



The connection  
between  
The Mafia,  
Big Business,  
U.S. Politicians,  
and their  
silent partner,  
The Banks

# THE SWISS BANK CONNECTION

BY LESLIE WALLER

## Interview with the author

### HELEN KOBLIN

While the IRS and the FBI feverishly conspire to nail the average citizen for the act of trying to rip off Amerika for a few dollars on their income tax, untold millions of dollars are being shuffled in and out of the country by those who are immune to, and protected by, the law.

In a slim, unassuming paperback, Leslie Waller has presented us with a handbook that describes the situation that holds most people slave to their social security number, while a certain elite segment of the society cavorts about the planet freely with thousand dollar bills in plain brown wrapping. "The Swiss Bank Connection," is an alarming and informative gazette revealing how organized crime and the establishment are inextricably intertwined into a corrupt and obscene tapestry that depicts the particular feudalism of our time. While the book is no literary masterpiece, it is a documentary indictment of the warlord criminals who govern us.

If you have not yet been afflicted with the paranoia that is the characteristic response of many Americans to the repressive-monitoring tactics that this computerized age has made possible, this interview will help you get it on. If you had any suspicions that your Government does not always go by the same numbers with all individuals in matters of the law, this interview with the author of *The Swiss Bank Connection* will definitely corroborate those feelings.

**KOBLIN:** What is your background?

**WALLER:** I started as a police reporter in Chicago writing about organized crime. When you're a police reporter in Chicago, it's like doing your undergraduate and postgraduate work all at the same time. It is like a University of Crime. It is the largest mob-controlled city in the country. The material that I gathered there, and later in New York, I used in a series of three novels, *The Banker*, *The Family*, and *The America*.

How is organized crime related to the government?

From the top on down. First let me define what I mean by organized crime. We're not talking about crime in the streets, which is poor people's crime. We're not talking about law and order, which is a phony political issue. We're talking about organized crime, which is rich folks' crime. It's a business. There's a thing called The National Crime Syndicate. They don't call it that. . . it's generally referred to as the Combo, The Outfit, The Opera-

tion. The Mafia is part of it. Basically, organized crime is a business that has developed with amazing, terrifying rapidity.

How long has this been going on?

Since the end of World War II, although it really got started during prohibition. During the war, all the young cops were in military service, and we had a country that was completely underpoliced. We had a terrific shortage of popular consumer goods, alcohol, butter, gasoline, nylon, etc., the black market began at that time. Organized crime took it over and established all of its power bases during that time, from 1941 to 1945, making its contacts at the highest levels of our so-called establishment.

Into what other operations did organized crime expand?

They became heavily involved in drugs, gambling, loan sharking, and a variety of illicit sources of money. It is a straight cash business. The rest of us surround our lives with pieces of paper. You write a check, you get a receipt, you get a bill. Your name is on all of these papers. Inevitably this all tracks back under your social security number to a computer somewhere near Arlington, Virginia, so that Big Brother can keep tabs on you. If a file isn't set up on you yet, it will be shortly.

What's this file for?

It'll include all your IRS material, all your bank account material. It will include volumes of information about you, everything will be available, including unsubstantiated rumors about you from friends, neighbors, old employees, enemies.

You speak in the future. Does this mean that at present, not all individuals have this dossier kept on them yet?

No, but at this point, it is possible to say that more than one-half the individuals in this country already do. The agency will go on collecting. It is possible with present computerization to handle this vast amount of data.

Who initiated this?

It was initiated by the FBI in the early nineteen fifties.

What is the purpose of this?

The purpose is to keep tabs on all of us and make information readily available between the various intelligence agencies in the nation and the commercial credit clearing houses. They know, for example, how many bottles you throw out in your garbage every week, whether you give a lot of parties or not. This comes from your neighbors. All of it is unevaluated, by the way, like untreated sewage.

How does the cash flow in

organized crime?

