

# FBI, CIA, The Mob, & Treachery



The True Story of an FBI Special Agent,  
US Army Lieutenant Colonel  
Decorated War Hero,  
And His Life with the FBI,  
The CIA, and the Mob  
As Told To  
**Rodney Stich**



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**The True Story of an FBI Agent,  
US Army Lieutenant Colonel,  
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And his life with the Bureau,  
The CIA, and the Mob**



**As Told to Another Former Government Agent,**

**Rodney Stich**  
**Former Navy Pilot**



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## Introduction

This is the true story of an FBI agent, a U.S. Army Colonel, a decorated hero of the Vietnam War, and a true patriot, working to protect the country against enemies from outside and *inside* of government.

It is the story told by Richard Taus to Rodney Stich, who was also a government agent, with the government's aviation safety offices. Between the two of them, they tell a chilling account of conditions in government that caused or enabled to occur decades of corrupt activities, tragic consequences. The blowback and ripple effects extend far beyond what most people could imagine.

The purpose of writing this book was to make available to the American public information from insiders about serious misconduct in the three branches of government. This misconduct involves people of both political parties who have brought several decades of devastating harm to countless numbers of innocent people and to U.S. national security interests.

The book focuses on two primary areas. One being the Vietnam War and the second being matters relating to the FBI. Both areas reveal an ugly side of these areas, something that needs to be addressed if the conditions are to be eradicated.

The matters that adversely affected Richard Taus adversely affected the United States and its people. A combination of arrogance and criminal behavior in the law enforcement and intelligence areas have enabled the United States and its people to suffer greatly, conditions that will surely increase until the public becomes aware of these matters and start to show some semblance of outrage.

People in positions of checks and balances have prostituted their responsibilities, making possible the widespread corruption in and out of government.

The people in government and in the media that are responsible for checks and balances have subverted the safeguards under our form of government, and have become implicated with the perpetrators. This book focuses on misconduct involving key government positions and covert government operations.

The consequences are not simply academic. They are real, inflicting great harm upon real people, and subverting the government of the United States. In this book, a courageous FBI agent attempted to perform his duty to the country, and to the people, when he encountered corruption that was inflicting great harm upon national interests, which subsequently did result in catastrophic consequences, he suffered severe retaliation.

Richard Taus was awarded many medals for bravery during two tours of duty in Vietnam: Three Bronze Stars, numerous Air Medals, the Cross of Gallantry, Battle Campaign Silver Star, plus several instances making him eligible for the Purple Heart where he suffered wounds from enemy action. He received national recognition on television upon his return from the first Vietnam tour for his adoption of a Vietnamese orphan, who was taken into the Taus household that included his mother, Yolanda. She also had a history

of patriotic actions during World War II and the Korean War, caring for many of the wounded returning to the United States.

After returning from the second tour of duty in Vietnam, Taus joined the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and over a period of years had his own investigative team. During this period he made several discoveries.

- (1) Drug smuggling and other crimes by people acting in CIA positions in unison with organized crime, and other CIA crimes that were clearly hardcore offenses against the United States, adversely affecting national security interests.
- (2) Unlawful funding and arming of Iraq during the 1980s, using people in the CIA, under orders from White House politicians.
- (3) Other areas of corrupt activities that meet the legal definition of subversion and treason.
- (4) Cover-ups by people in relevant government office that had a responsibility to prevent these federal offenses.
- (5) Cover-ups by people in the media.
- (6) Misuse of the awesome powers possessed by the Justice Department, federal and state, and complicity of judges, to retaliate against Taus for attempting to protect vital national interests.

After informing his FBI superiors of the criminal activities that he discovered, including FBI directors William Sessions and Louis Freeh, who later became heads of the FBI, none took any action to address these matters. This problem developed during the bi-annual signing of a standardized FBI form required by the U.S. Senate and House Intelligence Oversight Committees. This preprinted form must be signed by all FBI agents, acknowledging that the agents know of no unreported criminal activities.

Taus knew of major criminal activities, but since they involved the CIA and White House politicians, his supervisors blocked him from pursuing the matters and refused to receive his written reports. Taus' FBI supervisors threatened Taus for refusing to sign papers stating there were no unreported criminal activities.

Taus then did what I had done when I discovered deep-seated corruption associated with a series of very brutal airline disasters: he sent letters to members of the Senate and House Intelligence Oversight Committees. Among the statements by Taus in his letters to members of Congress were the following:

The involvement of officials, agents and operatives of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) with organized crime members and drug-trafficking activities. And the participation by members of the CIA who engaged in the looting of the Savings & Loans (Thrift) Industries, financial scams and fraudulent securities transactions,

The involvement of people from the National Security Council (NSC) and National Security Agency (NSA) staffs and the White House in criminal activities associated with funding for the acquisition of military weapons, supplies and equipment which was known as the Iran-Contra Arms Initiative, called Irangate, and the Iraqi Arms/Agriculture Loans (BCCI Scandal), later called



Iraqgate.

The associations between known and suspected members of the Mafia and CIA agents in conducting drug-trafficking and money-laundering operations and financial frauds.”

I was ordered by my supervisors in the FBI to halt these investigations, del my written reports, terminate my informants and make no reference to these criminal and subversive activities implicating high-ranking government officials, politicians, organized crime and business leaders who controlled and manipulated government agencies and operations.

### **Official Duties Threatened People in Key Government Positions**

Taus’ conduct was threatening to expose serious misconduct by people in key government positions. He became the target of false criminal charges.

The first retaliation occurred when criminal charges were filed by federal prosecutors, stating Taus had wrongfully placed a \$9 charge for gasoline on a government-issued credit card eight years earlier (when Taus was using his personal car on government business, as was standard procedure). Then, when that charge was dismissed, pressure was applied to cause local prosecutors at the county level to charge Taus with improper conduct with young boys.

Being threatened with criminal charges, several of the families had their sons testify that Taus had inappropriate sexual contact with them. The trial ended with a jury rendering a guilty verdict and a New York judge sentencing Taus to 30-92 years in prison.

That false testimony, false prosecution, and sham prison sentence, insured that the criminal activities that Taus sought to report would continue, and the guilty go unpunished.

### **Butterfly Effects of the Cover-Ups and Retaliation**

As a results of the butterfly effect, or ripple effect, conditions continued that would then play a role in the successful terrorist acts of 9/11, the hijackings of four airliners and murder of 3,000 people, plus the resulting fallout of those attacks. The poor performance of the CIA and FBI was identified in congressional and 9/11 Commission hearings, but omitted going to the heart of *why* the poor performance existed: a culture of corruption and cover-ups, that no whitewash would correct.

### **Short Chronology of Events**

In 1961, Taus entered the Pennsylvania Military College (PMC) as a Cadet, and upon graduation received a Bachelor of Science Degree and rank of a U.S. Army Second Lieutenant. General Creighton Abrams commissioned Taus in 1965 at PMC as a Second Lieutenant. Abrams and other Army and Navy generals and admirals would guide Taus’ career.

After graduating from PMC, Taus attended the School of Law at the University of Notre Dame, where he was further introduced to men who worked in the intelligence communities. Many CIA agents came from PMC and Notre Dame.

A foreign alumnus, Jose Napoleon Duarte, who Taus met at Notre Dame, later became president of El Salvador. Duarte played a prominent role in Taus’ entry into intelligence services. While attending the University

of Notre Dame, Taus was concerned about his former PMC classmates dying on the battlefield in Vietnam, causing him to volunteer for Vietnam service in November 1966.

### **Unusual Adoption of Vietnam Orphan**

Upon the completion of Taus' first tour of duty in Vietnam, Taus was able to adopt the orphaned son of a General that Taus had earlier befriended. The unusual intervention of high-level officials made this adoption possible.

The orphan that Taus adopted was the son of a prominent South Vietnamese family, whose father and mother were killed during the Vietnam War. Taus had met the child's father, Colonel Tran Minh, before the devastating Tet Offensive and was invited to the Colonel's home in Cholon. The Colonel was killed in action during the Tet Offensive. The boy's remaining relatives were killed by the U.S. bombardment of Cholon during that campaign.

In-between Vietnam assignments, Taus was involved in clandestine diplomatic missions to Central America. He then returned to Vietnam for a second tour of duty as an Army Aviation Unit Commander. On this second tour,

Taus discovered that the CIA and Air America were engaged in massive drug smuggling, which made possible the availability of drugs to American troops. The impairment under drugs contributed to some of the GI deaths in Vietnam.

Upon the completion of that tour, Taus again flew secret diplomatic missions to Latin American, where he discovered more sinister motives of U.S. politicians. For the next several years, Taus worked in both civilian employment and military duties at the request of high-ranking U.S. government officials. By 1977, Taus asked for a new assignment, and was hired by the FBI. Former FBI Assistant Director William C. Sullivan, who Taus had earlier befriended, was now working for the National Security Council and the CIA. Sullivan facilitated Taus' entry into the FBI as a Special Agent.

Taus' first discovery of links between the CIA and Mafia figures occurred while working on the FBI's New York Criminal Division, Taus investigated the Pizza Connection case. This investigation involved an international drug-trafficking ring, with Mafia links to the CIA. In another separate Mafia investigation, CIA drug-trafficking involvement was also developed.

On the Foreign Counter-Intelligence Division, the list of prominent cases that Taus worked included the Iran Contra Arms Initiative Affair (Irangate), the U.S. Savings and Loans (Thrift Industry) debacles; involvement of the CIA in Pakistan with the corrupt Bank of Credit and Commerce International; drug-trafficking; money-laundering; financial manipulations and the genesis of the terrorism problem America and her allies face today.

When Taus reported these matters, and then refused to halt his investigations, Taus became a target of the CIA and FBI.

The reader can contact Taus by writing to him as follows:

Richard Taus, 91A1040  
Clinton Correctional Facility  
POB 2001, Dannemora, New York 12929-2001

Or

The Taus Family  
POB 12  
Baldwin, NY 11510







## CHAPTER ONE

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### Start of Military Career and Vietnam Assignment

**A**s enemy machine gun fires pepper-sprayed the unit's foxhole positions, Captain Chester Tudor bellowed, "Return fire!" Bullets ricocheted off the steel revetment walls that were supposed to protect the beleaguered Army unit. Second Lieutenant Richard Taus was immediately struck in his left chest by a round that slipped through his flax vest. The force of the impact pushed him backwards against the dirt mound that constituted the last defensive perimeter for the unit.

"Fix Bayonets!" cried Captain Tudor as his soldiers braced themselves for the final assault upon their position. Though 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Taus was staggering from the bullet now lodged in his upper abdomen, he was still alert and followed his commanding officer's orders. While trying to secure a bayonet to his M16 rifle, another shower of enemy rounds raked their position. One bullet fragment hit Taus' bayonet, inflicting a gash on his right hand.

"Make every round count! We're low on ammo. Taus are you alright!?" Tudor was a former infantry branch officer from Kileen, Texas. His small elite unit, consisting of less than 20 soldiers, half officers and half sergeants, was defending the northern perimeter of Tan Son Nhut Airbase. It was the beginning of the enemy's Tet Offensive, an all-out battle where the enemy units had silently pre-positioned themselves.

Taus leaned against the foxhole's rampart, feeling the soreness in his chest and a stinging pain from the bayonet wound. Given the dark night, he tried to sight his rifle on the approaching enemy. The attack had commenced after midnight throughout South Vietnam. In Taus' sector, a 700-man Viet Cong Battalion was reinforced by North Vietnamese Army (NVA) soldiers. Despite the open runways and fields, Taus and his group could not detect the approaching enemy forces, until they were within 100 yards of their foxholes. (See "The Tet Offensive.")

Spies within the ranks of the Republic of South Vietnam (RVN) Army High Command had been divulging U.S. tactical plans to the NVA for years.

As a result, the 1968 Tet Offensive started with the Allied Forces being unprepared. Yet, early harbingers of this forthcoming attack were known to

many U.S. ground units as NVA men and materials poured into South Vietnam. General William Westmoreland, commander of Allied Forces, and his Intelligence staff, were well-aware of the impending attacks from staff reports concerning this buildup as early as the summer of 1967.

The dynamics of this secretive onslaught could be compared, in some part, to other covert operations carried out against the United States, except for the fact that some of the future enemies are *within* our own government.

### **Flashback to Earlier Days**

Prior to joining the U.S. Army and his first tour of duty in Vietnam, Taus entered Pennsylvania Military College (PMC) in 1961, where, as a cadet, he graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree and rank of a U.S. Army Second Lieutenant. General Creighton Abrams, who commissioned Taus in 1965 at the college, would later be Taus' Commanding General in Vietnam.

Abrams and other influential general, admirals, and intelligence agents would guide Taus' career in the years to follow. Taus' friendship with Abrams and Colonel Jonathan Sturm caused Taus to be used for other sensitive missions.

Upon graduation, Taus attended the School of Law at the University of Notre Dame, where he was further introduced to people who worked in the intelligence communities. Both PMC and Notre Dame graduated many future CIA employees. A foreign alumnus who Taus met would later play a prominent role in his entry into intelligence matters: Jose Napoleon Duarte, the "Fighting Irish" alumnus, who later became the president of El Salvador. Taus volunteered for Vietnam in November 1966 after he heard that several of his former military classmates had been killed while fighting the Vietnam War.

### **First Tour, Vietnam. August 1967**

On Lieutenant Richard Taus' first tour in Vietnam (1967-68) he was assigned as a U.S. Armed Forces Courier Officer. His position required top security clearances. On his second tour (1970-71) then Captain Taus was assigned as an Army Aviation Unit Commander to the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division's 228<sup>th</sup> Assault Support Helicopter Battalion and later to the 1<sup>st</sup> Aviation Brigade's 307<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion.

### **First Tour of Duty in Vietnam**

Aboard the U.S. Air Force's C-141 Starlifter aircraft bound for Vietnam, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Taus was beginning his first tour of duty in Vietnam. As with most military flights, the utility passenger seats faced backwards, with officers seated nearest the front of the aircraft. A short pre-flight briefing about what to do in the event of a crash landing increased tensions on the flight.

At approximately 4 p.m. the flight reached its destination at Bien Hoa Airbase in the Republic of Vietnam (RVN). To avoid hostile ground fire, the aircraft made a diving descent with exaggerated maneuvers during the approach. As over two hundred passengers departed the aircraft they suddenly encountered the hot humid air; Taus wondered if he could survive an entire year of duty under those conditions.

The arriving troops saw Vietnamese working in black pajamas with straw coolie hats, making them wonder if they were captured Viet Cong



prisoners that were seen on American television newscasts. Unarmed and in jungle fatigues was a U.S. Army sergeant who escorted the group of laborers that were cleaning the areas within the airbase compound. These Vietnamese were contract or hired civilian employees from the nearby villages who were employed on the military base during the daylight hours. Some, Taus would discover, were “moonlighting,” fighting the Americans at the base when they were not working.

Temporarily housed in Quonset huts with gray corrugated steel roofs, the new military personnel felt like they were back in training. Olive drab sandbags surrounded the huts, the height depending upon the reach of the small Vietnamese laborers that stacked them. Another group of laborers were replacing bags that were damaged by the hot sun, torrential rains, and the occasional rocket and mortar bombardments.

After the incoming officers received jungle fatigues, boots and malaria pills, they received a briefing during which questions were asked concerning eventual assignments that would come from Headquarters, U.S. Army Vietnam (HQS, USARV). Taus felt unconcerned since he was already assigned by the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon; or so he thought.

The orientation briefing started inside another Quonset hut to the accompaniment of an outgoing artillery barrage. The new troops wondered whether they should sit *at* their student desk or huddle *under* them. An Army Staff Sergeant, Joel Carter, greeted the officers with a crisp salute, which revealed the first two joints of three fingers were missing on his right hand.

Carter addressed the officers, “Gentlemen, please remain in your seats. That’s our own artillery going outbound.” Carter appeared to be about 35-years old and sported three rows of combat ribbons on his sweat-soaked khaki shirt.

Questions immediately flew concerning future in-country assignments, to which Carter barked, “At ease, gentlemen,” taking control of the anxious group. He acted like a seasoned Army drill instructor before a fresh batch of cadets. He stated, “All assignments will be made by USARV, no matter what assignments are printed on your orders; Sirs!”

Taus asked about his assignment since his orders were issued by the Joint Chiefs of Staff for a special assignment. Waving his right hand and pointing his disfigured finger stubs at Taus, Carter said, “Sir, all officers who are combat qualified, regardless of their branch assignments, will be placed where USARV needs them. Right now, there is a critical need for Second Lieutenant platoon leaders in the Central Highlands region where intense battles have been raging for the past several weeks.” Carter asked Taus’ name, then looked down at his paper rosters, stating, “And your records, Lieutenant Taus, show you are combat qualified.”

It was later learned that graduates of the 1965 and 1966 classes of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point took heavy combat losses. These career officers perilously volunteered for hazardous combat assignments, feeling it was an opportunity to secure the “fruit salad” they needed for their future Army careers. (“Fruit Salad” was the term used to describe the colorful and numerous decorative ribbons earned by actions of valor, service and

achievement.) The ribbons would bedeck a soldier's uniform, though many were presented in glass cases: posthumously.

A rumor developed that fewer West Pointers in the Class of 1967 were assigned to active combat areas so as to reduce their attrition rate. Several classes at Taus' cadet school, Pennsylvania Military College, suffered their greatest losses during this period.

