

THIRTY-EIGHT

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1972

THE STA

*Hoffa 'Lawyer' Played Many Roles***White House Saw Taub Film**

By FRED P. GRAHAM

© 1972, New York Times Service

WASHINGTON — William L. Taub, the mysterious figure who acted as "legal counsel" for James R. Hoffa, was able to arrange the showing of a film on China at the White House last February, even though the Secret Service had a thick dossier alleging that he had often used Presidents' names without permission.

He was subsequently able to pose as a lawyer and meet with Henry A. Kissinger and other top administration officials about Hoffa's desire to visit North Vietnam because they had no knowledge of the Secret Service's files.

These events came to light today when the White House disclosed that Taub—then in the role of a film distributor—was permitted to show a China film to White House staff members prior to Nixon's China trip.

From other sources it was learned that the Secret Service concluded that Taub was "clever but harmless to the life of the President," and no reason was seen to bar his entry.

Herbert G. Klein, Nixon's

director of communications, explained today that he set up the White House screening of the film, "Mao's China," for staff members who wished to bone up on China prior to the trip.

He said that Nixon was not present, and that Taub was told that the White House showing should not be taken as an endorsement of the film.

However, court papers in a New York lawsuit over the rights to the Yugoslav-made documentary film allege that Taub was a "clever confidence man" who claimed close friendship with the President and used Nixon's name in efforts to pressure the major television networks to buy the film.

The court suit, plus investigative records obtained by the New York Times, pictured a bizarre series of incidents in which Taub allegedly invoked the names of numerous famous men without permission—starting with New York Mayor James J. Walker in 1932 and including Presidents Truman, Eisenhower and Nixon.

His activities had passed

virtually unnoticed until last week, when it was disclosed that he had managed to hold meetings in recent weeks with Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Nixon's foreign policy adviser, Deputy Atty. Gen. Ralph Erickson and other high officials who thought he was a lawyer trying to arrange for Hoffa to negotiate with the North Vietnamese for the release of American prisoners of war.

That effort collapsed when Secretary of State William P. Rogers opposed it as private interference with international negotiations. There was also criticism over the disclosure that Taub's purpose was to persuade the government to drop its probation restrictions which bar Hoffa from returning to his post as president of the Teamsters International Union.

Today White House spokesmen insisted that nobody in the administration smoothed the way for Taub's meetings with officials on Hoffa's behalf. Klein, reached by telephone in Las Vegas, said that he and others in the White House did not know that Taub—the-film-distributor was also acting as Taub-the-law-

yer, and that Kissinger was not told of the Secret Service's thick dossier on Taub.

From various sources, the following picture of Taub's career emerged:

In 1932, he was accused of trying to get free passes to Atlantic City by posing as secretary to New York's Mayor Walker. The same year, charges were filed saying he obtained stationery of the Atlantic City mayor and wrote letters praising himself, which were given to business associates.

He soon moved to New York City and acquired a fashionable Park Avenue address. By 1960 he had also acquired upwards of 50 suits, judgments, federal tax liens and other court actions against him.

In some of them, plaintiffs complained that the five-foot, two-inch, stocky man—now in his early 60s—had gained their confidence through lavish use of the names of such "friends" as former Atty. Gen. J. Howard McGrath, Maurice Chevalier, Gen. DeGaulle, French president Pompidou, and Popes Pius, John and Paul.

\* Fred Graham, NYTimes 13 Sep 72, says Kissinger was told of the dossier.