There are twenty-four families of organized crime in the United States. Each week in the year, a courier from each of the families goes to Switzerland. Sometimes the families will use one courier for two transactions. They'll carry several thousand dollars in cash. It's easy to do, because a thousand dollar bill weighs the same as a one dollar bill. It will go into a secret number account in Switzerland. It doesn't stay there long. It comes back very quickly, in the form of "buy" orders for stocks and bonds, or in the form of loans for American businesses.

Such being the tremendous pressure of this cash flow, coming back anonymously, that it gets to the point where the managers of companies, small and even blue chip, have no idea who really owns them anymore. They can only track the ownership back to a numbered secret account in Switzerland.

If people with big money in this country have found ways to escape the computer, then what is the usefulness of the big machine outside of Arlington?

That is a system that is meant for the man in the street, not organized crime. It began with the concept of tax-withholding, which was around the end of World War II. The Government gets its cut of your salary, even before you get any of it to spend. Thus the Government knows everything you make, and how you spend it.

If you should perchance, manage to obtain cash payment for some service, you may or may not want to take the risk of reporting it to the Government. If you were a member of organized crime with tremendous amounts of cash, the risk would be well worth it, especially since you're being protected up and down the line by corrupt Government and law enforcement officials.

In other words, the system is set up to protect and subsidize the rich, no matter how corrupt their practices for getting money, and to discriminate against the middle class and poor, hardworking person. Is that correct?

I'm absolutely certain that the first half of your statement is true. I'm not sure about the second half, because the Swiss Bank, with its system of real secrecy, is of no real use to anyone in the working, or middle class. Since the Government already knows what you are making and you don't have any spare cash, there's no reason for you to put money in the Swiss Bank. They only pay about two per cent interest.

I was talking about the system here discriminating against the middle class and poor.

Oh, yes, I think the system here works to the disadvantage of anyone who is salaried. And it certainly works to the disadvantage of anyone whose income is below the point where he can hire any legal help to try and cover up his tracks, and anyone who can not buy a Congressman, or Judge to get out of whatever squeeze he's in.

Exactly how does organized crime collaborate with the legal system?

What you have as time goes by, with the tremendous pressure generated by cash from the drug trade, Las Vegas skim, gambling, is a shift in the power base of organized crime, from a wholly illegal operation to one that is part illegal and part very legal. Perhaps someday, it will shift even further so that the establishment itself is indistinguishable from what we now know as organized crime, because organized crime will own such a big chunk of it.

How does politics reflect this connection?

When this appears in print, the national election will be over. One of the things we watch closely is the Electoral College, which we all know is antiquated. It is my opinion and the opinion of a number of people in this field that the same twenty-six areas that are key to the Electoral College are the same twenty-six key areas where organized crime either has a foothold or a stranglehold on the American political process through the following methods: Large contributions to candidates, large contributions to political parties, delivering of blocks of votes in certain urban situations, and in really corrupt areas, actually brokering state and city jobs and contracts. There are parts of this country, Chicago is one of them, where nothing moves without the approval of the Mob. Any Chicago newspaperman will confirm this, in private.

How does the Mob wield its influence?

There's a fascinating story about

why Frank Sinatra fell out of love with the Democratic Party, and into the arms of Spiro Agnew. It has to do with a fellow named Sam "Momo" Giancana who was the chief of the Chicago Mafia, and also a very good friend of Phyllis Maguire, of the Maguire sisters.

At one time, Sam was in big trouble with Bobby Kennedy, then the Attorney General, about an income tax problem. Sam sent back word: "Tell him, Frank says to lay off." Frank Sinatra is a very close associate of the Mob and has been since he was a teenager. He is an intimate friend of Charlie "Lucky" Luciano, in addition to mobsters all over the country as well as at that point an intimate friend of President Jack Kennedy. He also had other connections to the White House — as a friend of Peter Lawford, who was married to one of the Kennedy girls.