Carter proceeded into the history, geography and customs where U.S. troops were considered guests of the Republic of Vietnam.

The group was upset over their unknown future assignments and became restless. Carter continued talking about the dangers they would face, such as nightly rocket and mortar attacks; he passed out information vital to their survival. Carter added, "It was during a night attack several months ago when a mortar exploded near me, severing my three fingers." One could hear a pin drop in the classroom, except for the noise created by another artillery barrage.

Outside, there was a constant clatter of tanks, trucks, equipment and materials. It graphically portrayed the presence of the U.S. Army. Taus thought, no wonder equipment and resources were scarce in CONUS; it was all in Vietnam.

The intense humidity continued throughout the night as a troubled sleep swept over the new arrivals. The mental and physical stresses they felt, having arrived at "death's doorstep," made for real nightmares, many of which would *actually* occur during their tour in Vietnam.

Occasional thunder could be heard from storm clouds, mixed with distant cannon fires. Closer, friendly rifle and machinegun fires, ripped into the dark jungle perimeter surrounding the base. Sentries randomly fired into the darkness that bordered the barbed-wire encampment, seeking to discourage enemy probes.

At breakfast the next morning, one officer admitted he spent the night in the underground bomb shelter. Before mess ended, a sergeant called Taus' name from outside the dining room. Taus acknowledged, meeting the sergeant at the doorway. Fully donned in combat gear, the sergeant pointed to a jeep parked several feet away. Both a captain and a specialist driver wore the same outfit; flackvest and steelpot. "Captain Allison; we're from the Armed Forces Courier Station. You're on order to us, Lieutenant."

The captain jogged up to the reception office and accomplished whatever paperwork was needed, then yelled out to his sergeant and Taus to gather Taus' gear and get into the jeep.

"In the back, Lieutenant Taus," Allison directed. The floor of the jeep was covered with sandbags to minimize damage if they ran over a mine. The sergeant flung an extra flackvest, steelpot and loaded M16 at Taus as Allison said, "Gear up. Watch for any VC from the rear!" As the jeep sped from the billeting area, Allison introduced himself, the Staff Sergeant, Fred Lockyear, and the specialist who was driving.

"Better check your weapon sir," cautioned Lockyear. "Make sure you got a round in the breach," added Allison. "Watch real careful-like for any VC patrols that might attack us along the highway. We have an important

mission to complete at Bien Hoa Airbase.” Facing rearward Taus could not detect the slight grins on their faces. It was part of their indoctrination process.

Taus asked, “Did you clear my departure with the 90<sup>th</sup> Replacement Battalion, Captain? They said I was being assigned as a Platoon Leader upcountry.”

“Don’t worry. Lieutenant. I took care of everything,” replied Allison. “They are always trying to steal our people. Washington told me you would be here last night, so we came early in the morning to make sure we got you. We are quite short-handed. USARV disregards any annotations on new arrivals’ orders. They simply assign personnel where they need them.” Allison then lost his slight smile, “You’re needed with us; we lost Lieutenant Richard Gray, a week ago. His aircraft may have been hit by our own gunfire. We don’t know. It crashed and burnt.” After Allison’s remark, both the sergeant and the specialist had worried looks on their faces.

The casual joke became real as Lockyear reinforced the potential threat of an enemy attack by pointing out several Army patrols adjacent to Highway One. They were searching the encroaching bushes that tried to spread across the busy blacktopped roadway. Meanwhile Allison pointed the way for the driver to take. They were headed for the main Base Exchange at Bien Hoa Airbase; that was the important mission. After the BX run, they headed for Tan Son Nhut Airbase and the Armed Forces Courier Station.

#### **The Armed Forces Courier Service**

The Armed Forces Courier Service (ARFCOS) was geared to handle classified materials needing armed escorts. Its name alone indicated it carried classified items for the Defense Department and the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force and Coast Guard. It also handled the State Department and other agencies. White House correspondence occasionally passed through its protective system.

Regional ARFCOS stations were established at overseas installations; if a base was operated by one service, such as the Navy or Air Force, then that service would have responsibility for operating the station. An example would be the U.S. Navy’s Hawaii ARFCOSTA at Pearl Harbor or the U.S. Air Force Tachikawa ARFCOSTA in Japan. In Vietnam, the U.S. Army operated the ARFCOSTA at Tan Son Nhut Airbase, Saigon’s civilian and military airport, as well as another substation in DaNang.

Only the three services operated these stations, using their own service personnel. The Army, Navy and Air Force members were all trained in Washington, DC. By Army Major William Goulay. His instructional course consisted of an orientation on the various types of classified and sensitive materials handled by the stations, the operational and administrative responsibilities, and an overall introduction to the intelligence agencies. These agencies included the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), National Security Administration (NSA), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), as well as foreign and hostile agencies such as the Soviet KGB. Weapons familiarization and qualification courses were

taught, along with defensive tactics. It seemed to be enough training to insure the safe delivery of the country's classified materials.

Formal classes were conducted at the Pentagon by Goulay, who would answer student questions concerning their missions. "What should I do if the KGB follows me? Will the KGB take my materials by force? When should I use my weapon to protect the materials? Etc." The answers varied from the somber to the ridiculous. "Yes, you shoot to kill anyone who tries to take your materials! If you see any KGB agents, give them a friendly wave and say 'hello' if you want. They will probably do likewise."

Upon graduation from the course, some people took Goulay's messages with a grain of salt, while others took them seriously. The more seasoned personnel at the various stations provided the newly assigned members the balance they needed to handle most situations. Usually the intrigue dissipated when someone told the new graduates to pick-up their mail, becoming glorified mailmen.

### **ARFCOS In Vietnam**

In August 1967, Taus started his first tour of duty in Vietnam at the Tan Son Nhut Airbase ARFCOSTA. Unlike the normal rule, this one was operated by the U.S. Army and not the Air Force. The Commanding General for all U.S. Forces, General William Westmoreland's Headquarters for the Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV), was located at the airbase.

That may have accounted for the Army operating the station. Most ARFCOS missions would take their courier personnel over contested territory and often into ground combat areas, which made the missions more suited to the Army soldier than sailors or airmen.

North Vietnam had come to rely heavily upon the Soviet Union for their wartime supplies of arms, ammunition and equipment. For centuries, the Vietnamese had struggled against the invading Chinese. Because of their historical rivalries and battles, the nationalistic North Vietnamese did not curry the favors of their Red Chinese neighbors.

The confrontation in Vietnam was viewed only as a small part of the overall communist attempt to spread their form of government. Taus felt that the main threat to U.S. national security interests was the Soviet Union. In their training sessions, the U.S. Armed Forces taught that the enemy was the Soviet Union. The primary free world bastion against the so-called "Red Peril" was the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Its defense forces were poised in Europe against the neighboring Soviet Eastern Bloc countries that were joined together by the Warsaw Pact.

The United States was not alone in fearing the threat from the Soviet Union. In spite of peace demonstrations and "ban-the-bomb" movements, most European countries supported the NATO alliance. The West German government made financial subsidiaries available to their farmers for the construction of farm buildings, provided that the northern and eastern walls were built from concrete. Such a structure would provide a defensive emplacement for tanks or artillery to take up positions if they encountered an advancing Soviet Army. The main enemy assault direction or avenue of attack was through the Fulder Gap region in West Germany.

Both the United States and the Soviet Union took active steps within their intelligence communities to develop strategic and tactical data on the other side's posture. Within the intelligence framework, every aspect of winning a hot or cold war was considered. Included among the espionage activities were acquiring technological information and using other economical and sociological factors, taking into account American and world opinion.

Traveling from the powers confrontation in Eastern Europe to Southeast Asia, one could see as a consequence, that North Vietnam had directed its invading armies to collect whatever sensitive data it could find. Some captured American pilots were sent to the Soviet Union to extract their technical knowledge.

The North Vietnamese Army (NVA) knew the American military base at Tan Son Nhut contained a treasury of valuable documents, and an objective of the attacking Viet Cong battalions was to penetrate MACV HQS and any other nearby restricted areas. The Tan Son Nhut ARFCOSTA was within a quarter mile of MACV.

During the Tet Offensive in January 1968, Viet Cong forces and elements from the NVA launched major attacks, throwing several VC battalions against the airbase. The assaults were eventually repelled during the pre-dawn hours by allied forces that were quickly assembled from the various units on the base.

#### **Tan Son Nhut Airbase, August 1967**

The Armed Forces Courier Station was on the eastern side of Tan Son Nhut Airbase and shared an old French stucco building with the U.S. Air Forces' Aeromedical Evacuation Team. The USAF team handled all the manifests for the wounded and killed-in-action that were being returned to the States.

In front of the ARFCOS station was a gravel parking lot that also had a sandbagged connex container that served as a bomb shelter. Adjacent to the bomb bunker was a Quonset hut occupied by the USAF's Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Team. Their hut doubled as an office and living quarters. Another 100 feet to the west of the station were rows and rows of large steel revetments, approximately five feet wide, and standing 15 feet high. Their length was wide enough to accommodate the large Lockheed C-130 Hercules cargo aircrafts, affording them some protection from rocket attacks. Some 50 aircraft could be parked in these revetments, which stretched out in a southwesterly direction towards the airport main terminal. The terminal was operated by the USAF and Vietnamese civil and military authorities and was one of the busiest in the world. Transportation assets for the ARFCO Station consisted of an olive drab Army 17-foot enclosed truck, a gray U.S. Navy Ford Econoline van, a small Army Ford Bronco, and the traditional Army Jeep.

Staff Sergeant Fred Lockyear called out Taus' name in the station office. "Sir, we'll take you and Lieutenant Leader to the hooch now. Captain Allison said he will brief you tonight."

Jason “Budda” Leader, a First Lieutenant, was asleep in a chair with his feet propped-up on a desk. He was the station’s duty officer for the past day and night. As Lockyear nudged him, Leader rubbed his bespectacled eyes, saying that it was about time. Leader was short and obese, earning him the nickname of Budda. Coming back to consciousness after his 24-hour shift. Leader noticed Taus and gave him a friendly smile, “Ahh, fresh meat! Welcome aboard F-N-G. My name is Jay, but people call me Budda due to my wealth of knowledge and philosophy.”

Lockyear muttered aloud to Specialist Fifth Class (SP5) Burger, the Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge (NCOIC), who was on duty with Budda. “We call him Budda because of his knowledge of the food stock in Asia.” Budda was a regular guy and laughed at the wisecrack. Giddiness sets in after a long shift.

Finishing their briefing for the new crew, they all exited the station and hopped into the Econoline for the trip to the billets. On the ride off base, Budda said, “We’ve got it nice here. There’s a lack of quarters on base; the government has contracted with a regular Vietnamese hotel, the Arugia.

Each room has an air-conditioning unit.”

Tan Son Nhut’s southern gate was about a mile away from the station, past the Military Assistance Command (MACV) Headquarters where General William Westmoreland conducted the war. Taus saw a blending of the old French fortifications, consisting of stucco buildings and the more recently constructed American metal pre-fabricated units. It reflected the rapid expansion that took place in the past few years to accommodate the increased American war actions.

The Arugia Hotel was 500 feet past the main south gate. The enlisted men resided in a Vietnamese urban villa, a half-mile farther down towards Saigon. The villa contained several bedrooms with an adjoining living room and kitchen. The Arugia was a seven-story high stucco hotel surrounded by eight-foot high stucco walls topped by triple concertina wire.

An old Vietnamese man in civilian clothes opened the metal driveway gates, welcoming the group as they drove into the main courtyard. Grinning with his painted black teeth showing, the old man spoke to Leader, “Hello, Dai-uy Budda. How are you?” The old man patted his stomach, reminding Leader of his stomach. “Okay, Papason. I’ve had a long night, and it’s Thieu-uy, not Dai-uy.” (Lieutenant, not Captain.)

The rooms had an air-conditioner, two twin beds, a tiled floor, bathroom with shower, a refrigerator, and a veranda that overlooked the front courtyard and the main street of Dai Cach Mang. The road led to downtown Saigon, about four miles away. Taus’ room was on the third floor with another

Second Lieutenant, Brian Gatch, who arrived three weeks earlier. Gatch transferred from a personnel unit downtown, saying it was too tame for him. “Things certainly don’t look all that wild here either,” Taus said. “It’s a world away from the troops in the fields.”

“Listen Tiger, you’ll get your chance to see the countryside soon enough,” Gatch noted. “You are replacing Second Lieutenant Gray who was killed-in-action.” Taus sat back as Gatch fetched two sodas from the refrig-

erator. A four-inch lizard ran across his headrest and scrambled up the wall to the ceiling where it clung upside down. "Don't kill him," Gatch said as he returned with the soda, "He eats the insects and flies."

At 7 p.m., Gatch woke Taus, saying they were headed for the officers' club for dinner. Entering the club, they found Captain Allison seated at the head of a table near the bar, downing several gin-and-tonics. Allison considered himself an intellectual, having a doctorate degree in political science from the University of Pennsylvania. He was also a conversationalist who enjoyed his totalitarian position as the unit commanding officer. Five Lieutenants sat around him nodding their heads, agreeing with his every opinion, the corporate "yes men" of the future.

When Allison asked Taus for his drink preference, Taus ordered the same as the captain. Allison still had not briefed Taus, despite his rambling about other trivial matters. One of the Lieutenants ordered another round of drinks for everyone. Allison interrupted, saying "For everyone, except Taus.

He'll be taking an early morning flight later. I want him to be ready."

Addressing Taus, Allison said: "You are replacing Lieutenant Gray. The C-130 he was flying aboard probably strayed into an outgoing friendly artillery barrage. It wasn't friendly to them. The aircraft accident report said the C-130 was destroyed in mid-air and that parts littered the rice paddies for miles around. They claimed recovering one leg of his, placed it in a casket, sealed and shipped it stateside with a label, 'Unviewable Remains—Do Not Open.'"

Allison continued: "Damn shame, the way Gray died. Should have been on the battlefield like Lieutenant Welles." Allison did not mention how Welles was killed while on a mission. After the meal, the officers returned to the hotel. At 2 a.m., Sgt. Wilson knocked on Taus' door and asked him to get ready for the night's flight, "Sir, you're scheduled for a ten-hour mission up-country. It departs at 3 a.m."

At the station, Taus collected his classified materials as Wilson sang, "I'm a merry, merry mailman. Bringing you cheers and joy with letters and packages for every good boy and girl." Wilson and Taus were both familiar with television personality Ray Heatherton who played the part of "The Merry Mailman" on New York's WOR-TV station. But to all servicemen, it was his daughter, Joey Heatherton, who was more familiar as a beautiful and voluptuous Hollywood starlet. There was some truth to what Wilson was singing. Taus told him, "I'll rather be in a troop unit, Sarge. I don't enjoy being called a mailman."

"Don't worry sir. You'll get your shot of action. You'll get a taste of what every Army, Marine, Navy and Air Force units are doing. If you really want more action, then you can volunteer for your unit of choice. All you have to do is extend your duty tour over here for six months. That's not for me. I'm so short that Tom Thumb stands two feet taller. I've already shipped my baggage home. Less than 30 days left in-country."

With 363 days ahead, Taus wondered if Wilson was rubbing things in because he was an officer. "That's good Wilson. I'm looking forward to see-

ing this land, meeting the people. It's a great opportunity for me. I love to travel. This is my passport to adventure."

The sergeant handed Taus a 45 caliber Colt pistol and said, "Forget about taking an M-16, you'll need both hands free. You can't let any of this classified material out of your sight. By the way sir, some of your classified materials are outside in the parking area."

In front of the station was a pallet of classified materials guarded by two USAF security policemen. Both hands free? That did not matter; Taus could not handle this load. Just then an Air Force forklift arrived and picked up the 4000-pound pallet.

The forklift driver, an Air Force Sergeant, said "Hop on sir, I'll drive you and your load over to the aircraft." With the materials dispatched, the two SPs were happy to leave their posts.

It was 3:05 a.m. and the C-130's turboprop jet engines screamed with the background noise of the aircraft's auxiliary power unit's turbine engine drowning out conversation. The loadmaster, another USAF Sergeant, signaled Taus to enter the left front passenger door. Then the loadmaster gestured Taus with a "thumbs-up" indicating the ship was ready to depart.

The multi-colored camouflaged aircraft taxied out of its revetment, down the taxiway with the loud shrill noises of its four jet engines. The noise was deafening and the heat was stifling, even at that early hour. Taus' palms were cold and clammy from nervous perspiration as he recalled visions of the epic documentaries on World War II when soldiers hit the beach in small landing crafts. He felt it was his turn now as he headed out in a more advanced "landing craft."

Taus consoled himself, knowing the mission would have him meeting several friendly units to exchange classified materials. However, Allison's remarks about Gray and Welles still lingered.

The Hercules aircraft sped down the runway and as it became airborne, cooling air suddenly could be felt. Taus glanced through a small window as the C-130 continued climbing and noticed a stream of aqua-colored tracer bullets following the aircraft's path, falling short of its apparent target. Taus alerted the loadmaster.

Yelling at the top of his voice, the loadmaster replied, "No problem sir. That sniper's been there for six months. He hasn't hit anything yet. We could have our fighters take him out, but the VC might replace him with someone who is more accurate. He's just moonlighting, doing his nighttime job. I bet he works at the airbase during the days."

Taus was dumbfounded. Men took their wartime duties as simply another job. Taus had encountered the first of many idiosyncrasies in this protracted conflict. A few hours later the aircraft landed at its first destination. After several more landings and departures, it was 10:30 a.m. Taus was already dead tired when the aircraft landed at Pleiku in the Central Highlands.

