

# How Maheu Fooled Spy

By Ron Laytner

LAS VEGAS — A younger man would think very carefully before tangling physically with Robert A. Maheu. The former FBI agent is 56, but he gives the impression of being an extremely dangerous man.

Maheu is one of the few FBI agents in its history ever to have made a perfect score in shooting and he has won an FBI medal for achievement. He is known as a master of weapons.

On Jan. 7 a mysterious voice, identified as belong-

*Last in a series of articles revealing the relationship between billionaire Howard Hughes and Robert Maheu, Hughes' Nevada chieftain who is suing him for \$50 million for firing him.*

ing to Howard Hughes, spoke in a bizarre telephone press conference. The voice accused Maheu of stealing from Howard Hughes.

Over the years many executives have come and

gone in the vast Hughes empire, but the former chief spokesman for Hughes is clearly different than most.

Maheu has refused to take his dismissal lying down and has armed himself with a tough attorney, Morton Galane, who once badly trounced Maheu and the Hughes forces in court.

Maheu and Galane had been discussing the possibility of our conversation being monitored by listening devices secretly plant-

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In 1938, Hughes was given a ticker-tape parade in New York City, recognizing his record-breaking around the world flight. The young Hughes, cap-

tured in a rare smile, is in center of photo. Official New York greeter at that time was Grover Whalen, left; at right is Albert I. Lodwick.



# Hughes Unmasked

## How Maheu Fooled A Top Nazi Agent

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ed in Maheu's rented house.

"If anyone is listening," said Maheu, "I hope they understand it is a felony in this state. There are also federal regulations which preclude the use of bugging devices."

"We have nothing to hide," added Galane. "Everything we have done in this litigation has been above board and has happened in the courts using proper procedures."

Maheu became nationally known over a year ago when he was suddenly fired by aides of Hughes who said they were acting on instructions from the wraith-like industrialist.

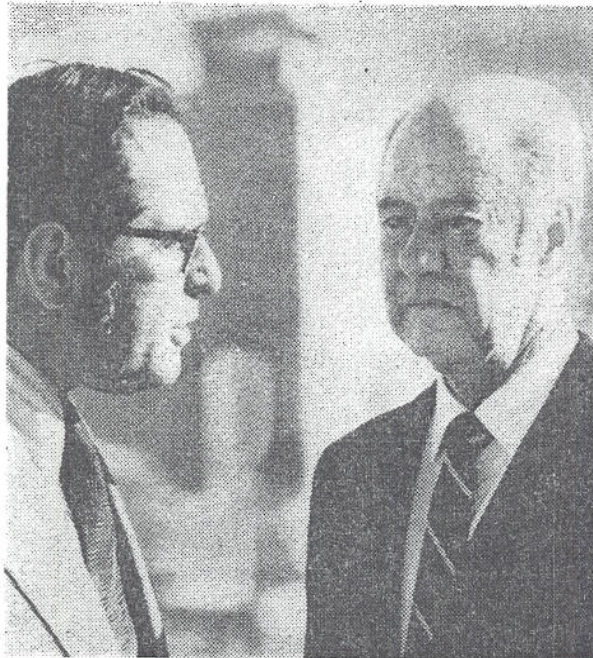
Accounts at that time and ever since have described Maheu as a "super spy." FBI agent and counterspy. He was rumored once to have been under contract to the Central Intelligence Agency to assassinate Cuba's Fidel Castro.

Just who is Maheu — what did he do for the FBI during the war and after? Why did Hughes choose him to eventually become his official spokesman and administrator of a \$300 million Nevada empire?

### Work for FBI

In this exclusive interview Maheu finally sets the record straight and describes his career in the FBI.

"During World War II, I



**DISCUSSED EAVESDROPPING POSSIBILITY**  
Attorney Morton Galane, left, and Robert Maheu

worked for the Federal Bureau of Investigation," Maheu began. "The early part of 1942 was a time when espionage had evolved to a point where there were many double and triple agents."

The Germans had decided to send an espionage team to the U.S. using a lead man who was to offer his services to the U.S. government, he continued. The Germans would then send a technician to set up a radio transmitter.

"As you know, one of the big problems in those days was the quick transmission

of information. It did no good if Nazi intelligence got the information after the fact," Maheu explained.

The lead man they chose to send was a famous French aviator, Dieudonne Costes. He had been one of the great pilots of World War I. At the time of the German takeover in France he was a vice-president of the Hispano Suiza Co. Costes is the man who returned Lindbergh's flight in 1930.

"He arrived in Spain," Maheu said, "and went straight to the American

embassy. Our investigators there finally broke him down and he told them the story I am telling you now — claiming it was always his intention to tell the same story after he arrived in the U.S."

After receiving special training in German espionage techniques Costes, operating under great personal pressure, followed his orders and "fled" France.