Are you now drawing a parallel between the entertainment world, organized crime, and politics?

Consider the results of this story. What happened was that Sinatra had an iron curtain drawn between him and the White House, the minute Bobby Kennedy heard that story from Giancana and told it to Jack. Sinatra, from that point, was persona non grata everywhere in the Kennedy sphere of influence. His "disillusionment" with the Democratic Party dates from that point.

Now take Sammy Davis, Jr. He does have a pipeline into the White House. When we saw him embrace Richard Nixon at the Miami Convention, we were looking at the second act of a drama.

The first act took place two years ago shortly after June 28, when Joe Colombo Sr. was shot down in Columbus Circle in New York and lay between life and death in the Emergency Care Unit of Roosevelt Hospital. The first visitors who were not part of his family were Sammy Davis, Jr. and his wife.

The third act took place a few weeks ago when Sammy was allowed to buy eight per cent of the Tropicana Hotel in Las Vegas for a no-cash down payment. If you ask Sammy about this, he is very honest. He is on record as saying, "I am not bucking the system. I have joined the system." You can't blame him when you realize he's only had talent on his side.

What do you mean ONLY? Didn't his talent bring him financial rewards?

He has never had the Mob connections that Sinatra had. He's new to this. You can follow his logic in what he did . . . I suppose you can make a moral judgment on it.

Didn't his connection with Sinatra give him an entrée?

There are no Blacks in organized crime. It is an all-white, all-male power structure.

Do the Italians predominate?

I'd say somewhere between a quarter and a third are Italian. You are implying then that racism is practiced within the structure of organized crime in much the same way as it is in the greater society?

Well, yes. In drugs, and in gambling, that's where the Mob really victimizes the Black and the Latin American in their ghettos in this country. Cops tell me that half the junkies in America are in the New York City area. More than half of those are Black. In drug traffic and the numbers racket all over the country, the people who take the risk are the runners out in the street. They are all Black, Chicano and Puerto Rican, but they don't get to keep the money. It all goes back to their white overlords after they collect it.

Is the relegation of menial labor to minorities in the criminal world remaining status quo, or is it changing as the outer society changes?

One of the interesting sidelights is the New York war at the moment between the younger and the older elements in the Mob. One of the reasons that people advance can be seen through the murder of Joey Gallo. He was a new breed of mobster who was very interested in bringing Blacks up to the leadership level. When he had done seven years at Attica Prison, he had achieved quite a record for standing up for the rights of Black prisoners.

What motivated him to take this stand?

Certainly not altruism. He was just smart enough to realize that if he didn't bring them up to the leadership level, they would take command themselves and more blood would flow.

Is that the same kind of reasoning that has characterized large corporations?

Yes, he made a virtue of necessity, but the rest of the mob didn't go along with it. They wanted to keep it an all-white, all-male protected reserve. When you get to the way the mob uses its power in this country, and you study the record of some of the leaders in the country, you realize just how much of a hold they have on us. Ralph Salerno, the New York City Police Department's top expert on organized crime, stated a couple of years ago, "Someday, the Mob will put a man in the White House, and he won't know it till they hand him the bill." I feel that Nixon's the one. There's no question in my mind that he is our first Mob President.

Does Nixon know it or not?

Let me give you some history and then make up your own mind. He tracks back in his connections with the Mob to about 1940, when Bugsy Siegel and Mickey Cohen here on the Coast both went on record as saying they made major contributions to his early political campaign. This in itself means nothing. These men are gangsters, their statement is unsupported by him and can be denied. Nevertheless, they have said it.

Now, Nixon graduates from Duke University, he applies for the F.B.I. He was turned down. He comes back to Whittier, California, puts out a shingle. Here he is, a small town lawyer in a remote suburb of L.A., looking for political connections, looking for business. We think the first connection was Bugsy. We know what the second connection was because where did he go to find business? Richard Milhaus Nixon went to Havana in 1940.