### **Loading Body Bags**

No one asked Taus if he wanted to continue on the flight, which they usually did before placing body bags on board. One olive drab rubberized bag was carefully strapped down on a loaded cargo pallet. The outline of the



body inside was slightly defined by the straps stretched across it. Taus' fatigue waned as he realized again that people were dying in this war. This was not the great adventure Taus had envisioned. How he wished that he were Wilson with less than a month left. The ten-hour flight was going into its 12<sup>th</sup> hour. The original crew had been replaced several hours ago.

Several more stops, pickups and deliveries, while Taus sat motionless across from the body bag. Who was he? What happened to him? Taus thought. Did he die in a battle or did a rocket attack kill him? Taus was bored and curious as he stared at the body bag. It had a small yellow tag on one end. Taus decided to read it.

**SP4 Richard M. Schultz, DOB 29 DEC 43**

**Circumstances of death:**

**Accident—Crushed by U.S. Army 21/2 Ton Truck**

**While sleeping on ground adjacent to road.**

Not all soldiers die heroically; accidents happen. Taus was shocked because they both shared the same birthday, first name and middle initial. Yet, this poor soldier's life was so short. Had he accomplished anything? Taus was an officer with a college degree, and felt that he had not accomplished anything important in life. Taus thought, in all probability, Schultz also did little in his short time on earth. His death was an inglorious way to go.

The trip entered into the long night. Taus stretched across a nearby pallet, trying to get some sleep. Questions lingered for him. Taus made a decision to do something meaningful with his life, and as soon as possible. Perhaps he could help the Vietnamese people in some way. He would put his off-duty hours to a constructive cause. He had promised his former civilian employer, the Nassau County Council of the Boy Scouts of America that he would assist the Scouting organizations in Vietnam. It seemed like a good start.

At 10 p.m., the Hercules returned to Tan Son Nhut Airbase, where an ambulance arrived for the body bag. A Jeep came for Taus, driven by Lockyear. Noticing the body bag, Lockyear remarked, "Rough flight, Lieutenant?"

"Yeah, it was long." Taus continued to chatter, releasing some of his penned-up feelings. Taus said he would do something beneficial, perhaps work with the Vietnamese Scouts.

**Plan to Help Vietnam Orphanage**

Lockyear understood. Early in his tour, he had looked for another way to accomplish something meaningful, and he found one. "Look Lieutenant, I know what you're saying. But working with the Vietnamese scouts would be a waste of time. If they can afford a scouting uniform, then they have regular clothes too and a home life. Most of those kids are from this country's elite.

Tomorrow, Lieutenant, after my duty shift, I'll be heading over to an orphanage downtown. Some of the enlisted men are helping them. We have done some construction work, adding a wing to their dormitory area. I think you'll find it will be helpful to you too."

The next morning, Lockyear stopped by the hotel for Taus, as they both had the day off. "Ready to go Lieutenant. We'll have to leave the Jeep here for Lieutenant Gatch and take a taxi downtown."

They stopped first at the EM'S villa so Lockyear could shower and change into civilian clothes, sports shirts and slacks. It was still a time in Vietnam when U.S. Troops could wear civilian clothes when off-duty. They hailed a Vietnamese cab, one of the many yellow-and-blue Renault subcompacts from the early 1950s.

### **Visiting Hoi Duc-Ank Orphanage**

Hoi Duc-Ank Orphanage was located in Cholon, a Chinese ethnic neighborhood. Like many buildings in Vietnam, it was surrounded by white stucco walls, six-foot high, with broken glass embedded in the mortar across the top ledge. A cyclone wired driveway opened wide for their taxi. As they exited the cab, the Vietnamese driver complained about Lockyear's modest tip. "Screw him," said Lockyear, "I'll spend my money on the kids."

The young orphans scampered around the two soldiers and several hugged Lockyear, calling him Papason Fred. Taus was introduced to the staff workers. The orphanage director was at a government meeting in Saigon.

It was easy to see that the orphanage needed considerable help. Many of the orphans had physical problems; some were abandoned at birth and struggled to survive. The orphanage's nursery had more than 50 old fashioned metal cribs. Crying babies were neglected due to staff shortages. Some of the youngsters had visible physical injuries due to the war, and some were injured in heavy traffic before coming to the orphanage. The Vietnamese staff workers also led a pitiful life trying to sustain themselves on a meager salary. Taus and Lockyear were busy throughout the day as they worked at the orphanage and felt what they were doing had a meaning at the orphanage.

### **First Missions and Body Bags**

The U.S. Marine Corps was encamped in the northern provinces of South Vietnam in one of four military regions known as I-Corps, and had their main headquarters at DaNang airbase. The airbase had a small 4-man ARFCOS substation that handled flights in such I-Corps areas as Phou Baa, Dong Ha and Khe Sahn.

Taus' first trip to DaNang was aboard a Lockheed C-130 Hercules aircraft carrying a full cargo load. Most of the classified material shipped from Tan Son Nhut Airbase was destined for the Marines in the northern provinces. It was 3 p.m. when the aircraft landed at DaNang, and Taus has been on it since 4 a.m. Upon landing, an Army Ford Econoline van pulled up to the open rear cargo ramp and its driver, a First Lieutenant, shouted out, "Is there a Taus in there?"

"If you're looking for a courier, than that's me." The First Lieutenant dismounted the vehicle, smiled and approached Taus, introducing himself. "Hi ya! My name's Jerry Pullins. Welcome to DaNang. You got some material for us?"

Pullins was stocky, built like a college tackle. His wide hand extended to Taus for a handshake. "You can return on this flight in an hour or take another out later tonight," Pullins offered.

### **Stench of Decaying Bodies**

The Major pointed to the airport tower and advised Taus that he could get something to eat while they were loading. Near the side of the tower were 40 olive body bags being taken to the aircraft by several Army graves registration soldiers. A pungent stench was in the air due to the hot sun having heated the bodies that were starting to decay.

A new flight crew was assigned and its crew chief was inspecting the underside of the left wing, avoiding the body bags. Taus skipped eating and walked over to the chief. Seeing Taus approach, the chief said, "You know the last crew reported receiving some ground fires." It was as if Taus and the chief knew each other, but each was avoiding the scene on the ground. "See if you can spot any holes, Lieutenant." The chief was thorough and found three small bullet holes, none of which were critical. One could only guess when the aircraft was actually hit or how many missions it took after receiving the hits.

As the engines started, the crew chief signaled Taus to go forward into the cockpit for the flight, where there was a bench that doubled as a sleeping bunk for the crew's quarters. On the bench was another First Lieutenant with a shirt collar insignia from the Army Quartermaster Branch and a strange camouflage pattern on his jungle fatigue uniform. He was quiet and stared straight ahead, deep in thoughts. He failed to acknowledge Taus' greeting as Taus sat next to him.

Another passenger came up from the cargo area. It was a Special Forces Sergeant who took out an olive drab handkerchief and a can of "Right Guard" deodorant. He sprayed the handkerchief and asked Taus if he wanted to use the can. The spray was to counteract the tremendous stench now rising from the dead bodies in the cargo section. The pilot opened his side window and the crew chief pulled out a rag and took advantage of the Sergeant's Right Guard. Luckily, Taus had not eaten.

The flight arrived at Tan Son Nhut Airbase late in the evening, being met by a convoy of Army ambulances with their red-light flashing; which seemed unnecessary. The quiet First Lieutenant thanked the pilot and crew and directed the unloading of the KIAs; he was the mortician at the airbase.

Under the bright headlights of the ambulances, Taus could discern the unique camouflage pattern on the mortician's uniform that consisted of dried bloodstains.

Alongside one of the ambulances was a more familiar vehicle, the Navy Econoline with Lieutenant "Budda" Leader and Lockyear inside. The normally smiling Budda grimaced as he caught the sight and smell of the bags containing the dead GIs.

Back at the station, Budda said, "Lieutenants Gray and Welles' deaths brought us back to reality. Our missions are dangerous. Don't let anyone kid you. Welles may not have simply died in action; he may have been assassinated. We never recovered the classified materials he was carrying. There

were no reported enemy contacts in the area he was sent too. His wallet was also found missing. But his weapon and equipment were left untouched, not something a VC would do or a gangster would leave behind.”

Budda added, “We are not just combat support troops. In country, for every grunt in the field, there’s nine or ten support troops backing them up. We go over those fields too, and sometimes we find ourselves stuck in them. There are no front lines in Vietnam. They only occur when Charlie decides to strike us in force. We are at risk because of the highly classified materials we carry. You will protect their contents with your life, even if you have to shoot another soldier who may compromise the materials and your mission.”

Taus knew about the importance of the materials, but asked Budda “What could be so important that we are forced to kill a fellow soldier?”

“Who said that those fellow soldiers were necessarily on our side?” questioned Budda. “You do know that North Vietnam is supported by the Soviet Union. They do have spies; white men who could be posing as U.S. servicemen.” Budda also asked Taus if he was misled about the job description stateside. Few trips would take a courier out-of-country. “You’ll be well-acquainted with all of Vietnam in a few more weeks.” Despite an intense headache, Taus was talking loudly. Budda asked him to lower his voice and wear ear protectors on the next flight.

Budda gave Taus little comfort when he noted that the C-130 flights, though longer, were operated out of larger, more secure bases. There were many other types of aircraft that flew on a shoestring and landed in unsecured areas. “You’re really on your own. We cannot spare enlisted guards to assist you. There aren’t enough personnel assigned. And speaking of personnel shortages, I’m sorry to say I had to assign you another mission tomorrow morning.”

This time Taus would fly on a Douglas C-47 “Gooney-Bird” operated by the U.S. Naval Support Activity Command at Tan Son Nhut Airbase. This aircraft was the military version of the old DC-3, a twin-engine propeller aircraft known as the workhorse of many commercial airlines during the 1930s and early 1940’s. The trip would take the southern excursion, through the Mekong Delta and onto the southernmost tip of South Vietnam. Phu Quac Island was the site of An Thoi, an RVN POW compound, as well as a U.S. Navy Base and Coast Guard Station.

After boarding the flight Taus went forward to the cockpit and spoke to the Navy pilots. The Navy Lieutenant Commander piloting the aircraft was affable as Taus expressed some surprise seeing an old C-47 was still in active service with the Navy. “This aircraft must date back to the Korean War, Commander.” The pilot responded, “No Lieutenant, it goes back a little farther than that,” as he pointed to a metal placard on the inside of the cabin cockpit doorway. The placard read: “Douglas Aircraft Company, Built for the U.S. Navy, May 1934.” Anticipating Taus’ consternation, the pilot said, “Don’t worry. It’s a great aircraft,” as he rotated it off the runway and veered south for the Delta trip.

At Vinh Long, a heavy-set middle-aged Air Force top sergeant, who was a regular passenger on the flight, deplaned. He told Taus he was as-

signed to the 1880<sup>th</sup> Communications Station and surveying the area. He pointed to a large radar dome mounted on a one-story building, surrounded by a few smaller structures, enclosed by a high chain-linked fence. “It doesn’t look safe out there, Sergeant,” Taus commented.

“Well Lieutenant, it’s quiet here. We have an ARVN battalion protecting us, so we don’t have to worry.” Already, Taus had heard disturbing stories about the performances of ARVN units under pressure, but did not tell that to the confident sergeant. Later, during the Tet offensive, the 1880<sup>th</sup> Communications Station was overrun by Communist Forces. There were no survivors.

### **Ground Fire Hitting the Aircraft**

Flying a few hundred feet above the Delta, the C-47 headed to the southwestern coastal island of An Thoi. Suddenly, it felt like several stray rocks peppered the fuselage and some of Taus’ classified materials jumped off the aircraft’s deck accompanied by sounds like stones hitting the aircraft.

Before Taus could rise and inspect the materials, Taus seatbelt tightened around his waist as the aircraft pitched upward to gain altitude. “Are you okay, Lieutenant?” asked the crew chief. “We are flying in the dead man’s zone, not high enough to avoid enemy ground fire and not low enough to present an easy target.”

Upon landing at An Thoi, the crew chief pointed out 12 bullet holes in the fuselage. Taus’ materials had stopped some of the bullets. The receiving units were unconcerned about their damaged packages; the topic of conversation was that Charlie was out there. From An Thoi, the aircraft headed due East to the Ca Mau Peninsula, landing at another airstrip. Taus then awaited the arrival of a Navy Seal team.

The Navy crew chief began negotiations with an Army advisor and several Vietnamese soldiers and civilians. Often ARVN soldiers traveled with their families close behind, with the families living near the base. Usually the living conditions were in utter squalor, as the South Vietnamese government did not provide much for their military dependents.

### **Everything But the Kitchen Sink**

Whatever the case at Ca Mau, these Vietnamese were being moved to another area. With negotiations apparently settled, the group boarded the aircraft with their personal possessions, which consisted of furniture, baggage, livestock, and household goods. The pilot looked to the crew chief and said, “We’ve got just about everything except the kitchen sink!”

A small Vietnamese girl grunted and struggled, asking for help from the others as she tried to lift an enamel basin through the cargo door, effectively eliminating the pilot’s exception.

The chief chuckled as he gave up trying to control the influx. “We will either make it off the ground with this load or just taxi down the highway to the next town.” The flight was filled with the smell of wintergreen, which the Vietnamese carried as liquid in small glass ampoules. They dabbed it around their nose and across their face in an apparent attempt to prevent air sickness. It was felt that the wintergreen probably induced air sickness for the Vietnamese passengers, who did not enjoy flying.

At 8:30 p.m., the C-47 returned to Tan Son Nhut, where the flight was met by SFC Stanger: "Geez Lieutenant, are you bringing back your whole family with you? Don't you know you are not supposed to travel with foreign civilians if you are carrying classified materials? It's DOD policy."

The Sergeant was only half correct. If it was a U.S. carrier, then it did not matter who was on board. However, an Armed Forces courier could not take a foreign-flagged aircraft unless he carried no classified materials. Taus was not going to argue; he was too tired and simply said, "Sarge, there were no other flights. Would you have preferred me to stay? How come you are on-duty?"

"They dropped a couple of rocket-propelled grenades on the base today and Jackson was wounded, not seriously though. We had to replace him. Dayton has the flu and Wilson's off to R&R in Hong Kong. So the captain told me to take it."

By the time Taus arrived back at his quarters, the other Lieutenants were returning from their evening activities. It did not take long to discover the lures of Saigon. There were numerous bars and restaurants and the usual assortment of Vietnamese girls. The higher quality, more expensive night-clubs had the better looking, more sophisticated women. The saloons along Dai Cach Mang Street had a few peasant girls, fresh from the rice paddles.

These country females attempted to look like westernized vamps, crudely painted with cosmetics and masquerading in vinyl mini-skirts as femmes fatale. For the American soldier coming in from the boondocks, they were sufficient. USARV Headquarters decided it was time to set up selected areas in-country for R&R, rather than having U.S. troops corrupt the morals of their host country's citizens; or vice versa.

There was a policy for rest and recreation leaves, which provided for every soldier to have one R&R trip. But these furloughs were often for five to ten days or more. Most units needed their men and could ill afford any shortages, despite an ever-increasing build-up of men and materials. To provide the commanders and troops with some relief, the idea of in-country R&R recreation took place. Areas were created in Vung Tau and Cam Ranh Bay to provide a three-day respite for the men, where they had access to tropical beaches, Vietnamese bargirls, saloons, and all the distractions for a war-weary soldier.

Alcohol and Tobacco were always two vices eagerly and cheaply provided by the government to alleviate the stresses of military life. In Vietnam another vice, much more deadly, started being used by the troops: drugs.

The result was drug addiction for many soldiers, airman and sailors. R&R trips would not provide the solution to men who became addicted to drugs in the field; they required more extensive rehabilitation. USARV Command did not address that problem until very late in 1970, and then drug rehab centers were established for drug-using troops. At these centers, troops received counseling and medical services to help them kick the habit. Casualties from drug-use exceeded combat injuries.

### **Orphans and Street Urchins**

Early September found Taus heavily involved in military flight missions, and his frequent trips to the orphanage became filled with exhaustive chores instead of leisure activities. He tried to place several of the local shoeshine boys in the orphanage, but officials there were reluctant to accept them. Disagreements arose as Taus felt the orphanage had an obligation to tend to the welfare of such youngsters.

### **Orphanages Did Not Want Older Street-Wise Orphans**

Orphanages would not accept youngsters older than eight years, particularly street-wise kids. These children would be sent to orphanages in the countryside, where more often than not, they left the boring and laborious life of a farm orphanage to return to the more exciting life in the city. Discipline was also stern at the farm orphanages, and the street-wise orphans saw no reason to blindly follow orders and perform dull and toilsome farming tasks. They missed the city sights and sounds where they could do what they liked, where no one cared what they did.

Another factor was a feeling among the Vietnamese that the street kids would have no strong loyalties to any adopting family. Vietnamese felt that loyalty had to be instilled in children at an earlier age. However, girls were more adoptable, either because they had a greater sense of family loyalty or they could be used as a maid or for kitchen work.

The Vietnamese people may have also recognized that their sons would eventually be snatched by the government for use as soldiers. After such an absence in the military, these young men would carve out their own lives. The old proverb often heard stateside applied more in Vietnam, "A son is a son until he takes a wife. A daughter is a daughter for the rest of her life."