### Counter Agents

At the time of his involvement in the case Maheu and his wife had a five-and-a-half month old son. He had just opened a resident agency for the FBI in Aberdeen, Wash.

There he received an order to report immediately at Washington for a special assignment.

At the Capitol Maheu was briefed on the background of the case and given instructions on his cover story. Because of his fluency in French it had been decided that he would be the counter agent to work with the Nazi radio team.

He reported later in Miami, turning in his credentials, gun, badge, everything that was identifiable — even clothing that held laundry-marks.

Maheu became Robert A. Marchand, a French-Canadian black-marketeer, and checked into a small hotel on Miami Beach where he waited for Costes to arrive.

Costes arrived in the



U.S. by way of Buenos Aires, in June, 1943 and was told that Maheu was an FBI agent. "We took the calculated risk that he was a double agent and would not, in fact, become a triple agent."

For a long while the French aviator and Maheu worked on the method of secret writing that Costes had been taught to use by the Nazi intelligence. This was the code which would be used to send messages back to Germany and Maheu had to be completely familiar with it.

The French war hero and presumed German spy gave Maheu exact details of his training at a German espionage school in Hamburg and advance information on the top Nazi spy who was to join him.

In charge of this whole project at the time, said Maheu, was FBI Assistant Director E. J. Connelley who has since died.

#### Misled Nazis

"Mr. Connelley had the authority to go into any FBI office and pre-empt any case. He was in charge of this particular operation.

"Our whole purpose in working with the Nazis was to provide them with false information about the invasion of Europe."

Maheu said that after a time he and Costes started sending messages to mail drops in Spain and Portugal. This was supposed to be a temporary method of communication until the Nazi radio operator came over to set up his facility.

Costes and he sent out many messages, but the ones they sent out were not the ones the Germans received. The FBI agent was still not sure at this time if Costes was a triple agent.

"We would work together on a message," said Maheu, "and then I would get it to a mail drop. Unknown to Costes, however, the messages were flown to Washington and another message was prepared in the same code."

The man the Germans eventually sent as the radio operator was Jean Paul Marie Cavaillez.

Cavaillez was an electrical engineer. He had helped establish and operate a secret radio in the German espionage headquarters in the Hotel Luticia in Paris before France fell to the Nazis.

#### Top Nazi Agent

According to the FBI he had built three powerful transmitters for use in Berlin. He was one of Germany's top secret agents.

The spy arrived in New Orleans on the steamship Magellanes from Vigo.

Spain on Oct. 12, 1943 and went into action.

On Nov. 30 he managed to get the French authorities at Washington to reinstate him as a lieutenant in the French Air Force so that he could wear the French uniform while operating as a German spy in the U.S.

According to Connelley, the French-uniformed Nazi spy did considerable research work in the Library of Congress and in the New York Public Library, obtaining material from the restricted shelves on the strength of his French uniform and credentials.

But he sensed something was wrong with his contact, Costes, and kept away, much to Maheu's dismay.

"Our surveillances disclosed that Cavaillez would attend a certain mass at St. Patrick's every Sunday at a given time. And so we arranged in New York City one Sunday for Costes and he to bump into each other without their realizing they'd been maneuvered.

"Contact was now finally established and eventually I was introduced to Cavaillez," said Maheu. "After a while he and I became good friends."

Maheu said the Nazi spy began buying parts so that

he could build a radio transmitter to open contact with Germany but the FBI placed a number of roadblocks in his way.

Finally, Cavaillez had the set working and the FBI let him transmit a few messages, always with Maheu at his side in case he tried to tip off the Nazis that it was a FBI trap.

After the Germans had been convinced that Costes had access to solid information the espionage team started sending messages that the invasion of Europe was going to be staged in southern France.

At first it was reported to German intelligence that Costes had been called to the Pentagon to answer some questions about southern France.

#### Troops Shifted

And then the messages became increasingly forceful so that the last were absolutely certain—there was no doubt—the invasion would take place in southern France.

"After the war," said Maheu, "I was told that when the espionage papers of the Germans were seized it was determined that—God knows there were enough troops in Normandy—but it was learned that some of the German troops which were destined

for Normandy were either relocated or left in southern France."

When the war ended Costes went back to France where he was first tried as a spy then exonerated with the help of the FBI and recognized as a hero. Cavaillez was first sentenced to five years by a U.S. Federal court, then sent back to France a prisoner.

After the war Maheu became assistant to Connelley and worked on many of America's major cases with the FBI's top trouble-shooter. When Connelley's special squad was broken up, Maheu became supervisor of the administration division.

"After a while I resigned. And after a short period of being in business I formed my own company. It was a combination of international investigative work, public relations and management consulting.

"Then one day in 1955—without knowing it—I went to work on a secret assignment for Howard Hughes. My life has never been the same since."

(The End)

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