Havana was controlled at that point by Meyer Lansky, the childhood friend and syndicate buddy of Bugsy Siegel. Lansky and Siegel grew up together remaining friends and business associates right straight through until Bugsy was shot. Nixon was in Havana three or four weeks making business connections. We think that's where he met Bebe Rebozo.

We know that at that point, Charles "Bebe" Rebozo was a filling station attendant, very active in the Batista-Lansky operation in Cuba. We know that Dick's first job was in the tire rationing division of OPA in 1941. We also know that Bebe's first million was made in tire recapping in 1941 and '42, when tires became very scarce, as rubber was a strategic material in World War II.

Then Dick went into the Navy. And from there we know what his political career was. But there was a period of time after he was defeated for the Presidency in 1960 and for the Governorship of California in '62, when he was a private citizen. At that time he started a series of real estate speculations in the Florida area with four or five Lansky associates. All of them were partners, or in some way involved with these land deals. Through this Nixon became what he is today. He is self-made, there is no question about it. But all along the line, he has been involved with Mob people and businessmen who are associated with the Mob.

Bebe Rebozo is another story that we don't have to go into. But it is documented that he was serving as a banker for organized crime down in Cape Biscayne. Murray Chotiner has an interesting role. He is a personal friend of Nixon's and his campaign manager for many years. He is also on record as attorney for a number of syndicate figures. He has defended them in court.

What has Nixon done for the Mob, now that he's in the White House?

About three things. The first thing was to kill the legislation that was to have made it illegal to export cash to Switzerland, and bring it back anonymously. He, Kleindienst, and Rossides of the Treasury Department pulled the rug right out from under this bill that was introduced by Bob Morgenthau of New York City, a U.S. attorney and Congressman, Wright Patman of Texas, and was sponsored in the Senate by Senator Proxmire. It came out a very anemic version that had no teeth in it, and doesn't do anything. Nixon can not be blamed for having killed it completely. In essence, it is a law that does nothing.

What, exactly, was it supposed to do?

It was supposed to limit the export of cash to ten thousand dollars in any one year. It called on every bank and brokerage house in the United States to make sure that every transaction from abroad had the name of a real person attached to it, not a numbered account. This would have effectively dried up the Swiss Bank connection, no question about it.

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# A Letter about Billy Dean Smith

Dear Editor,

After deliberating only six hours, a jury of seven Army officers found Pvt. Billy Dean Smith innocent of the "fragging" murders of two officers at Bien Hoa, Vietnam. Billy was also found innocent of the attempted murder of three other officers.

Smith was convicted, however, of assaulting the Army investigator who arrested him that fateful morning in March of 1971. This charge carries a maximum sentence of one year. However, Billy has already spent over twenty months in solitary confinement so it is certain that Billy will be a free man very shortly.

Being a member of Vietnam Veterans Against the War and the Billy Dean Smith Defense Committee, I want to express the sincere thanks of these organizations, Billy's family and friends, and all progressive people to the man most responsible for Billy's freedom—Luke McKissack.

Well over a year ago Attorney McKissack "discovered" the case of Billy Smith. From that moment on until today he has spent a large majority of his life working on the case. Not only did Luke prepare the defense case and present it in the courtroom, but he also took it upon

himself to help develop the political defense of Billy. As we all know from past experiences, this is often as important as the legal defense.

Luke came to a state conference of VVAW and explained to all of us veterans what the military was doing to our brother Billy. It was his sincerity and determination that led us to support the case wholeheartedly. Luke also brought the message of Billy Dean Smith to many other organizations.

But above all, Luke unselfishly spend a great deal of his personal funds on the case. He spent thousands of dollars on an evidence gathering trip to Vietnam. Considerable monies were spent to hire ballistics experts to counter the sham "ballistics" test the Army presented on the spoon and pin from the alleged murder weapon (hand grenade). The Vietnam Veterans Against the War pledge to do all in our power to repay our comrade, Luke McKissack. We need your help also. If everyone who reads this would send in \$1 or more to: BILLY DEAN SMITH DEFENSE COMMITTEE, 6430 Sunset Blvd., Room 521, La., Cal. — we would greatly appreciate your help.