In Vietnam, wars had raged for thousands of years. In a country torn by military conflicts, the male child was valued by the government as a future soldier, and could be taken from the adopting family. Once in the military, they rarely returned to their families.

Foreign adoptions were mainly of Vietnamese girls. The boys would be saved to soldier in the endless struggles. Unless a physical or mental problem was present, few boys were permitted to leave Vietnam through overseas adoption agencies.

A contingent of Australian civilian charity workers operated an adoption agency, and Taus met the agency's director during an orphanage visit. She was an Australian woman, Rosemary Taylor, in her early thirties. She told Taus they placed children worldwide, with a majority in European countries. She triumphed when bands of orphans were finally collected, with reams of paperwork processed, and delivery arrangement completed to send them out of country.

Once, Taus met a group of orphans waiting in an Aussie van at the orphanage courtyard, including several mentally retarded and physically handicapped Vietnamese children. Several youngsters were Eurasian and Afroasian, the offspring from mixed marriages between Vietnamese women and allied military personnel. The forsaking fathers included soldiers, diplomats and businessmen that could not or would not accept responsibility.

### Street Children

Street children were scattered throughout the city. Many congregated at central locations where there was a hustle of activities and where the police or local authorities did not disturb them. These were society's throwaways, with some as young as seven years old, and either orphaned or abandoned by their families. They lived on the streets and fended for themselves.

Taus discovered their woeful plight was due to many different reasons as he listened to their various tales. "Mamason got new Papason, who no like me. Tell me to go." Another nine-year old stated in pigeon English, "Family no can feed me. I go away. Work for food."

The tragedies brought by the Vietnam War complicated their lives. Some families were simply displaced as refugees or evacuees and could no longer function as a family unit. The breadwinner, or the rice-farmer who lost his land, was without a livelihood. When the family head could no longer support his family, the children suffered.

In the streets, the older more street-wise adolescents preyed on the younger ones, who used them for work and took a share of their meager earnings. Otherwise, they were exploited by unscrupulous adults who used them in a variety of ways. Child labor laws were not enforced in Vietnam, if such laws even existed.

The few orphanages that existed were overcrowded and not willing to extend any assistance to these street children. Directors at these orphanages could tell horror stories of how they tried to help the street children and suffered stealing and other forms of biting the hand that fed them. Social workers noted that the longer a child stays on the streets, the more committed that child became to the life-style, and the less likely the child will be able to adjust to another situation.

Few families in Vietnam wanted another mouth to feed. The South Vietnamese government took the population out of rural hamlets and villages that were prone to communist influences, and tried to resettle them in an attempt to win their hearts and minds. The resettlement camps turned into ghettos and the population often gravitated towards the overcrowded cities where life continued in a slum.

Human life was never precious in the Third World countries. Often heard was a story about a farming family whose little son was killed while riding the family's water buffalo or the animal steps on a land mine which explodes, killing the child and buffalo. The family grieved primary for the buffalo, as they didn't have money to replace it. Although they grieved for their dead son, they had other children to work the fields.

On one of Taus' early off-duty days, dressed in civilian clothes wearing sneakers, he went to Saigon and found five shoeshine boys following him, repeatedly asking him if they could shine his *sneakers*. Taus was appalled at their open sores, skin rashes, and dirt on their frail bodies. Undernourished and disfigured with sores, he found they were pitiful sights. More than ever,

Taus felt like doing more to place them in orphanages or shelters.

Taus responded to one who spoke a little broken English. "How old are you?" The boy quickly scampered down on his knees in an attempt to clean



Taus' sneakers. "No, don't do that; I asked you how old are you." Another older boy pulled the kneeling one away from Taus and spoke to the smaller boy in Vietnamese. Turning to Taus, the older boy said, "He no understand you. He eight years." The boy held up eight fingers. Then the older boy pointed to his chest and said, "I eleven years." He held up his ten fingers and reached for the younger boy's hand to show another finger, reinforcing his verbal answer.

It was unbelievable. The 11-year old looked like an 8-year old, and his younger friend, could have been five at most, Taus thought. After a lengthy discussion in pigeon English, Taus understood that Vietnamese count their birth as year one. The children were physically small, but aged rapidly on the streets. There was little need to accelerate the process the way the Vietnamese added an extra year.

Whenever Taus went downtown, he would invite street-children into a Vietnamese restaurant for dinner. It usually consisted of rice covered with chicken or pork stripes. They drank sodas served with the meals, bottled at the local Vietnamese Coca-Cola plant. The dinner conversations covered a wide range of topics for children with so little education.

The children spoke of their separate tragedies, how much money they earned each day, and how the American soldiers were more generous than the Vietnamese soldiers. They talked about being harassed by the Saigon police who only occasionally tolerated their presence. At night, the police would awaken them and demand that they move from the doorsteps or outer lobbies of the buildings where they slept on the floor.

It greatly disturbed Taus. Did this situation really exist? Could the youngsters be making up their stories? Very early one morning, Taus decided to see for himself just where the kids stayed. At 4:45 a.m., he was downtown. The early morning curfew had not been lifted, and several military policemen stopped Taus and asked him for identification, then allowed him to proceed. The kids said they slept at the front entrance to a movie theater near the Continental Hotel and a few other locations, unless the police chased them.

As expected, Taus saw them clustered together, laying on the terrazzo floor of the theater entrance. A few old rags and discarded cardboard boxes covered some of them. The humid morning dew made their sleep uncomfortable. Two rats scurried across the floor as Taus neared them.

#### **Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV)**

Located on the eastern side of Tan Son Nhut Airbase, MACV Headquarters was situated a half-mile from the Courier Station. MACV units normally picked up their classified materials at the station, but the station would often deliver them since MACV had many conveniences, including a snack bar, mini-post exchange, a barbershop, and a movie theater.

One day in late August 1967, Army Colonel John Tilson stopped by the ARFCOSTA to pick up MACV classified materials. Taus was the duty officer and recognized Tilson, who was a guest intelligence instructor back in Washington, D.C.

Tilson was a dedicated and experienced soldier whom all respected. Taus engaged him in conversation. Tilson bemoaned his MACV staff duties, "There's no adventure in making policy decisions. I am a combat branch officer, not an administrator!"

After Tilson departed, Lockyear asked Taus to deliver MACV materials to their headquarters rather than waiting for them. The MACV office was a two-story modern prefabricated metal structure with central air-conditioning; hardly anything that a grunt would recognize as his forward headquarters. In the field, the grunt's command post would be half-buried in the ground, fully sandbagged and constructed out of twelve-by-twelve timbers.

Most of the headquarters personnel suffered from the same maladies. Protruding eyes, pale complexions and an affinity for the trivial. All day long, they handled the paper war, which often consisted of petty administrative matters mixed in with serious problems and reports. Denied the rays of the Asian sun, their appearance was further aggravated by the lack of physical conditioning.

There were red security signs in the corridor as the two ARFCOS soldiers approached their classified accounts. The signs were a warning to unauthorized visitors and read:

**STOP! You Must Have A Top-Security Clearance  
To Enter. Present Your Military ID To The  
Security OIC. Have You Taken Your Malaria Pills Today?**

It was Friday and both Taus and Lockyear felt somewhat feverish from taking the malaria pills the day before. As luck would have it, a rocket attack occurred as they entered the building. Several soft thuds were heard from outside the building, caused by Viet Cong RPGs slamming into the MACV compound, making its corrugated steel walls waffle under the concussion. A fire alarm sounded to warn those who may have been unaware of the attack.

An Army major rushed into the corridor from an office and was crouching, looking for cover. Seeing Taus, the Major remarked, "This is the first attack in a long time. We may as well stay here and wait it out. Running for the outside bunker could get us killed.

"How long sir," asked Taus, as another several rounds hit with a louder blast. "The bunker's 70 feet away, outside," said the Major, not quite understanding the question. "No sir, I mean how long has it been since the last bombardment?" The Major was more concerned about the explosions coming closer. "Two weeks ago, Lieutenant," Lockyear answered as he also crouched on the floor. "You were up-country on a mission then. I'm glad you didn't miss this one."

The major looked familiar to Taus. It was Boris Pogoloff, Taus' former tactical officer assigned to the Corps of Cadets at Pennsylvania Military College. "Pogoloff, remember me," asked Taus. "Whump!" Another rocket struck the compound's perimeter fence.

"Oh yes, what brings you here?" asked the congenial Major. The rocket attack had ended, permitting the Major and the Lieutenant to bring each

other up-to-date. “Did you know Lieutenant Welles and Lieutenant Gray?” asked Pogoloff. “Both were couriers. Gray was killed nearly a month ago.”

“No sir, I didn’t know either man, but I’m Gray’s replacement.” Pogoloff represented one of the units that the Courier Station serviced. Pogoloff and Taus’ conversation lasted twenty more minutes as MACV returned to routine after the attack. Lockyear slipped off to the PX Annex and snack bar.

The Major took his assignment seriously. “We are here to help these people. I’m glad you made it over here. I know most of the Armed Forces Courier personnel in Vietnam are volunteers. My unit assists the Vietnamese Army. Would you be interested in transferring and really getting involved?”

Taus pointed to the MACV patch he wore on his left shoulder. Pogoloff noted, “You are only technically assigned to MACV. You take your orders directly from the Pentagon where your ARFCOS comes under the Joint Chiefs of Staff’s office. I am aware of all the intelligence mumbo-jumbo and secret missions.”

### **Meeting Colonel John Singlaub**

Pogoloff obviously was familiar with various intelligence operations.

“Let me introduce you to my boss. He happens to be here today, but he works at Long Binh, coordinating USARV and MACV operations. His name is Colonel John Singlaub. Pogoloff rapped twice on the colonel’s door and then opened it. Singlaub was seated with a high-ranking Vietnamese ARVN officer. “My apologies sir. I didn’t know you had company. Your sergeant is outside assessing the rocket damages.”

“That’s quite all right, Barry. Come in; you know Colonel Tran Minh.”

“Yes sir! Pogoloff provided a crisp hand salute to Minh who smiled and looked at Taus, forcing Pogoloff to introduce Taus to them. “Sir, this is Lieutenant Taus. He attended Penn Military where I was a ‘Tact.’ He’s a good officer. Cares about people. We could use him in our unit. Has all the qualifications.”

There was a greater meaning behind Pogoloff’s statement that Taus “had all the qualifications.” With a top-secret security clearance, Taus could be given access to sensitive matters. He was also fully combat-qualified and had an excellent record from his cadet days at the academy, where he also was the captain of the Pennsylvania Military College Judo Team. But even with those things considered, the main interest was the PMC association.

Pennsylvania Military College, which was later renamed Widener University in the late 1970s, produced many intelligence officers for several of the Armed Forces. Sons of CIA officials and agents attended PMC. Some even “retired” from the CIA, establishing CIA proprietary firms such as Kroll Associates. Kroll was formed by five former PMC Alumni who were also CIA agents. They claimed to be involved in worldwide corporate security work. In 1990, Kroll’s name was involved in several covert operations.

Singlaub was in charge of the Special Operations Group (MACV-SOG). His meeting with ARVN Colonel Tran Minh had political repercussions that went beyond the battlefield. Tran Minh came from an influential and powerful South Vietnamese family. After Pogoloff’s introduction, Singlaub invited

Pogoloff and Taus into his meeting with Colonel Tran Minh, where the discussion centered on the future for Southeast Asia. Before the meeting concluded, Tran Minh extended a special dinner invitation to all three officers at his home in Cholon. Taus accepted, pending approval from his commander.

Singlaub said he would speak to Allison.

By the time Taus and Lockyear returned to base, Allison had already received Singlaub's call telling him about Tran Minh's dinner invitation. Allison smiled, and acted subservient for the first time since Taus had met him. "Don't worry. Rich. You will have Sunday off. Make sure you get over to Colonel Tran Minh's house on time. Lockyear will be your driver." Turning to Lockyear, "Sergeant, be certain you get the Lieutenant over there on time."

Singlaub eventually reached the rank of General before being fired by President Jimmy Carter in 1978. Singlaub publicly denounced Carter during congressional hearings when Carter insisted upon withdrawing U.S. troops stationed in South Korea. However, Singlaub's stars continued to rise as he stayed in touch with government power brokers.

Under the Reagan Administration in the 1980s, Singlaub worked with the National Security Council in the Contra operations against Nicaragua. Singlaub was active in recruiting former U.S. military personnel to train El Salvador's Army. He briefed officials on anti-guerrilla operations in Central America. He worked with NSC staffer Oliver North, as part of Singlaub's activities with North was raising funds from private benefactors and foreign governments, such as Taiwan and South Korea.

Pogoloff was promoted to full colonel and eventually retired from the Army. During the 1980s, at the height of the Iran-Contra Arms Initiative, Pogoloff worked in Florida with intelligence personnel. In 1988, Pogoloff died of cancer.

On Sunday, Lockyear drove Taus to Colonel Tran Minh's house in an affluent area of Cholon. An ARVN sergeant opened the gates to the driveway and a teenage Vietnamese girl invited Taus into the home. Lockyear exchanged pleasantries with his ARVN counterparts who spoke some pigeon-English.

Tran Minh was seated in the living room with his wife and young son. She bowed her head with an apparent shyness, which she tried to suppress, while the three-year-old toddler copied his mother and meekly bowed his head. Tran Minh explained to his wife that Taus and his unit were helping the nearby Hoi Duc-Ank orphanage.

Pogoloff arrived shortly thereafter without Colonel Singlaub, profusely apologizing for the colonel's absence, saying that there were serious matters he had to handle. Tran Minh nodded his head, saying he was aware of the situation.

Dinner consisted of several traditional Vietnamese side dishes followed by a main course of steamed chicken and rice with vegetables. The toddler gravitated toward Taus, as Tran Minh's wife said, "Little Huu likes you. Lieutenant." The three-year-old had played patiently with a toy car during the discussions.

After drinks and dinner, the conversation was light initially, until Pogoloff noted that Tran Minh was the son of General Tran Minh who had been assassinated a few years ago in an internal power struggle. "It is unfortunate that my family has had to pay such a high price," said Tran Minh, "But I believe in this country and I will support its present leadership." He continued to talk about the politics of the war effort, wanting the South Vietnamese government to more strongly exert itself throughout the countryside.

"Certainly, we must control the capital area," Tran Minh stated as if to admonish Pogoloff. "We have surrendered control of the rest of our country to your U.S. forces."

Pogoloff grinned and nodded his head, saying: "General Westmoreland has directed that all U.S. combat and security forces will operate outside of the Saigon area. This will leave Saigon's main defense in the hands of your ARVN Forces." Pogoloff expressed reservations on whether the local peasants could fully comprehend, or even cared, about such a political structure.

Tran Minh countered, "With a proper educational system, we will raise our people from a Third World society into a competitive economy." He thanked Pogoloff and Taus for their help. Tran Minh's remarks reinforced Taus' own feelings and he felt privileged to sit in on the conversation.

The dinner ended with promises from both sides to help each other. They were a Catholic family with several religious figures in the house. Tran Minh's wife wore a blue-stoned Rosary around her neck, and often held the cross with her right hand as they discussed serious matters. Before departing, Tran Minh and his wife extended their guests an additional invitation. Unfortunately, Taus would never see them again as the requirements of the war intensified including the Tet Offensive.

### **Chaplains and Cobras**

"Christ died to make men holy, let us die to make them free. His troops are marching on," was the message being sung at the Tan Son Nhut Chapel, reflected the official line. Taus had attended services for spiritual strength and fortitude and deliverance from the ongoing struggle. But instead, he was being spiritually indoctrinated with the administration policy. In discussions with several chaplains, he was disappointed by their opinions about the war. He was no dove himself, but his childhood Christian education and the beliefs it taught were always at odds with his military training. The counseling available from the Chaplain Corps only encouraged the military line.

As Taus searched for some truths, he asked several chaplains why they become military ministers. They all had different stories. One minister noted, "There were no congregations for me in the South. In order to work as a minister, I joined the military." Another minister said, "It offered me a better life than the church alone could provide." Did he mean the pay was higher, thought Taus. "The program to become a chaplain is highly competitive, I was lucky to be accepted," added a third chaplain. Through it all, the chaplains supported their commander and seemed more concerned with the fitness reports prepared by military superiors than their eternal souls.

One Sunday, at the ARFCOS station, Jack Jefferies from the United States Embassy arrived carrying a small white pouch; "This is important," he said. Jefferies was a former military man and may have been with the U.S. Army Security Agency or the Intelligence Branch while on active duty. Later, he became a CIA agent and then with the American Embassy in Saigon. "What's up, Doc," Taus asked?

"This is anti-venom serum for a snakebite. Our Embassy in India delivered it to us, and it has to go to DaNang immediately." The DaNang flights were scheduled for later that evening, and the Military Airlift Command (MAC) showed some interest, unlike their attitude towards the Marine Corps radio bound for Khe Sanh, which would occur later.

MAC suggested the "Scatback Flights," which were flights used by high-ranking officers in small twin-engine Lear jets; one was leaving shortly. MAC contacted the pilot and asked them to take the serum. Within minutes, MAC called Taus to rush the package to the plane that was leaving shortly, and had General William Westmoreland on board; they would wait for Taus to arrive.

There were no courier vehicles at the station to travel the one-mile distance to the Lear jet that was on the other side of the airbase. Two station vehicles were inoperative due to a dead battery and a broken axle. Taus sped across the runways on a motorcycle, and in hot pursuit was a USAF security patrol that saw the speeding bike and gave chase in their Jeep. Taus figured they would either shoot him or follow him. Hopefully they would not shoot because of the many aircraft they could hit.

