

Partin Conferences Recorded

Tapes May Free Hoffa

By ARTHUR C. EGAN JR.
Copyright May 5, 1971,
Union Leader Corp.

BATON ROUGE, La. — Municipal Judge William Hawk Daniels has admitted possession of tape recordings which could possibly win freedom for Teamsters President James R. Hoffa. Judge Daniels, in an exclusive four-hour interview with this reporter and Ralph W. Sullivan, Boston lawyer, conceded possession of the recordings. "I have lots of tapes made in connection with the government's activities in the Hoffa case," he said.

Daniels told this reporter and Sullivan that he would turn over the tape recordings to the Union Leader after he "sorted the Partin-Hoffa tapes from others in my possession." The judge said when he left the district attorney's office he took "all the tapes in the office."

The Baton Rouge jurist said he personally made the tapes, using electronic eavesdropping devices hidden on his person. "I am an electronics expert in my own right," Daniels said in explaining his use of the equipment.

According to Daniels, some telephone wire taps were made with the knowledge of former FBI agents assigned to the Hoffa case by the late U.S. Sen. Robert F. Kennedy. Other tapes of conversations, according to the judge, "were made on my own without anyone's knowledge."

Daniel's involvement in the Hoffa case came to light in the wake of a deposition given March 27 in Sherman Oaks, Calif., by Edward Partin, a Baton Rouge labor leader. Partin's testimony was credited with convicting Hoffa on the charge of jury tampering.

Partin, in a 31-page deposition given before witnesses, said that in 1962 representatives of the Justice Department forced him into the role of informer by threatening him with a "hundred years in jail" unless he complied with their demands.

'In On Deal'

The business agent for Teamster Local 5 at the time, Partin, in a later interview, named Frank Grimsley, Justice De-

HOFFA

(Continued from Page One)

partment lawyer; Walter Sheridan, Chief of the Justice Department "Get Hoffa Squad"; and East Baton Rouge District Atty. Sargent Pitcher as being "in on the deal" whereby he was forced into being a "stool pigeon" against Hoffa.

Partin said he was ordered by Grimsley and Sheridan to infiltrate the Hoffa camp to learn the strategy of Hoffa's lawyers in what was known as the "test fleet case," a government suit against Hoffa in Nashville,

Editor's Note — In the past four weeks, Arthur C. Egan Jr., chief investigative reporter for the Manchester Union Leader and the N. H. Sunday News, covered nearly 20,000 miles to probe new developments in the Hoffa case. Egan's trips carried him to Los Angeles, Dallas, New Orleans, Washington, Baton Rouge, Nashville and Houston. The Manchester reporter conferred at length with all figures connected with the case. Lawyer Ralph W. Sullivan of Boston accompanied Egan during his interview with Judge Daniels.

Tenn. A hung jury in this case resulted in Hoffa being charged with jury tampering.

Judge Daniels corroborated Partin's accusations, saying, "as a special assistant to Pitcher, I was present during the meetings between Grimsley, Sheridan, Pitcher and Partin. I recorded some of these conversations without their knowledge. I have the tapes — I have a couple of boxes of tapes."

In his deposition Partin accused federal agents and government lawyers of coaching him, instructing him nightly on how to testify. "I was giving perjured testimony on their orders. I had no choice or they would have me in jail today," Partin told this reporter in an interview.

He Got Protection

Partin went on to say that Sheridan and Michael Epstein of Washington, a special assistant to then Atty. Gen. Robert F. Kennedy, have been in constant touch with him since Hoffa's conviction.

"I have received protection and free legal advice from both Sheridan and Epstein since Hoffa was convicted. Every time some government official tries to prosecute me, these two, Sheridan and Epstein, come to my rescue and stop the prosecution," Partin claimed.

This was substantiated by Gerald Gallinghouse, U. S. attorney in New Orleans. Gallinghouse, and his two top assistants, during interviews with this reporter, said they have definite knowledge that the two men have been protecting Partin since 1964.

"We can't get at the truth in the Partin-Hoffa matter. We are constantly thwarted by the Kennedy element remaining in the Justice Department," said Gallinghouse. His two assistants confirmed the U.S. attorney's statement.

Partin said he thought the "Kennedy gang" in the Justice Department had been removed from office and that he could "finally tell the truth as to what really went on during the Hoffa investigation."