I'm sure we all would want a Luke McKissack to be around when we are confronted by the vicious attacks of political repression. YOU COULD BE NEXT.

Tom Zangrilli  
Los Angeles

## Anti-war demonstrations

(continued from page 1)

solately no right to be in Southeast Asia, the U.S. has absolutely no right to negotiate, placing conditions on and demanding concessions from Asian people," NPAC said.

NPAC recognizes the right and need of the fighting Vietnamese to negotiate what they must for their own survival but feels it is a step backwards for Americans, in the aggressor country, to push for anything less than total unconditional withdrawal from Southeast Asia. It denies that Thieu represents the people and realizes that he will continue the war in order to stay in power.

Since Nixon won the elections, he may be less inclined to sign even the nine point compromise. NPAC remembers that Lyndon Johnson halted the bombing in 1968 and that it was resumed at a later date more intensely and fiercely than ever before. Nixon is currently bombing and supplying Thieu with more weaponry than ever before in the war's history.

In seeming contradiction to what many feel the Vietnamese want

Americans to do (that is, to loudly proclaim the slogan "Sign the Treaty Now"), Nguyen Minh Vy, second major negotiator of the Democratic Republic of Vietnamese to Paris, sent NPAC the following telegram after the peace treaty was proposed (Oct. 26):

"We highly appreciate your initiative of organizing October 26 picket lines and November 18 mass antiwar demonstrations. The U.S. war in Vietnam is intensified and fiercer than ever. Although the Vietnamese people have shown maximum good will, the Nixon administration doesn't respond to Vietnam's legitimate demands, namely genuine independence and freedom. We firmly believe your activities will contribute an important part to the mobilization of American opinion demanding that the Nixon administration immediately end the Vietnam war, and support to the Nguyen Van Thieu puppet administration, withdraw U.S. troops from South Vietnam, and let the South Vietnamese people settle their own affairs without foreign interference. We wish you every success."

## Leslie Waller interview

# 'There is no question. . . Nixon's our first Mob president'

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The second thing he did was to fire Bob Morgenthau. Bob had a record as being THE single U.S. attorney in the country who had ever made any inroads against the Mob. He had wreaked havoc with the leadership of the five families of the New York-New Jersey area. And they still haven't recovered three years after the firing of Morgenthau.

The third thing that I can document is Nixon's freeing of James Riddle Harper, who was the top go-between between organized crime and organized labor, with two-thirds of his sentence yet to be served. It is conceivable that a man could be put in the White House for that one purpose alone.

Is Nixon aware of his position as a "puppet" for the Mob?

I would say that a man like Nixon, a superb political animal whose strategy pulled him from nothing to the White House, I think that a man who could pull that off must know what he's doing at every moment. It is impossible to think of him as an unwitting dupe.

You do think Nixon is a pretty intelligent man then?

No, a superb political animal. That is a completely different thing. The first duty of a politician is to get elected. The second duty is to get reelected. He has no other responsibilities. That's my view of politics.

Isn't it dangerous for you to have written this expose?

No, a lot of this is known. It hasn't all been pulled together in one place like this. It's known to the police, the F.B.I.

Is organized crime as you're describing it now indigenous to America, or does this go on in other places of the world?

There are some countries who are afflicted with it more and some less. We seem to be the center of it because of our affluence. The Scandinavian countries are relatively free of it. England is afflicted with it only in the urban areas. France and Italy are pretty much under the thumb of either the Mafia or the French-Corsican version of the Mafia.

In areas of the world where the United States has heavy financial interests, would there be a greater

tendency toward organized crime?