The SPs followed him to the Lear jet that was already out of its revetment and taxiing down the runway. It stopped for Taus and the crew chief opened the door and accepted the package. After a long explanation, the SPs allowed Taus to go, warning him not to use a civilian vehicle on the restricted runways. They were, however, interested enough to have their headquarters contact DaNang's security police to meet the aircraft.

At the evening meal, Captain Tudor said a small company of ARFCOS couriers met the Lear jet as it landed at DaNang, along with Embassy officials, MAC coordinators, DaNang's medics, USAF Security Police and the general's staff. Tudor added that the shipment wasn't urgent; the DaNang hospital had simply run out of their supply.

Taus apologized, "Sorry about the fuss, but Mr. Jefferies, the Embassy's CIA honcho said it was important to get the package there immediately. You did tell me to react whenever the Embassy asked for something."

"It's okay Rich. At least you have a sense of urgency that some of my other officers could use." The next day, the DaNang substation informed Tudor that the hospital thanked them for their efforts, as the serum was used the previous night on two people bitten by a cobra.

### **Troop Categories**

Fighting troops are referred to as combat soldiers. Their supporting service members, the people who move supplies, handle paperwork, or maintenance, mostly in rear support areas, are known as combat support and combat service support troops. There were no frontlines in Vietnam. One was

more likely to be killed in a rice paddy serving with an infantry platoon as a “grunt.” Nonetheless, those who served in a combat support role at a rear staging area or in a secure base were often rocketed and shelled by enemy fire. There were no safe areas in Vietnam; the dangers varied by degree.

But there was a difference between the hardships and perils that grunts endured compared to their supporting troops. It showed in their faces, their dress and in the attitudes and philosophy. It was as if they came from different armies.

Contrasting the combat troop to his supporting comrade-in-arms, one could see that life, if not just the Army, played favorites. The combat troop’s wrinkled uniforms usually had no insignia, never starched or ironed. There were splashes of jungle-colors, lubricants, sweat, blood and tears. Vietnam earth added splashes of colorations, creating swirls of red clay, beige dust and brown soil on their olive drab garb. Combat troops uniforms were fashioned from the same fabric and stock that produced the support member’s outfit. The combat troop’s uniform was strictly utilitarian compared to the almost parade dress ensemble worn by the rear-echelon personnel.

There was a third group of soldiers who experienced both extremes. At times they were in combat areas and at times they were in bases and cities. They were a group that understood both sides. They would leave the relative safety of their home base clean-shavened, with newly starched fatigues and polished boots. Later, they would return if their luck held, with stubble on their faces, fatigues that were limp from sweat and boots stripped of polish.

A layer of grime and dirt from the field covered them. Their faces were wrinkled, lined from stress and their eyes were sunken-in, their bodies drained. Many members of this third group conducted clandestine missions. Others were called upon to execute critical tasks such as the delivery of battlefield orders.

### **The Royal Australian Air Force**

The morning flight took Taus to the Mekong Delta in a C-5 twin-engine DeHavilland Caribou owned and operated by the Royal Australian Air Force. Two Canadian-built Caribou transport aircraft stood ready at their little Field Office near the Armed Forces Courier Station. The Caribou aircraft became the subject of inter-service rivalry between the U.S. Army and Air Force in the early 1960s, as the Army needed such an aircraft for tactical moves and the Air Force felt that the Army was infringing on its own tactical support missions.

A C-5 Caribou could fit 25 troops aboard, or fewer troops if a Jeep was carried. The argument was settled by the Defense Department removing the ship from the Army inventory. Disappointed, the Army contracted with the Boeing Aircraft Corporation to build a large helicopter, which made up for the loss. The new aircraft, called a CH-47 Chinook helicopter, could lift 44 troops or a variety of cargo, including a three-quarter ton truck. Its external cargo hook could sling a 10,000-pound load.

“Ged dey mate!” came the greeting from the Aussie crew chief who packed Taus’ materials on board for the Delta excursion. “Hope to get back early today,” Taus told the chief who said they usually do. Upon his return,

Taus thought about stopping by the Catholic Charities in Saigon or the Hoi Duk Ank orphanage in Cholon, where his unit was extending the dormitories. The planned visit provided him with some peace of mind.

As the Caribou slowly rolled down the runway, inward-rushing air from the cargo area made Taus' thinking clearer. He thought about starting a charity of some kind for the people. Am I building castles in the sand, he wondered? Was fantasy taking the place of reality? He wondered if his own sense of purpose was strong enough to accomplish anything. It would be tested within a few hours.

After making deliveries at An Thoi Island off the southernmost coast, the Caribou headed back to the mainland at low level. Suddenly, enemy fire from the coastline hit the left engine and wing, causing the engine to fail. The failing engine caused the aircraft to shake and slowly descend, yawing to the right until the pilot applied rudder to counteract the asymmetrical power.

The pilot turned the aircraft around and headed back to An Thoi, remaining further out to sea to avoid gunfire from shore. Within 20 minutes, An Thoi was in sight. The starboard engine maintained power until the final approach. Few pilots realize that with reduced power due to loss of an engine, they must make a steeper approach to avoid getting behind the power curve. In this case, the one remaining engine continued to produce power, but not enough to maintain a shallow approach which the pilot made with the gear and flaps extended.

Continuing to lose altitude, the aircraft crashed into the ocean 350 feet short of the runway. Water rushed into the aircraft cabin and cockpit areas. The crew chief shouted to Taus, "Come here mate! Exit through the pilot's window."

Waist deep in water inside the Caribou, Taus managed to reach the cockpit and climb through the escape hatch, just as the aircraft settled into the bay. The crew stood on top of the submerged fuselage and wings, with only the top of the vertical stabilizer and rudder visible. Knee-high in water, the crew looked like bay clammers.

Later that afternoon, the U.S. Navy sent a diving team to recover the classified materials. After reaching shore, a second Caribou arrived to return the crew to base. Taus arrived back at Tan Son Nhut shortly before midnight.

Sleep was short. At 5 a.m. Taus was awakened for another flight, on a C-130. The long mission was uneventful except for the sight of 14 body bags with the stench of decaying bodies.

### **Some Problems Facing Couriers**

Taus was scheduled for another C-130 flight with several hundred pounds of classified materials to deliver. In training, the new courier officers were told not to lose or compromise any piece of material. Having several hundred or more items to monitor became extremely difficult. Complicating the situation was the turn of events in the intelligence area. The Tet Offensive begun up-country in September 1967. U.S. Army Forces were encountering large enemy units moving down from North Vietnam for later



tering large enemy units moving down from North Vietnam for later attacks, known as the Tet Offensive in late January 1968.

More and more skirmishes resulted in more dead soldiers; more body bags. The dangerous missions also became unpleasant. The couriers were trained never to relax their vigil, even at home bases. The enemy could be unrecognizable, maybe he was another Caucasian officer. He could be a disguised KGB agent or operative who would try and steal the secretive materials that couriers carried.

There were the rocket attacks and ground assaults that greeted many of the arriving flights. One attack happened when Lieutenant Daniels went to An Khe with a thousand pounds of materials, destined for delivery farther up-country. But it was off loaded at An Khe when a USAF crew chief shifted his cargo-loading plan.

Before it could be placed back on board, a rocket attack began, causing the flight crew to scramble aboard the aircraft and take off, leaving Daniels and his materials behind. Daniels sought cover in a bunker and both he and the material survived the attack. However, Daniels had to remain at An Khe for three days before finding a flight back to Tan Son Nhut, without having delivered his materials.

The Viet Cong was preparing for the greatest series of attacks in the Vietnam War. Battles were already occurring and MACV Headquarters expected an all-out assault as U.S. intelligence reported more and more engagements. Daniels and his material had to wait as there were higher priority cargo, including blood for transfusions and ammunition.

Once safely back, Daniels told his story many times, how he sat by the pallet under a scorching sun during the days, and half sleeping during the humid nights. The monotony was relieved by more rocket and mortar attacks at An Khe. A final enemy assault fortunately failed. Daniels' request for security guards was refused by the base commander, as personnel resources were already fully committed to the base's defense.

Captain Tudor, in charge of the couriers, saw the problems and arranged for couriers to anticipate delays, and to carry extra gear and ammunition, and to destroy the material before falling into enemy hands. To destroy the material, couriers carried two thermite grenades the size of a 12-ounce beer can. Careless handling in an aircraft could cause its downing.

Tudor decided to test the grenades at a local explosive ordnance disposal range by wrapping two thermite grenades around a cardboard beer box filled with assorted scrap papers and old Army manuals. The pins were pulled on both grenades and he headed for cover. The grenades fizzed for 30-minutes before going out. A second, and a third test were conducted. The box was scorched only on the sides where the grenade was attached. All papers and books inside were untouched. The demonstration showed that the grenades were totally useless and that a Zippo lighter could do more damage.

A separate test using fragmentation grenades was better, but only succeeded in scattering paperwork and materials around the contested area. The order to carry the two grenades was rescinded.

On this particular flight, Taus thought he was prepared, but weather immediately became the first factor as heavy rains made the aircraft divert from its intended destination. Then a maintenance problem arose with the loss of an engine, causing the aircraft to land at Pleiku Airbase, just as the base came under attack. Since the C130 needed repairs, the crew could not take off, and instead, jumped into a ground bunker.

After the attack halted and the aircraft was repaired, the flight continued to its next destination, Chu Lai Airbase, arriving at 3:30 a.m. The night's darkness hid the huge size of the airfield, which had several squadrons of older F-100 Super Sabres as well as other aircraft.

A USAF Staff Sergeant, operating a forklift, tried to unload Taus' pallet of classified materials. "Step aside Lieutenant, this one's got to come off." Taus asked for a reason. "Cause I load and unload the aircraft," shouted the irritated sergeant. "Sergeant, I'm responsible for that stuff. Its classified materials and it has a high priority." The sergeant continued working the forklift into place at the rear ramp, saying "I gotta set it over there in the cargo area. Pal. It'll be placed on a later flight." Taus replied, "Unless you have a good reason to bump this stuff, I cannot allow you to do it." The forklift blades slipped under the pallet and the sergeant came chin-to-chin with Taus.

"Take it easy sergeant. Nothing personal, but you're biting off more than you can chew. Unless your other cargo is blood or bullets, this stuff had priority. Check with your Officer-In-Charge. I'm not interested in a fistfight. I've got to protect these materials." The sergeant retreated to the forklift and started to lift the pallet off the aircraft. Having to make a major decision, Taus drew his pistol, and raised it toward the sergeant, saying, "You won't be the first man I've shot."

The sergeant was not going to question Taus' resolve. Shakened and frustrated, the sergeant placed the forklift in reverse and left the pallet on board. He sped off cursing and swearing at Taus. Within a few minutes, the forklift driver returned with his superior, an Air Force sergeant. "Take it easy here. Lieutenant." Taus still held his pistol. "I understand you're upset about something," said the sergeant.

Handing the sergeant a copy of his orders, Taus identified himself and explained the situation. The sergeant had previously been assigned to an ARCOSTA unit and knew Taus' dilemma. The sergeant turned to the forklift operator, "You're damn lucky you didn't remove the pallet. The Lieutenant could have blow your fool head off"

The Staff Sergeant jumped back on his forklift and quickly spun it around. It held the substitute pallet of unknown material that would have taken the place of Taus' classified pallet. As the forklift abruptly swung around, the inertia caused the pallet to fall onto the loading area, and some of the contents broke open, with a hissing sound: broken beer cans.

"Sergeant," Taus said, stunned at the sight. "You wanted to place a pallet of beer aboard in place of my cargo?" The forklift driver smiled for the first time and said, "You won't have really used that gun, Lieutenant?"

“You read my orders, Sergeant. There would have been your blood mixed in with the beer.” Taus’ pallet stayed on board as the C-130 continued to its next destination. Along the way, Taus smelled the still lingering beer spray as he sat upon his pallet of classified material.

### **US Marines in Hell, August 1967**

The ARFCOS substation in DaNang needed help for a few days. Being the new courier, Taus was given the assignment. DaNang’s substation was commanded by First Lieutenant Jerry Pullins, who met Taus’ arriving flight. Revving the jeep’s engine, Pullins yelled to Taus, “Come on, come on. I’ve got to place you aboard another flight now. It’s waiting for you over on the Marine Corps’ side.”

As soon as Taus put his materials and gear in the jeep, Pullins sped off, steering with his left hand and with his right hand reached into the jeep’s rear area and pulled out a pouch containing more classified materials, dumping them into Taus’ lap. Then he reached under the dashboard and grabbed a clipboard. He told Taus to sign the forms and inventory the materials later. “It’s all there. The materials go to the Marines at Phu Bai and Dong Ha. I’ll meet you on your return flight.”

Abruptly the jeep stopped in front of another C-130. “There’s your flight. Hurry, get on and good luck.” The flight would be leaving in an hour, but Pullins, an alcoholic, did his drinking early.

The Air Forces’ C-130s were painted in camouflage tones, unlike the Marines’ C-130s, which had a clean white paint coat on top and glistening polished aluminum sides. One would have expected just the opposite color combinations for the two services. The Marines’ living quarters were far worse. At DaNang, their Quonset huts looked grimy with few embellishments.

Unlike the Army, the Marines seemed to keep a man where he could serve best. With the Army, it was up or out as far as promotions were concerned. If a man did not merit a promotion to the next higher rank in due time, the Army considered him unfit and discharged him. If the officer could handle the duties at the lower rank, that would not necessarily mean he could handle the duties at a higher rank. The Marines would allow a man to stay at the lower rank, at least for a time. Besides, they needed their personnel.

The outside of the Marine C-130 was sharp and clean; however the inside was another story. It showed wear and tear placed upon it by numerous combat missions, including the repeated loading and unloading of cargo to the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ).

Phu Bai was 10 miles from Hue, the old imperial capital, and Dang Ha was within 10 miles of the North Vietnamese border. Khe Sanh, soon to become infamous, was 30 miles west of Dong Ha. The first stop on that day was Phu Bai, the largest base in the area, where Marine MPs guarded the main terminal and airfield.

The Marine Corps units receiving Taus’ classified materials met him at the aircraft. After turning the material over to them, the sound of incoming rockets occurred. “Whump, Whump-Whump-Whump!” Everyone scram-

bled for cover, and Taus found himself against a sandbagged aircraft revetment as a second volley of rockets poured into the base. He started to stick his head up to see where the rounds were landing. A 39-year old Marine Second Lieutenant grabbed Taus' pistol belt and yanked him back down. "Sorry I..." There was nothing to say about a stupid move. Rounds continued to slam into the airport.

The older Second Lieutenant said, "That's how people get themselves messed up. They look for trouble, and right now, it's incoming." The attack ceased and as they slowly stood up, Taus saw a Vietnamese man carrying a knapsack, running across the taxiway. Two Marine MPs yelled at him to halt. The younger MP fired his M14 Rifle into the air, while the older MP immediately fired a burst at the person. "Wham!" The Vietnamese blew up before their eyes. There was nothing left except debris slowly falling down from the intense explosion when the bullets hit the knapsack.

The Marine Lieutenant said, "Another damn VC Sapper. We got him before he did his thing." The rocket attack must have been coordinated with the sapper. He may have been running towards an aircraft or the ammunition dump with his satchel charge.

Undaunted by the events, the Marine C-130 crew continued its mission. Next stop would be the Marine garrison at Dong Ha, located somewhere in the lower regions of Hell, Dong Ha was a treeless, crater-ridden piece of earth. For as far as the human eye could see, there were brown mounds and hills of dirt. Positions that had been repeatedly blasted by artillery fire and offshore Naval bombardments. The North Vietnamese, also used their long range artillery fires from across the contested DMZ to pulverize the earth.

There was no greenery, no vegetation, only rolling hills and craters of brown dirt. A gloomy gray sky met the distant horizon. The earth was accented with billowing plumes of black smoke tunneling upward, and then blending into the gray sky the results of artillery fires.

The landing field was primitive and surrounded by sandbagged bunkers and foxholes. The Marines that met the aircraft blended in with the landscape, looking gaunt and somber, and their uniforms were more brown than green from the dirt and dust.

Khe Sanh was the last stop before returning to DaNang. It was situated on a plateau that had other higher hills surrounding it. There was foliage on the mountainsides around the encampment, which regrettably hid the enemy until he ran into the perimeter triple concertina barbed-wire. From the jungle of trees and bushes, the enemy could direct mortar and artillery fires into the beleaguered Marine position.

A constant chatter of machine gun fire from all sides sounded as Taus dispatched his remaining materials. Another rocket or NVA artillery barrage struck the base. This time the C-130 had not shut down its engines and started to taxi forward for a speedy take-off. Taus jumped into the aircraft's cargo ramp as it taxied out. In a few minutes, the C-130 was at altitude. Taus sympathized with the Marines left behind at Hell's outpost. When the time came for them to die, they could truly say they were going to Heaven, because they spent their time in Hell.

For the courier personnel at DaNang, living accommodations were off base in a French-styled Vietnamese villa. A unit of Republic of Korea officers shared an adjoining villa. That evening, as Pullins drank heavily, he spoke about the Korean's toughness. It sounded more like brutality to Taus.

Pullins' tales did not last long as he quickly became inebriated, slurring most of his words and thoughts from drinking straight whiskey.

