one of Partin's friends to turn informer, claims Sheridan. Long allegedly promised to get Attorney General John Mitchell's cooperation in the deal.

- Partin subsequently was charged in an unrelated federal criminal case. Sheridan cites tape-recorded evidence that former Rep. Jimmy Morrison (D-La.) offered to get Partin off for \$50,000 and a promise from Partin to recant his Hoffa testimony. Morrison said he could fix it, according to Sheridan, through the late Mayor Charles Sinagra of Independence, La., who was an in-law of the presiding federal judge, William Murray. Partin turned down the deal, and Murray forcefully states he was never approached by anyone.

Million-Dollar Offer

- New Orleans Judge Malcolm O'Hara, a self-styled messenger boy for the Teamsters, was prepared to get "a million dollars in cash" for Sheridan if he would switch sides and help to free Hoffa.

- A letter, with President Nixon's signature forged on White House stationery, was

shown to Partin in a bizarre attempt to persuade him to make a phony deposition recanting his testimony. Movie star Audie Murphy arranged to get the unsigned deposition to the White House.

- When the Justice Department's Organized Crime Section tried to submit a memo on Hoffa's criminal alliances to the Federal Parole Board, higher-ups at Justice blocked it, says Sheridan. The Board denied parole to Hoffa anyway.

- In return for support in 1968 from New Hampshire newspaper publisher William Loeb, alleges the book, "Loeb extracted a commitment from the Nixon forces that if Mr. Nixon were elected President, the Nixon administration would do what it could to help . . . Hoffa." Loeb, whose paper had been financed with a Teamsters loan, denies the deal. Loeb's trouble-shooter reporter, Arthur Egan, offered Partin \$100,000 from the paper if he would swear Hoffa had been convicted through illegal wiretaps. Egan says the offer was all on the up and up.

Footnote: My associate, Les Whitten, double-checked as many of the details as possible in the Sheridan book. He was able to reach most of the people who were mentioned. All denied any wrongdoing. The Justice Department denied harassing Partin or favoring Hoffa.