



The New York Times/Tyrone Dukes
**Mell Stewart, above, and
 Gordon Margulis, personal
 attendants to Howard
 Hughes, discussing the mil-
 lionaire's last years.**



Hughes Attendants Accuse His Aides Of Manipulating Him

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 By PETER KIHSS

The two personal attendants for the late Howard R. Hughes, who have disclosed a tragic story of his last secretive, ailing years, said yesterday that they did so because their allegiance had been to him and because they considered that aides who directed the billionaire's empire had manipulated him—often without his knowledge.

The men, Gordon Margulis and Mell Stewart, conceded they also had a "monetary interest." The 201-page book by James Phelan, "Howard Hughes: The Hidden Years," for which they supplied much material and anecdote, has had advance earnings of \$250,000 so far, even before the official Jan. 24 publication date, with proceeds being split three ways equally, Mr. Phelan said.

In a news conference at Random House, publishers of the book, at 201 East 50th Street, Mr. Stewart said that "the taxpayer has a right to know" what happened at Hughes Aircraft, the nation's eighth-largest defense contractor.

He and Mr. Margulis said they doubted that there was any valid Hughes will, and Mr. Phelan said 78 percent of the estate should belong to the Federal Government.

In the book's introduction, Mr. Phelan termed as "pure myth" the idea that the Hughes fortune was a product of free enterprise. Rather, he said, Mr. Hughes for 30 years "siphoned huge sums out of the public treasury"—\$6 billion in Federal contracts since 1965, according to records studied by Donald Barlett and James Steele of the Knight News Service.

Mr. Margulis, who wore a gray safari suit and tieless flowered shirt, said he had been a waiter at the Desert Inn in Las Vegas, Nev., when he first brought meals to Mr. Hughes's hideout penthouse, and was then hired to prepare the recluse's food. A karate student, he also served as bodyguard, and carried the dying billionaire in an ambulance plane in Acapulco, Mexico, last April.

\$1,000 Fee for Barbering

Mr. Margulis, who was born in Egham, England, on Oct. 12, 1931, said he quit school when he was 14 years old, worked as a dress cutter, ran a factory, worked on a construction gang and served for two years in the Royal Air Force as an instrument mechanic. He came to the United States in May 1965—"I wanted to see America, and I didn't like socialism."

Mr. Stewart, who wore a light blue business suit, said he had a barber shop in Huntington Park, Calif., in 1961, when he was called one day to trim Mr. Hughes's straggly hair and beard in the Beverly Hills Hotel.

The visit brought him a \$1,000 fee, and later standby payments of \$75 a day—without much more barbering for Mr. Hughes. Mr. Stewart said he sold his shop, started another in Kearns, Utah, and then, in 1968, decided to study as a male nurse and wound up working full time in the capacity for Mr. Hughes.

Mr. Stewart was born on Jan. 13, 1929, in Meadow, Utah. Like many other Hughes aides, he is a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. His wife Florence had been a Mormon choir pianist. They have four children—Teresa Lynne, 19; Alan, 18; Carla, 15, and Robert, 12. Mr. Margulis and his wife Patricia have a daughter, Kelle, 11, and a son, Gordon, 6.

The two aides said they had still been employed by the Summa Corporation, the holding company for Hughes interests, when they got in touch with Mr. Phelan at the end of last April—three weeks after Mr. Hughes's death. They took accumulated vacation time to work on the book.

When the book was half-written, they said Kay Glenn, a key aide to Frank William Gay, now president of Summa, learned about the project. He failed to dissuade them despite what Mr. Stewart said was an offer of a 79-cent tie-tack as a 10-year service pin, some chocolates and a steak dinner. They were dismissed last Sept. 15.