Screaming sounds came from across the open courtyard by the Korean's quarters. They had a cage of pet monkeys, similar to the ones that the USAF EOD team had at Tan Son Nhut. However, the treatment of these primates was quite different by the Koreans. They taunted and teased the monkeys. One Korean called Taus over to see how they were harassing the monkeys with sticks. Their form of entertainment did not interest Taus who retired for the evening.

It was 7 a.m. when Taus arrived at the DaNang Courier Station, finding Pullins still sacked out. Pullins arrived about 10 a.m. and after shuffling through his paperwork, leaned back in his chair, propped his feet on his desk and picked up a guitar that was resting by the wall.

Nice guy, Taus thought. Shouldn't he make arrangements to get me back down south? Scheduling flights and materials was Pullins' job. Instead he continued to pluck away at his guitar, while his duty sergeant was making a PX run at the main base.

"Taught myself," Pullins proudly noted. He was a far cry from the musical hero he tried to imitate; Glen Campbell. Pullins' craggier facial features, shorter height and stocky body were not in tune with the famous guitarist. Nor were Pullins' tunes as he strummed the instrument incessantly.

When evening arrived, Pullins' duty sergeant closed the station and headed for the officer's club to pick up Pullins, whose drinking problem started earlier each day. That was Taus' first encounter with an alcoholic. Realizing that Pullins would never get to schedule a return trip, Taus bid him goodbye and made his own arrangements for a return flight.

Every Armed Forces courier carries orders which reads, "The individual who presents these orders, properly identified, will be allowed passage and transportation along with his materials, cargo and equipment in the National Security interests of the United States of America. He is authorized to carry firearms for the protection of materials, cargo and equipment, which, if compromised, could jeopardize the national security of the United States. Commanding officers of all posts, bases, stations and commands will furnish such transportation to complete this officer's mission. Travel by extra fare aircraft is authorized as being necessary due to the emergency of the mission. Authority is granted to wear civilian clothes when directed in the performance of duty."

With that statement, Taus had a ticket on any military flight and, with the exception of human blood and ammunition, he could bump any cargo to accomplish his mission. It would have been unfair to exercise this option just to get back, but there were other missions originating out of Tan Son Nhut that required his services, especially since the unit was short-handed.

A USAF sergeant at the military counter accepted the orders and apologized, "Lieutenant, I'm sorry to tell you we ain't got anything headed to Tan Son Nhut today or tonight. Have you checked with anyone else?"

Who else, Taus pondered. The U.S. Marines had few missions anywhere outside of I Corps. The Navy probably flew to its fleet somewhere offshore in the South China Sea. Army aircraft, unless specifically scheduled for command staff flights, made only short trips, and these were usually combat insertions. "Who else, sergeant?" Taus finally asked.

#### **Air America**

"Why Air America or Air Vietnam of course," the sergeant replied. Though Taus' orders could get him onto Air Vietnam, it would be a struggle to arrange payment in Vietnamese pilasters for a ticket. Air Vietnam carried civilians and was a quasi-commercial airline run by the South Vietnam government.

Its' two largest aircraft were Boeing 727s, obtained from Pan American World Airlines. The two aircraft were still painted in Pan Am white and blue colors, but had "Air Vietnam," both in English and Vietnamese, painted over the Pan Am insignias. The other problem facing Taus was he had a pouch of classified materials in his possession, and couriers could not utilize a foreign country's air carrier with such material. However, Air America was approved.

Across from the Air Force terminal was the Air America offices, where a middle-aged American civilian stood behind their counter. He wore a white short-sleeves shirt and black slacks. Small black epaulettes on his shirt shoulders denoted his rank. When Taus approached him, the Air America officer wiped his sweaty forehead and smiled asking, "What ken I dew for you-all, Lieutenant?"

Taus handed him his orders and asked if Air America had anything headed back to Tan Son Nhut. After reading the orders, the agent mentioned that one of their Curtis C-46 aircraft was near the north end of the terminal area, boarding passengers and cargo for a trip to Saigon. If he hurried, Taus could make the flight.

The agent provided him a boarding pass and a sloppy salute. Then as he looked at Taus' gear and sealed pouch he added, "I hope you aren't carrying any more drugs in that package. We don't need any competition." He laughed and was quite unconcerned about the contents. "Good luck Lieutenant. My pleasure to be of assistance."

The C-46 had a strange lot of civilians and semi-military Vietnamese and American Special Forces soldiers on board. There was no rank or insignias on their uniforms. The Vietnamese also brought on board some chickens, geese, a pig, and household possessions. Everything was crammed into the shining aluminum aircraft. The twin-engine tail-dragger bore the name Air America in black letters on the sides, over the passenger windows.

As Taus was waiting to board the aircraft, a thunderous roar was heard as a Marine Douglas A4 Skyhawk started its takeoff on the military side of the airbase. Loaded under the wings were napalm tanks, rocket pods and bombs. The off-white jet, carrying two crewmembers in tandem, one behind

the other, streaked down the runway, as everyone's eyes focused on the aircraft. Taus took his Canon 35 mm camera that he had hanging from his shoulder and tried to steady it for a picture of the departing Marine jet. After the Skyhawk hit its afterburner for additional thrust, its left wing landing wheel tire deflated, followed by sparks racing along behind the wheel as the rubber tore off and metal scrapped the runway. Shortly, the Skyhawk collapsed on its left wing and slid off the runway onto the dirt paralleling the runway.

As on-lookers stood in amazement, staring at the sight of an unfolding tragedy, the jet finally coming to rest, littering the runway with armaments and parts of the aircraft. Grey and black smoke shot into the air from the rear underside of the jet, followed by a gigantic fireball and deafening blast.

The fireball rapidly rose several hundred feet into the sky, followed by a concussion that knocked several spectators to the ground. The orange and red fireball quickly turned into a black billowing cloud that obscured the aircraft. The armaments under the aircraft started exploding. Taus felt sad for the two-man crew, but suddenly, the Plexiglas canopy covering the cockpit rose on its rear hinge and both crewmembers leaped out of the aircraft, running as fast as they could into a nearby drainage ditch.

One rocket under the wing ignited from the heat and shot across the runway, striking a Marine Corp tanker carrying aviation fuel, resulting in another explosion.

Spectators crouched as additional explosions occurred. Another gigantic black cloud rose from the truck. Within a few minutes the black clouds from the flaming fuel truck and the jet had risen thousands of feet and covered DaNang Airbase. Fire trucks, which arrived on the scene several minutes later, were unable to suppress the flames or halt the other munitions from exploding. Witnessing the shocking event, Taus had failed to shoot any pictures with the Canon camera that dangled on his neck strap.

### **The Tet Offensive, January 30, 1968**

The night was ominous as Taus rode his motorcycle through the streets of downtown Saigon and the congested urban squalor surrounding the huge Tan Son Nhut airbase. The Vietnamese started their celebration of the Lunar New Year by setting off fireworks in the streets, which began the "Year of the Monkey." The staccato outburst of explosions from the firecrackers made soldiers jumpy and irritable. American military police manning sentry booths and guarding entrances to the various government buildings were tense and nervous compared to the casual attitude of their Vietnamese MP counterparts. The Americans could not see any reason for celebrations.

The bursting firecrackers were the perfect cover for an attack. Taus had a premonition of a major attack starting under cover of the fireworks, and his premonition soon came to life.

Life had become routine with the American Officers at the Arugia Hotel situated just outside Tan Son Nut's main gate. The Arugia was owned by a wealthy Vietnamese officer, and was a typical Mediterranean-style hotel with an enclosed courtyard and parking area, an inside open-air atrium, and six stories of separate rooms with baths and balcony patios. The seventh

floor had a bar and restaurant with open-air space for dancing. From that vantage point, a person could see the entire Airbase in the northwest and portions of downtown Saigon to the southeast.

Most officers ate at the U.S. Third Field Consolidated Mess located appropriately 200 feet southwest of the Arugia and the Airbase. Some more adventurous diners ate at local Vietnamese restaurants, resulting in a high number of hepatitis cases and other maladies. The Third Field Hospital was located four-miles away for the more seriously ill. That evening, several fellow officers and Taus joined Captain Chester Tudor, the newly assigned ARFCOSTA commanding officer, for dinner at the Third Field Mess.

During diner, they discussed their various missions. None of them were “desk-jockeys.” All had flown around Vietnam from the northernmost outposts of the Demilitarized Zone to Vietnam’s southernmost islands of Ca Mau and An Thoi, where a U.S. Coast Guard detachment was located. The low-ranking courier officers usually accomplished their missions alone, without an enlisted man for assistance.

#### **Warning Taus of VC Attack**

By 9 p.m. the officers returned to the hotel, some of whom seeking rest from the day’s missions while others prepared for their early morning departures, with the air racked by exploding firecrackers. As they entered the Arugia’s courtyard, the old Vietnamese man opened the hotel’s front gates and looked at Taus, saying, “VC attack tonight! You see Dai-uy (Captain). VC attack!”

“Thieu-uy (Second Lieutenant), Papason,” corrected Taus who smiled. The haggard old fellow was right; the attack started soon after the warning. Muffled explosions occurred shortly after midnight, rattling the windows, causing Taus to look outside.

#### **Vision of Pearl Harbor Attack**

Quickly putting on his uniform, Taus grabbed his M16 Rifle and scurried upstairs for a look from the 7<sup>th</sup> floor, from where the sprawling airbase complex could be seen. Kneeling down alongside the roof’s railing, Taus couldn’t see any military action.

After a few minutes, Taus decided the noise must have come from a distant B-52 bombing raid, but as he started back to bed, a massive rocket attack unfolded in front of him, appearing like a land version of the Pearl Harbor attack of December 7. Taus ran downstairs to wake up the others.

#### **I Told You So!**

The hotel’s staircase wound around the open-air atrium from which all floors could be viewed. As Taus hurried downstairs, he saw the old Vietnamese man standing on the first floor who had warned of the imminent attack. “Papason, Papason! Ring the alarm!” shouted Taus. Papason started striking an empty brass artillery shell casing with a crowbar as he shouted back to Taus, “I tell you Dai-uy, VC attack tonight!”

Amid the clanging of the alarm, military people appeared at their doors, trying to figure out what was happening. Soon, military people station at the hotel started assembling in the lobby with their combat gear. Some officers were pilots who only flew into Vietnam and were staying overnight. Other



officers were Green-Berets Special Forces. Most headed for their jeeps and vehicles parked inside the hotel's compound, rushing to their units at the base.

Tudor saw Taus and told him to get Pullins, who was drunk and out cold. "Put him into his flax vest and helmet; carry him if you must," shouted Tudor.

Pullins was still in his fatigues, passed out across his bed with an empty Chivas Regal bottle nearby. He threatened to punch Taus if he persisted in disturbing his sleep. Taus had no use for Pullins or his demeanor, but as Pullins closed his eyes, Taus planted Pullins' helmet, not-so-gently, on his head. Following Tudor's orders, Taus grabbed Pullins' arm and slung him over his shoulder in a fireman's carry.

Three ARCOSTA vehicles were ready to exit the hotel's gates as Taus dragged Pullins to one of them. Tudor looked disgusted. "Throw him in the back, Taus." They then sped off to the main gate at Tan Son Nhut, but encountered a barrier at the branch road passing MACV headquarters. Tudor turned the Jeep and took a circuitous route to the main gate. Approaching the illuminated gate, a loudspeaker called out, "Stop your vehicle. Proceed no farther or we will open fire."

Tudor dismounted, leaving his weapon behind and raising his hands, "We are U.S. Army soldiers assigned here. We need to get to our unit on base." It was a nervous time as Tudor slowly approached the gate. He showed the security police his Armed Forces identity card. Satisfied, the MPs swung open the barbed-wire fence strung across the main road, allowing the Jeep to enter. Each man's ID card was checked.

When their last man was identified by the SPs, another loudspeaker announcement cautioned an approaching small truck. Instead of slowing down, the truck accelerated. Quickly, the exposed SPs dove behind the barricades, along with Tudor, Taus and the nine other military personnel—except for Pullins, who slept in the rear of the jeep. Tudor told his men to spread out and establish firing position as the SPs opened fire.

Long bursts from several tripod mounted M60 machineguns tattooed the approaching truck as it rammed the main gate. Its occupants scrambled out of the rear doors and returned fires, trying to capture the gate. A chorus of other weapons by enemy troops opened up with metallic chattering of AK-47 Soviet assault guns.

Suddenly, the small truck burst into flames and exploded, wounding and killing the Viet Cong attackers. Tudor's men, who carried only a small amount of ammunition, quickly ran out. One of the M60's near Taus had jammed, while Viet Cong started approaching the area, causing a temporary feeling of impending doom. Finally, the security police gunner cleared the jam and started firing again, mowing down the advancing VC.

What seemed like an hour took only minutes. The last sound of gunfire ended near the consolidated officer's mess. From all appearance, there were no U.S. casualties at the gate. Tudor ordered his men back into the vehicles, continuing on to the Courier Station. The SPs did not venture forward to

inspect the area where the Vietcong had been, choosing to wait until daylight.

The airbase was badly hit during the rocket attack. Several troop barracks were ablaze that contained wounded and dead airmen. Fire trucks and ambulances rushed around the airbase as blazing fires lit up the area.

Taus and the others passed the base chapel, which had been struck by a rocket and was engulfed in flames. Turning onto the taxiways, they were stopped by another SP patrol, who asked them for identification and then warned them about unexploded ordnance and infiltrators.

A McDonnell Douglas F4 Phantom Jet-fighter was destroyed and was blazing just 200 feet from the airport control tower. Farther down the flight line a twin-engine Canberra jet sat broken in half by a direct hit. As they neared the Courier Station they saw a Lockheed C-130 blazing from a direct hit.

Arriving at the Courier Station, they found the front metal door was bolted shut. The three men inside sheepishly asked who was there before opening. The newly assigned First Lieutenant, Kevin Abell, had just arrived in Vietnam for a temporary-duty-tour to supplement the station's manpower, along with two assistants: SP5 Dave Patterson and SFC Cornelius Stanger.

Abell asked, "Captain, am I glad to see you. This whole base is under attack. Does this happen every night, sir?"

"Not as bad, son," remarked Tudor as he looked at the pale-faced Stanger for a damage assessment. "We're okay, sir. No damage. It just scared the hell out of us. What's happening out there?"

"I'm not sure, Sergeant, but I think this is the start of the enemy offensive MACV was predicting. Tudor continued, at first checking his personnel, then his arms and ammunitions held in arms lockers inside the vault, he ordered: "Each man grab twenty magazines and a bayonet. Make sure you keep on your flax vest. And will someone drag Pullins in here."

Tudor repeatedly telephoned base operations until he got through, to inform the deputy base commander about the sensitive materials at the Courier Station.

*You'll have to provide your own security, Captain. We are over-extended. The South Vietnamese commanders have given their men leave for the Tet celebrations. As you know, it's the RVN's responsibility to defend this base. My Security Police are acting like Infantry now, repelling a heavy attack in the southwestern sector. We expect another assault in your area, coming from the northeast Go-Vap sector. Do the best you can. Set up your own defensive position. And good luck!"*

As Tudor looked at the base map on the wall, he drew his bayonet from its scabbard, using it as a pointer. He pointed out the aircraft revetments that lined the northeast area and said: "We'll set up our defensive perimeter on top of those revetments."

Stanger cautioned, "Sir, that will surely expose us to enemy fires. The revetments are 15 feet high. We'll be like sitting ducks."

"No Sergeant, you and the men will dig into them from the top. Those revetments are wide enough to accommodate decent foxholes. There's

plenty of room to position oneself. Good fields of fire can be obtained from that height. The only other choice is to take up positions on the ground which doesn't offer any good observation points."

Tudor was right; although the positions were somewhat exposed, they commanded the taxiways and adjacent flat terrain, and there was enough earth between the corrugated steel sides to offer reasonable protection from machine gun fires. The revetments were originally designed to protect the aircraft from airfield bombardments. No one wanted to stay inside the small stucco station where they could not see an enemy approach. No one except Stanger, "Sir, my tour of duty ended yesterday, I don't need to get shot out there."

There was only one other enlisted man in the station, Patterson, who was anxious to get outside. Tudor was disappointed in Stanger's attitude, but understood his apprehension. "Okay, that's fine. Sergeant, you man the station, and the rest of us will establish the perimeter defense. In fact, I want Abell to stay behind too. If the VC make it past us, destroy whatever materials you can before both of you are captured or killed." Tudor's sarcastic remark was intended to prompt the other Lieutenants into action. Within minutes, they had positioned themselves in the revetments and begun to dig in.

Gunfire exchanges could be seen on the distant horizon near the Go-Vap orphanage, probably 2400 feet from their position. Sounds of muffled explosions were also heard, including occasional crossfire, probably coming from American and Vietnamese soldiers.

Pushing up more dirt on the brim of the revetment, Patterson said to Taus, "The captain's going to get us killed up here! That's why Stanger chickened-out. Hell Lieutenant, if the VC storm our position, Stanger and Abell wouldn't have time to destroy anything."

Before Patterson finished his sentence, a Lieutenant spotted small figures in the distance, silhouetted by the faint moonlight and an aerial flare. "Hold your fires!" bellowed Tudor. "They may be friendlies." That assessment was quickly shattered by incoming machinegun fires from the dark figures scampering toward the flight line.

"If they're friendlies, captain, why are they shooting into our aircraft positions," shouted Patterson as rounds flew over their heads towards the station.