Germany is one of those. The drug connection that used to go through Marseilles is now going through Frankfurt or Dusseldorf. The French finally woke up and cracked down on the Marseilles area. A lot of it's in South America now, they're starting to cultivate the poppy.

Is it safe to presume that there are no women involved in organized crime in this country?

Their only involvement is as wives, mothers, sisters, and sweethearts. When you're in the Mob, you have to be quite careful whom you associate with. The tendency is, when you do marry, it is often to a second or third cousin, someone's niece, or someone you can vouch for. If you marry outside the family, it's someone you can keep under control.

Girlfriends and mistresses have to submit to the same kind of self-discipline that Mafia wives, daughters and sisters have to submit to, which is one of associating with themselves. They lead very quiet lives of desperation. T.V. is probably the only thing they have free access to.

Why are women not involved in organized crime on high, money-making levels?

I think it has to do with the old Sicilian concept similar to machismo, but has other connotations, including silence in the face of the enemy. I guess it just developed along the lines of the Sicilian base, where women were never involved. The cultural background of it is masculine. Beyond that I could not psychologize.

The same is true of war, and women have begun to question whether or not we are still dragging it out in Viet Nam because the men who run wars are unable to admit defeat, as it would be detrimental to their masculine image. Do you think perhaps, that this has directed the course of the history of wars?

You sound like my wife, "If women ran the world, the world wouldn't be in the shape it's in . . ."

To be specific, because of the ego trip and power quest that man is on, would the war be similar to organized crime in the way that it is promulgated and perpetuated?

In many ways, I think it would. There is much less excitement in

organized crime than there is in war, because there is much less killing, much less bloodletting.

Then men consider killing a source of excitement.

Oh, yes. About two years ago, a team of psychologists did a series of in-depth interviews with interviewees, who didn't know what they were getting at and didn't know what answers to feed back. The results showed that faced with certain kinds of hypothetical frustrations and fears, the male reaction was much more prone to violence than the female reaction. In other words, men would resort to violence much more readily than women would. It is apparently a more male way of meeting "crises," or to dignify it, "challenges."

In organized crime, and in the general business world, the so-called challenge is to make money, and the way you make money in our society is to take it away from somebody else. You either con them out of it or trick them out of it, or if you're a member of organized crime, you steal.

What's the basic difference between the high echelon organized crime chieftain, and the petty thief in the streets?

The petty thief will either end up in jail, be shot down in the streets like Bonnie and Clyde, or be hounded into jail like Jean Valjean. The free-lance petty thief has no future. The member of organized crime is rarely arrested.

Didn't organized crime members ever have to serve their apprenticeship as petty street thieves?

No. When the thief wants to get money for what he has stolen, he has to deal with the Mob at the level of the "fence." How do you get into organized crime? Frequently, you're born into it. Sometimes, you live in a neighborhood where you develop these kinds of contacts. Very often you get into it without even wanting to or realizing that you are.

I have a friend who has a small business in the Chicago area. It's big enough so that at Christmas he gives out eighty cases of booze to buyers and favorite customers. Once he said, "Last Christmas was great. I was able to buy hijack booze at half-off price, and fortunately saved a lot of money." I said, "Fortunately? You're now an accomplice in a high-jacking crime.



The feminist electric rock band of Chris & Jo, Charlie Chin & Lizzie Tisch will perform at the Ash Grove, 8162 Melrose Avenue, through November 19.

## New Watts newspaper by Black Writers Collective

The first edition of a new community newspaper, the *New Watts Awakening* is now available to the public. A production of Mafundi Institute's Black Writers Collective, the paper will be published every month.

The *New Watts Awakening* is designed to fill the pressing need in the Watts area for a community

news organ. Featured in the first edition are articles on Sounder, the Black Film Collective, *don't bother*

*me i can't cope*, Black movies, and much more. Subscriptions and donations are invited.

For further information contact: New Watts Awakening, 1827 E. 103rd St., Watts, Calif. 90002