Partin went on to say, "Hoffa shouldn't really be in prison. I know I committed perjury, but I was forced into it by Kennedy's people. I'm willing to take my rap for perjury but I think the truth should come out."

Threats Claimed

Partin revealed that since his California deposition, he has been contacted by Sheridan and "threatened with all sorts of things happening to me. I wish someone could get him, and the other Kennedy people in the Justice Department, off my back."

Throwing a challenge to the federal judicial system and to congressional leaders in the House and Senate, Partin told this reporter, "I will testify, under oath before any congressional committee or any court official about the way in which

the Hoffa investigation was conducted. I'll tell senators, judges or anyone else how things were done. Hoffa wasn't the only one the Kennedy gang wire-tapped or used electronic surveillance on."

Witnesses to Partin's deposition were Patrick Willis of Los Angeles, Dalton Smith and J.M. Walters, both friends of Partin. Irving Kramer, a Sherman Oaks lawyer, interrogated Partin with David Newman, a notary public, recording the testimony.

A number of nationally known figures have become involved with the Partin deposition with film star and World War II hero Audie Murphy playing a key role. Murphy became involved through his close association

with Willis, a representative of an international business organization.

Murphy, winner of the Congressional Medal of Honor, and World War II's most decorated soldier, arranged for a copy of Partin's deposition to be delivered to President Nixon at the San Clemente summer White House April 7.

The film star also prevailed upon former U. S. Sen. George L. Murphy of California to personally hand-deliver a copy of Partin's deposition to Atty. Gen. John Mitchell.

Reporter Contacted

Willis and Murphy contacted this reporter to request that he meet them in Los Angeles to discuss Partin's deposition. A copy of the document was furnished to this Union Leader reporter with the stipulation that nothing would appear in the press until such time as President Nixon and John Mitchell had time to review the document and take appropriate action.

Murphy, desirous of obtaining additional information, met this reporter in Dallas April 22 and 23 and conferred with Lester L. May.

May, a former U.S. attorney and a close personal friend of Murphy's, agreed to conduct a "more thorough examination" of Partin in an entirely new deposition.

However, because of the threats Partin claims are being made against him by Sheridan

2



GEORGE L. MURPHY



GOV. JOHN McKEITHEN



LESTER L. MAY

and other former Kenney people still in the Justice Department. Partin is seeking assurances from someone "high in government" that he will receive protection from this group. "All I want to do is tell the truth now. I'm aware I committed perjury but I want to right the wrong I was forced to do," Partin said.

Murphy said the new deposition has not yet been taken, but he said, "I'm hoping we can get to it this week or next. I have met several times with Ed Partin, I'm convinced he is finally telling the truth and it is a shame the government won't allow the truth to finally come out in the open."

Governor Blamed

Partin, in an interview this week, blamed Louisiana Gov. John McKeithen for his troubles, saying, "It was Gov. McKeithen who made me the patsy in this thing from the start. It was a move to get me out of the labor field so the governor and his henchmen could run things in Louisiana."

Judge Daniels, in the interview with this reporter and Sullivan, even before Partin made his accusations against the Louisiana governor, said, "I am convinced the governor and Mr. Pitcher were out to get Partin from the very start — as long ago as 1962 when Partin first became involved with the law here."

Daniels said he was retained by Pitcher to investigate Partin and to secure evidence that would dump the Baton Rouge labor leader from the union local office he held.

Pitcher, in an interview with this reporter three years ago, admitted his role in setting up Partin as a "spool pigeon" but justified his actions, saying, "If



GERALD GALLINGHOUSE



EDWARD G. PARTIN



AUDIE MURPHY

you thought I was going to oppose Bobby Kennedy and his brother who was the president of the United States, you're crazy. I went along with all they asked me to do with Partin."

U. S. Atty. Charles H. Anderson of Nashville, in an interview

some months ago with this reporter, confided that he was "horrified and shocked" at some of the methods employed by the Kennedy Justice Department in the Nashville area during the Hoffa investigation.

Records Missing

Anderson said when he assumed office last year he found records of his office were missing, and that attempts to secure information from a number of sources in Washington were being sabotaged.

Anderson said Sheridan and Epstein played a prominent role in these methods and that persons still in Justice were protecting Nashville residents who cooperated in the "Get Hoffa" movement.

"Before I leave office here I just might indict someone from the Justice Department for obstruction of justice," commented Anderson in concluding his interview.