Except for the Air Vietnam hangar, the revetments were the largest objects on the airfield from where the enemy was approaching. (This is the battle that is on page 1 of this book.) "Return fires!" shouted Captain Tudor as enemy machine gun bullets impacted their foxhole area.

Taus was struck in his left chest by a round that slipped through his flax vest. The force of the impact knocked him backwards against the rear dirt mound.

"Fix bayonets!" shouted Tudor as the small unit braced for a final assault on their position. Staggering from the bullet now lodged in his chest, Taus was still alert and attached his bayonet. Another shower of enemy bullets swept their position, one of which struck Taus' bayonet and inflicting a gash on his right hand.

“Make every round count! We are low on ammo. Taus, are you alright?”

Tudor continued yelling directions to his troops. Taus was momentarily stunned, but quickly staggered back to the foxhole’s front berm, feeling the soreness in his chest and a stinging pain from the bayonet wound.

Patterson wasn’t the only man upset about their predicament. Daniels complained, “All these aircraft and no airborne protection.” He was right. Tan Son Nhut had several F-4 Phantom Fighters and other armed aircraft, but none were prepared for this type of infantry action.

Bullets whooshed over the revetments, several impacting into the steel plates. Others ricocheted down the taxiways. The area around the revetments were hit as mortar rounds were lobbed into the area. One directly hit the sandbagged steel connex container that was the station’s improvised bomb shelter.

Suddenly from high overhead, a long bright red stream flowed from the night sky, followed by a purring noise. It came from an aircraft, a few thousand feet away. It was “Puff The Magic Dragoon” or “Spooky,” the Air Forces C-47 cargo aircraft. A World War II vintage “Dakota” twin-engine that was converted some time ago into an aerial gun platform. It boasted three SUU-11 30-caliber machine gun pods consisting of multi-barreled electrically operated machine guns, each of which could fire 3,000 rounds a minute.

The tracer trails fell on the advancing enemy, like a Monsoon rainfall, completely saturating the open fields where enemy soldiers had stood. The Northern Airfield attack had sputtered and failed. As things settled down,

Tudor told Taus and Patterson to go over to the station and obtain more ammunition and some C-rations for the revetment defenders. As Taus passed the destroyed connex container, he remembered the cage of monkeys that the neighboring Air Force EOD team had built to house their pets.

Surely, it must have been destroyed too. Taus did not want to inspect the damage, but Patterson did, and called to Taus, “Hey Lieutenant, looky here! The damn monkeys are all alive!”

Evidently the mortar or rocket round landed directly in the steel bunker, confining the explosion. The monkeys were safe, playing their brand of “grab-ass” with each other as usual, as if nothing had happened.

The doors of the station were bolted shut. Taus banged on the door, and Stanger’s voice responded, “Who goes there?”

Opening the door, Stanger cursed, complaining about not leaving Vietnam that morning, “My flight’s been cancelled. I’ve spent a year in Vietnam and I want to leave.” Without waiting for an answer, Stanger continued, “And what’s the big idea of firing rounds into the station last night. I left the door open and rounds came flying in. You guys could have hit us!”

“Sergeant,” Taus frowned, “It wasn’t us that fired in this direction. It was “Charlie” as he crossed the airfield.” Taking some unsolicited credit, Patterson added, “But we stopped them, so you can leave tomorrow.”

Colonel Tilson, staying in another bachelor officers’ quarters located adjacent to the consolidated officers’ mess, had quickly dressed and exited his quarters trying to get to MACV Headquarters. Armed with only an M16

Rifle, he saw several armed Vietnamese in traditional black pajamas attempting to penetrate the far left side of the southern gate defenses. Tilson opened fire on them, resulting in overwhelming VC firepower directed at him that mortally wounded him. After nearly a year in Vietnam, the colonel would have returned to the States in five days.

There had been three attacks on Tan Son Nhut that night. The supporting attacks were made in the Southeast main gate and the Northern gate, while the main thrust seemed directed against the West gate. Hostilities were still ongoing, especially at the western perimeter. No mention was made as to the body count in the northern perimeter where Puff had strafed a VC Battalion.

Because of the tense situation, no one was allowed off base, and few were permitted entry. Within 30 minutes, a call from the American Embassy ordered the station to assist with a rescue mission. The VC had attacked the downtown Saigon American Embassy and it was still under attack. It was feared that classified materials would be compromised if the enemy took over the Chancery. Inside, a large vault contained highly classified documents. A second higher priority call from ARFCOSTA Washington, DC confirmed the order to immediately proceed to the Embassy.

Tudor came out of the Courier Station and called to several men in the revetments, taking four men downtown to the U.S. Embassy. He turned towards Taus, saying, "I have no choice. We can try and collect our enlisted men from their villa on the way downtown. If the VC attacks again, I don't think the five of us will make much of a difference here."

They took a Jeep, a Ford Econoline van, and a 17-foot truck, and as they approached the airbase's south gate, they saw the burned out hulk of the VC truck that tried to ram the gate. The security police commander was given an explanation before he allowed the small caravan to depart.

On the four-mile trip to the Embassy, Tudor barked out instructions. "Daniels, drive faster. Patterson, zip up your flack-vest. Taus you're bleeding." The last one came as a surprise to everyone. Unnoticed in the firefight, Taus had a nasty slash above his wrist when he attached his bayonet. Taus was also hit by a bullet in his chest which had lounded in his upper abdomen. The heat of battle had numbed the pain, but his right side had bloodstains.

Tudor quickly ordered his men, who had remained in the villa, "Grab your weapons, vest and helmet and get into the vehicles!" Tudor must have been an infantryman. He was acting like a combat commander.

On Thong Nhat Boulevard, U.S. military policemen from the 716<sup>th</sup> were spread out around the Embassy. Two dead MPs were being placed on the rear ramp door of an armored personnel carrier; their burnt arms reached out as if trying to cling to life. They were now frozen in death. Tudor identified himself to the MPs and his three-vehicle convoy was allowed into the compound. Several dead Vietnamese were sprawled around a dry courtyard pond, dressed in civilian clothes with red arm bands for identification as Viet Cong.

Dismounting the vehicles, Tudor met with CIA agent Jack Jeffries who stood by a huge teakwood front door to the chancery. He waved them over, brandishing a 45 caliber Colt, describing the battle as he pointed out the damage with his gun, "They used satchel charges over there, breaching the wall." A steel-reinforced stucco concrete wall had a three-foot hole blasted in it. "Must have been about 19 VC Sappers that got in," Jeffries commented. "We lost five soldiers here."

The Embassy building was completed last September, but already its white concrete exterior was covered with bullet marks. Jeffries said that no VCs managed to get inside the main chancery, but that the VC did penetrate the consular and other offices in the compound. "I think we killed their leader early-on. They became disorganized and never set off their other explosives," Jeffries noted. "We also lost two Vietnamese chauffeurs. Someone gave the order to shoot any Vietnamese found inside to avoid any compromise of sensitive documents; they were unfortunate enough to be here."

Though Tudor explained the situation at the airbase, Jeffries insisted that several pouches and packages of classified materials be removed and taken to Tan Son Nhut. A special flight from the ARFCOSTA station at Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines would fly in and take out the material. The classified material was loaded onto the vehicles and Tudor's group returned to the Airbase.

Back at base, Tudor assigned men to relieve those in the revetment positions. He rechecked with the base commanding officer, who advised that things had settled down. Lockyear, one of the men at the villa, was anxious to examine the carnage he missed; Taus went along. Tudor ordered his revetment outposts to cover them as they moved forward among the dead VC.

While Taus and Lockyear walked past the parking lot, two senior USAF sergeants were returning to their nearby Quonset hut, and as they looked up at the ARFCOSTA soldiers in the 15-foot high revetments, one said, "You guys make a nice target!"

"Good fields of fire and good protection too," replied Patterson who obviously had changed his mind after the attack. "We had some night!" There were several USAF security policemen who had the same idea and were examining the battlefield. As they saw Taus and Lockyear approaching, they cautioned them, "Don't take any papers. We'll have our intelligence people out here later to see what they can find."

Bodies were everywhere, in different contorted positions, but always with the same gaunt expression. Most were dressed in similar uniforms ripped apart by the machine-gun fires from Puff. Blood that darkened the ground was partially absorbed by the soil. Broken bodies, missing limbs and the grotesquely mutilated were everywhere.

Lockyear called to Taus as he viewed one body. "Taus, take a look at this guy. Recognize him?" The dead VC was about 50 years old and was the Airbase Exchange barber. His mouth was still agape holding a bent cigarette butt in his lower jaw, wedged in a space between two teeth. That was his trademark while giving haircuts at the barbershop. He had taken his last cigarette break.

Taus recovered a small Chicom machinegun. It had a folding metal stock and a short barrel, resembling a British Sten gun and would be useful to Taus because of its compactness. Taus did not have good feeling for the longer M16, which was awkward carrying on his motorcycle. His recent hand wound was from his own M16's bayonet. It made another weapon selection a good idea. The farther out Taus and Lockyear walked, the more dead bodies they encountered. Puff had done a devastating job.

When they returned, Lockyear noticed that Taus hand was covered with blood, and insisted that Taus go over to the base infirmary. Lockyear already had the Jeep's keys in his hand for the ride. Lockyear said, "You'll get your Purple Heart out of this one." Taus replied, "I've seen too many others who need their help; I don't need a Purple Heart." A medic from the nearby USAF Aeromedical Evacuation Team dressed Taus's hand wound and suggested Taus get a chest x-ray for the wound, which now sported a dark bruise.

### **Tilson Finally Left Vietnam**

Six days after the attack, Stanger boarded one of the first passenger flights out of Vietnam, still complaining about the delay. At the same time, on the other side of the main terminal, a Lockheed C-141 was loading with aluminum caskets, each filled with the body of an American serviceman who lost his life in the Tet Offensive. Colonel Tilson was among them. "Farewell and Godspeed, Colonel Tilson," Taus said to himself.

### **The Siege of Khe Sanh, January 20 to April 14, 1968**

Located 14 miles south of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) and six miles from Laos, Khe Sanh became one of the most controversial engagements the U.S. Marines fought in Vietnam. The Marines had established a forward staging area for patrols a year before the first battle, on January 20, 1968, when an intense firefight occurred between an NVA Battalion and the U.S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 26<sup>th</sup> Marines. That battle kicked off nearly three months of struggle for a desolate foothold in South Vietnam's I Corps. On January 21, 1968, the Village of Khe Sanh was overrun by the NVA and North Vietnamese long-range artillery fire destroyed the Marine's main ammunition dump.

An incessant artillery barrage followed for several weeks, keeping the Marines pinned in their trenches, while subsidiary battles waged for the hills surrounding the airfield. The Marine base had to be resupplied by air, while a massive U.S. bombing campaign began to destroy enemy positions around Khe Sanh Airfield.

Courier personnel received information, by word-of-mouth, from U.S. intelligence unit, on how the war was being conducted. Casual discussions with the intelligence gatherers filled the gap between what the news media, including the *Stars & Stripes*, reported, and the truth. The American command laundered the information provided to war correspondents, combined with the censorship by much of the controlled media, keeping the public uninformed about the terrible price paid for the decisions by White House politicians.

The local Armed Forces radio and television stations broadcast news only after carefully censoring information considered detrimental to the war effort, and reflected the official policy. The only South Vietnamese television station showed glorious victories, pretentious parades and cheering people, combined with visual propaganda interspersed with contrived dialogue for the masses.

### **U.S. Press Coverage**

At that time the local New York newspaper, *Newsday*, was not controlled by the government, and printed more of the truth, which wasn't complimentary to the war started by White House politicians. *Newsday's* publishers sent the paper free to military personnel in Vietnam, some of which showed the U.S. military personnel as aggressors, guilty of numerous war crimes, and fighting in an unjust war.

Once, while Taus was reading *Newsday*, he saw a picture of Lieutenant Michael Pollack who Taus knew at Pennsylvania Military College. Pollack had talked Taus into joining the U.S. Marine's Platoon Leader's Corps, the Marine's version of the Army's Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) program.

Taus and Pollack decided to take an Army Commission instead of staying with the Marine program, and Taus wanted to attend Law School after graduation. Pollack went straight into the Army. It appeared the more sane thing to do, rather than joining the Marines. Pollack devoted his free time at the academy working with underprivileged families in the depressed downtown Chester, Pennsylvania, area. The caption below his picture read:

*Lt. Michael Pollack, Graduate of Pennsylvania Military College, was killed-in-action on January 31, 1968. Lt. Pollack was the Commander of an Ordnance Platoon that had responsibility for explosives in the Long Binh Army base. A large Viet Cong attack during the Tet Offensive hit his positions. He valiantly evacuated personnel and attempted to stop the resulting fire when a massive explosion took his life. Pollack's courageous efforts lessen the loss of lives. He was awarded a Bronze Star Medal and a Purple Heart Medal, posthumously.*

Remembering that very day, Taus recalled he was at Tan Son Nhut defending the perimeter when the VC assaulted. The huge explosion that Taus saw in the distant came from the Long Binh Main Ordnance Depot, and it was in that blast that Pollack died.

Several weeks before, the *Stars & Stripes* reported an intense conflict in I Corps. The Marine garrison at Khe Sanh was facing a large-scale NVA force, infiltrating through the wide border areas of the DMZ. That area was defended by the Third Marine Division, which did not have the manpower to cover the entire DMZ. In the northern district of Quang Tri, heavy enemy contact was experienced as the NVA prepared for the upcoming Tet Offensive.

In late January, while duty officer at Tan Son Nhut, Taus received a frantic call from Pullins at the ARFCOSTA substation in DaNang. Pullins said the Marine position at Khe Sanh was under a heavy siege, and that one bombardment hit the Marines classified communications equipment, de-



stroying their ability to send and receive encoded messages. A stateside shipment was delivering another radio set for Khe Sanh and would be arriving soon at Tan Son Nhut. Pullins wanted the radio set expeditiously transferred on a flight going to DaNang.

Within four hours, the Courier Station at Tan Son Nhut was informed that a flight would be arriving from Tachikawa Air Force Base in Japan and had the priority equipment for the U.S. Marines at Khe Sanh. Taus immediately scheduled a courier officer to escort the classified radio device to DaNang, as there were no direct flights into Khe Sanh from Tan Son Nhut.

The USAF Military Airlift Command notified Taus that there were no flights scheduled for DaNang due to the heavy enemy attack throughout Vietnam. Taus then called MACV headquarters seeking assistance, receiving sympathy but no help.

Another call to the U.S. Naval Support Activity at Tan Son Nhut received the same reply. There was no way an aircraft could be freed for such a long-distance flight. Taus had one more card up his sleeve. A World Airlines Boeing 727 arrived at Tan Son Nhut early each morning from Japan, known as the Stars & Stripes flight since it delivered the newspaper from its printing plant to the troops. It made two stops in Vietnam, one of which was at DaNang.

When the World Airline jet arrived at Tan Son Nhut, Taus had the large radio crate, which weighed 802 pounds, ready to be loaded aboard the flight. An American civilian, who supervised the loading of the overseas flights, told Taus that he could not manifest the radio to DaNang because it was against regulations. "Stick your regulations! Marines are dying up there." Taus went directly to the captain of the World aircraft and informed him of the situation. The captain was a retired USAF Officer who understood the problem. "Sure Lieutenant. I'll take it and your courier too."

As the forklift eased the radio into the opened cargo doors of the 727, Taus was again confronted by the American civilian supervisor who was accompanied by his Vietnamese counterpart. Taus' appeals only served to create more animosity between them.

The cargo sat on the forklift as the aircraft started its engines. Finally the American supervisor said Taus could discuss the matter with the Deputy Base Commander who had an office near the terminal. Taus parked the ARFCOSTA truck in front of the 727's nose wheel and pocketed the keys before he went to see the commander.

Upon hearing the story, the USAF Deputy Commander sided with the civilian supervisors. "Listen Lieutenant, the Military Airlift Command in Vietnam provides in-country cargo transportation. Anything arriving from out-of-country cannot be bound for another destination in country, unless it's transferred to a MAC flight. Otherwise our agreement with the South Vietnamese requires us to place it on their civilian flights, Air Vietnam."

"Sir that doesn't make sense! The World Airline plane is headed north for another delivery at DaNang. That contradicts what you said!"

“Not really, Lieutenant. I see you are wearing a gold bar. You probably have less than six-months in the Army. You don’t understand the way things work.”

“I was commissioned three years ago. Whose side are you on anyway? U.S. Marines desperately need this equipment.” Tudor arrived, having been contacted by the airport authorities. He agreed with Taus’ position, but was more tactful. “I’ll handle this Rich. Please move the truck.” As Taus walked over to the aircraft, he saw a larger forklift prepared to lift his truck out of the way.

Back in the Courier Station, Tudor explained that MAC would schedule a special flight to DaNang. Taus volunteered for the mission. At 1 p.m. he arrived in DaNang with the radio. Pullins had another Marine Corp C-130 flight waiting. He asked Taus, “Will you take it on to Khe Sanh? We’re still short-handed here.” After a 30-hour tour of duty, Taus was exhausted. He asked Pullins why the C-130 Marine aircraft commander could not sign for it. “Sorry, Rich; regulations say that we must get the account on the ground to sign for it.”

The Marine C-130 crew chief bolstered Taus’ sagging morale, “You Army guys are alright. Thanks for the help. We have heard the story about getting this radio here.”

The short trip to Khe Sanh was made longer as the aircraft endlessly circled over Khe Sanh at high altitude. Both enemy and friendly artillery duels made any normal approach suicidal. Finally a lull came, and the crew readied the cargo for a low-level drop over the runway. “You can’t do that,”

Taus implored, “I need a signature from the ground unit for it.”

“Then hold onto the pallet. Lieutenant. We’ll drop you too.” The equipment may not survive the running drop. Taus added, “This radio is sensitive, fragile. It will shatter. This whole mission would be wasted!” The chief went to confer with the aircraft commander. The decision was made to land, but in darkness, which was an hour away. The C-130 continued to circle until darkness and then commenced a high-diving landing approach.

Once on the runway, it quickly taxied to an off-loading ramp.

The enemy expected it and begun an intense bombardment, with rounds hitting the landing aircraft and damaging the right wing and an engine. Risking their lives, Marines rapidly unloaded the cargo. Despite the damage to the aircraft and engine, the aircraft commander decided to take off. But their plans were halted by the right landing gear tires going flat and the runway pockmarked with craters. The aircraft engines were shut down and the crew ran to the nearest foxhole bunkers.

A direct hit on the C-130 left it a flaming wreck, but the worse was yet to come. An NVA Battalion launched a ground attack using the light from the burning aircraft as a beacon to guide them. In the foxholes with the Marines, Taus and the aircraft crew became riflemen. A Marine barrage whizzed rounds over their foxhole, slamming into the barbed-wire defensive positions. The NVA finally relented, and shadowy figures were seen retreating into the tree lines of the distant hill.

Able to move from their foxhole, the group found that the 800-pound radio was safe and operable. A Marine Corps communication officer noted that he was sending messages “in the clear” (unencoded). He said it was faster that way. Late the next day, the aircraft crew and Taus were returned to DaNang. They traveled with the wounded on a Med-Evac mission; the Marines who were killed in the attack waited in body bags for a later flight.

### **Operation Pegasus**

Operation Pegasus started in early April 1968, which was the Army’s First Cavalry Division and an ARVN Battalion fighting their way into Khe Sanh, opening up a ground route for resupply. These units were joined by the 9<sup>th</sup> Marines south of the Khe Sanh airfield, and by Easter Sunday, NVA forces were driven off a prominent position; Hill 881 North.

General William Westmoreland stated that Khe Sanh played a vital blocking role at the western end of the DMZ. Had the Marine base fallen, the NVA would have flanked Marine defenses in the buffer zone. Westmoreland’s MACV headquarters released estimates of enemy casualties as over 10,000 NVA soldiers, while U.S. Marines lost 205 troops.

There were parallels drawn to an earlier battle occurring on May 7, 1954; that was the last battle fought between French and Viet Minh forces at Dien Bien Phu, a tiny village near the borders of North Vietnam and Laos. Lacking both military and public support, the French garrison was overrun.

The American media started reporting the siege of Khe Sanh in 1968, describing it as an American Dien Bien Phu. It became a very hot topic at a time when the American public and world opinions continued to mount against the war.

The Siege of Khe Sanh ended with an American victory. But by June 1968, the Marine Base was abandoned as the American war plans shifted. The ground battle to stop the flow of enemy supplies down the nearby Ho Chi Minh Trail would be conducted from the air.

### **The Hoi Duc-Ank Orphanage After the Tet Offensive**

Madame Chuang Thu Ban was a robust woman in her late fifties, the director of the Hoi Duo-Ank Orphanage. Several days had passed since the Tet attacks began and since she last saw Taus. Although the road leading to the Cholon orphanage was closed by a VC Battalion that held the area, Taus tried to visit the orphanage, but was stopped by military police. Taus found a way around their roadblock, taking his motorcycle down another parallel street. He figured things must have settled down; he figured wrong.

Gunfire at Taus erupted from the second floor of a nearby building, causing the motorcycle to fall out from under him. Taus grabbed the Chicom machinegun, and using his motorcycle as a shield, pushed it in front of him until he rounded a corner. By then, the MPs were on the scene, and with the reinforcements, Taus decided to test the capabilities of the Chicom gun. He directed his fire at the enemy positions until his ammunition ran out. The MPs also directed their fires towards the same building. There was no return fire. A cursory search of the second floor found several dead Viet Cong soldiers. One happened to be carrying the same type of Chicom machine gun along with a vest of full magazines. Taus recouped the ammunition that he

had expended. Late the next day, Taus again tried to visit the orphanage. This time only a Vietnamese MP stood at the intersection where the firefight took place. He nodded his head that the VC was gone.

The Tet Offensive had shaken Madame Chuang, but she was still in control and happy to see Taus. She showed him the damage the orphanage had sustained when a rocket or mortar round landed inside, which injured seven children and two staff workers.

There was not much Taus could do. He reached into his wallet and handed Madame Chuang 10,000 pilasters, about \$100, his monthly donation. It did not seem like much to him, but it brought tears to her eyes and a smile to her face. Madame Chuang escorted Taus to her office to write out a receipt. It wasn't necessary Taus said, but she had to maintain records on all income lest the RVN government accuse her of some kind of illegal transaction. Corruption permeated the Vietnamese government at all levels.

Madame Chuang took the long way to her office, through the nursery to emphasize the need for more equipment and assistance. "Look, there are no mattresses for the toddlers and..." Her voice faded off as Taus saw three-year old, Tran Huu Can, the son of Colonel Minh. He stopped and stared at the little lost boy who was dazed. "What is it, Lieutenant Rich, Do you know this child?"

"Yes Madame. He's Colonel Minh's young son. They live right down the street from here. We learned from MACV headquarters, our Army command, that the colonel was killed-in-action a few days ago." Taus knelt down and picked up little Huu Can. "How did the child get here? Where's his mother?"

Madame Chuang explained that the VC attacked and infiltrated the area where Colonel Minh's house stood. The boy's mother took him to the nearby National police station, and then returned to her house to gather some personal belongings. Madame Chuang was not sure if the VC or a U.S. aircraft bombed the area, but the mother was killed at that time.

Taus knew it was not the Viet Cong that dropped the bombs. Perhaps, Madame Chuang also knew, but felt it better not to accuse Taus' fellow servicemen. During this time, a U.S. field commander made the infamous statement about the destruction of the Village of Bren Tre by the U.S. Air Force. "It was necessary to destroy the village in order to save it." It was applicable to Cholon as well."

Little Huu Can's hand touched Taus' chest. His tiny fingers following the stitches on Taus' nametag that read "US Army." Taus felt guilty and ashamed. The war had caused so much misery and sufferings to so many innocent people. It continued to extract a horrendous toll, and Taus was a part of it.

Madame Chuang broke the silence, "Let's go to my office. Take the child with you. He needs someone." She added, "I think you need him too. The boy was delivered to us yesterday by the National Police. They said he has no relatives."

Taus concurred, "Colonel Minh mentioned that to me when we met for dinner. He said his father, General Minh, was assassinated, along with other members of his family some years ago."

"If you want," Madame Chuang said, "I can help you adopt this child." Madame Chuang had political connections and was very influential among the numerous government ministers.

### **Courier Replacement**

One of the couriers, Lt. Steve White, was due for rotation to the United States, but instead of accepting it, he volunteered for in-country airborne training at the ARVN paratrooper school in Nha Trang, which necessitated extending his tour of duty in Vietnam.

Replacing White's functions at the Courier Station was Jason "Budda" Leader, who would be responsible for mission assignments. For one delivery, Budda had a large envelope addressed to a unit at Tay Ninh near the Cambodian border where the Courier Station had never delivered material. With the group of courier officers gathered in the station, Budda sensed everyone's question as to whom he would ask to deliver the package. Turning to Taus, Budda asked, "Do me a favor; either take the C-130 mission up-country, or deliver this damn envelope and establish an account with that bastard unit."

None of the other officers minded that Taus was given a choice. It was a choice between two equally unfavorable alternatives. Taus could avoid the day-and-a-half flight north and take his chances with a possibly shorter mission to Tay Ninh, 50 miles away. "No problem, Budda. I'll go to Tay Ninh. Where's the flight." "You gotta find one, Rich. Go across the airfield to our Army boys at the helicopter ramps. See if one of their choppers is headed that way today. I think they support units out there."

The Army flight operations officer at the ramp located a flight going to Tay Ninh, and told Taus to walk down the Army flight line and look for a Bell UH-1 Huey with the last three serial numbers of 0-0-7.

The Huey was already cranked-up. Taus stepped on the right forward skid to talk to the copilot seated inside. He was a young warrant officer whose large blue eyes bulged as he scanned the flight instruments. The loud turbine engine and rotating blades made it difficult for the copilot to hear what Taus was saying. Finally, the copilot nodded his head and yelled out, "Sure, hop in Lieutenant. We're ready to lift off now."

The crew chief told Taus where to sit as the high-pitched whine of the transmission, the noise from the engine, and popping noises from the blades reminded Taus he had forgotten his ear protectors. The copter skirted away at low level from the airbase darting past buildings and houses, which flashed under its body as it left behind the relative security of the airbase and its suburbs.

### **Helicopter Shot Down**

Rolling hills and occasional villages captured Taus' vision until the aircraft flew deeper into the countryside over open fields, before encountering a thick forest. Flying at 300 feet and 90 knots, the copter ran into a spray of automatic weapons fire, being hit several times. The turbine engine wound

down and a rapid descent followed. Seconds before impact, leaves and branches entered the cargo doors, followed by a hard impact, causing Taus' seat to collapse.

The two pilots were feverishly pushing buttons and turning knobs on the consoles and then yelled, "Get out." The crew chief quickly disconnected the M60 machinegun from the aircraft mount, carrying it outside the helicopter. Everyone gathered away from the crippled copter.

The pilot added that he had notified Tay Ninh of the downing and that help would soon arrive. The copilot's blue eyes bulged larger than ever as he strained to read his pocket compass and pointed out the direction to the base, which was wrong. The pilot moved the copilot away from the chief's M60 and the compass needle swung around another 45 degrees.

The aircraft was motionless on the ground; no smoke or no fire. The pilot decided to make another radio call. He told the crew chief to cover him as he ran back to the small clearing where the copter had crashed. It was a tense few minutes, but the pilot had gotten through the first time and a recovery ship was enroute. He advised them of enemy ground fires. The group then moved another 100 yards from the crash site to avoid Viet Cong that might arrive before the recovery ship showed up.

Several helicopters arrived, one, with an infantry rifle squad on board, while another Cobra Gunship flew overhead to attack any arriving Viet Cong. The helicopter on the ground unloaded the infantry rifle squad to secure the area, while another helicopter landed nearby, with another squad running to establish defensive positions.

With such a powerful force, the Viet Cong decided not to attack. One of the infantry Officers said a CH-47 Chinook would come in later to lift out the crippled copter. When Taus arrived back at the base, another helicopter was waiting to take him to Tay Ninh.

Upon arrival at Tay Ninh, an Army major greeted him and then opened the envelope Taus had delivered. After reading the contents, he told Taus, "Hear you had a little problem back there. Can't say losing a helicopter is worth what this envelope contained." Taus replied, "Or for the pain I have from the hard landing."

Right after eating lunch, Taus boarded another helicopter with several other troops. They were laughing and singing, as their year in Vietnam was ending. Taus did not join in their happiness as he switched from side to side, trying not to sit too long on his tender backside.

### **Operation Quyet Thanq, March 1968**

The intensity of the war could be measured by the amount of classified materials pouring into the Armed Forces Courier Station (ARFCOSTA) at Tan Son Nhut Airbase. An increase in the number of assigned personnel also occurred. The post-Tet offensive period was more active from an intelligence standpoint. USARV was trying to make the enemy pay, commencing new operations against known and suspected enemy positions. The soldiers in the field felt the pressure of the current efforts, became more cynical. They were receiving nothing from this war, not even the adulation of

their hometown friends, or the country that turned against the war. The GIs were ordered to wage the war by White House politicians.

Behind the legitimate authorities, a shadowy group orchestrated the war effort, consisting of the military-industrial-intelligence complex and the lucrative defense contracts. Former President Dwight David Eisenhower had warned the nation about the military-industrial-complex—to which he should have added the intelligence groups.

This cabal reaped huge profits from the sales of weaponry, enhancing their wealth through the sales of conventional arms for the Vietnam War effort. U.S. military personnel paid for this in lost lives and wounds. The “Grunt” in the fields knew little about financial matters, and some even thought the invasion of Vietnam was justified. The Vietnamese people, struggling to survive in their Third World country, were attacked by an overwhelming military force.

Seeing the havoc that war creates, the grunt was stuck on the frontlines where he saw his comrades-in-arms being killed. Physically, the grunt lived in the hostile environment of the tropical jungles. Emotionally, he felt the alienation from his fellow countrymen back home who opposed the war.

Mentally, he suffered the combat stresses and pressure of warfare.

A mixed group of America’s young men carried the real war burdens. Some came from the ghettos and slums. The war orchestrated by White House politicians, would shatter the ideals of those few who recognized the ugly nature of this morass.

### **Huge Increase in Sensitive Material**

The flow of sensitive materials through the ARFCOSTA increased in early March 1968, overflowing the station’s large vault. The larger crates and packages were placed in the station’s parking lot on aluminum cargo pallets and covered with heavy protective plastic tarps, being guarded round the clock by USAF security police.

The previous night’s duty was relentless as materials poured in and out. Taus had caught only a catnap during the past 30 hours. He was due to be relieved as the Station’s Duty Officer at 8 a.m. when Pullins arrived. Pullins was ready to return stateside as his tour of duty was nearly over. Because of his alcoholism, he had been reassigned from the DaNang substation. He still had a serious drinking problem, but at Tan Son Nhut he could be monitored by Tudor.

It was humid that morning. Most courier officers had already been assigned missions, and Taus was anxious to be relieved. He needed to see his French attorney who was handling the adoption of the Vietnam orphan.

Pullins, still feeling the effects of the prior night’s drinking binge, had just arrived and was standing at the station entrance. “What the hell’s all this material doing here, Taus! You’re supposed to move this stuff. What did you do, sleep all night? Didn’t you schedule any missions? I’m going to put you on a mission up-country to get rid of some of this mess!”

Tudor, who arrived earlier, overheard Pullins complaining. He stepped between the two Lieutenants as Pullins approached Taus. “Relax Pullins, Taus has been working hard. The materials just keep coming in.”

Ignoring Pullins comments, Taus briefed Tudor, "There's a big operation underway in Saigon's five surrounding provinces. We need to schedule a mission in this area. A lot of high-priority materials has to go immediately.

I don't have any other officers to use."

Looking at the office wall map, Taus pointed to the local area. "This is where we are conducting operations. MACV is trying to destroy the remaining enemy forces in this area of operation. It seems the VC is launching another attack. I'll take the mission. When I get done, I can stop off at the attorney's office and the orphanage."

"Fine, use my Jeep. Be careful, there still a lot of activity out there." Tudor then turned to Pullins, "You'll be taking the mission up-country. I'll handle your duty officer tasks today."

### **Commencing All-Out Assault on Enemy Positions**

The U.S. 1<sup>st</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions, along with ARVN Airborne Battalions and a South Vietnamese Marine Task Force, commenced an all-out assault on enemy positions in and around the Saigon area. VC and NVA

Forces from the Tet Offensive were not completely eliminated. The new counter-offensive was called Operation Quyet Thang and employed 22 U.S. and 11 South Vietnamese battalions.

Taus' body began to ache, and his mind was not alert, but the fresh air blowing across Taus' face as he drove the Jeep towards USARV Headquarters kept him awake. Grey funnels of smoke could be seen in the distance between the many houses and stores adjacent to the roadway.

The smoke clouds were more than the usual garbage burnings. Soft thuds could be heard, growing louder as the Jeep approached the first destination. Ahead, the sporadic clatter of small arms fires was clearly heard. An MP waved down Taus' Jeep and told Taus, "Better pull aside, Lieutenant. We got contact with Charlie up the road." The MP bent over the side of his Jeep with his glossy black helmet reflecting the sun's glare into Taus' blood-shot eyes. "Who's up there?" asked Taus, "Friendlies, I mean."

"The Two-Five's (25<sup>th</sup> Infantry) in contact with some VC battalion, I think, sir. I don't know if you can get through to them." Plumes of dirt and dust rose off the surrounding roadway and chips of stucco flaked off nearby buildings as scattered enemy fires peppered the area. Several bodies lay at the building's side. They were Vietnamese in black pajamas. "VC?" Taus asked the MP. "No, they lived there. See the dead kid, Lieutenant?"

Taus' eyes again reviewed the bodies, but his mind was not focused. It did not want to witness the scene. The child could have been 5 or 6 years old. A wooden toy truck rested on the ground near the child. It almost looked like the truck had sprung an oil leak. There was a pool under its wooden wheels: blood. The child would never again play with his toy truck.

Three Army ambulances approached from the road behind Taus, and stopped. A Medic jumped out from the first ambulance and asked the MP where were the wounded men. "There, by the dead gooks." In back of the building, which afforded more cover, were several Army soldiers. They were tattered and torn, bloodied and bruised. Several Medics ran over to them. One wounded soldier reached into the air with one hand, feeling for a



Medic, while his other hand held a head bandage that covered his eyes. The men were just doing their jobs on patrol and, in an instant, their lives had changed.

“Get some body bags. Tony. We got some dead here too,” shouted a Medic to his driver.

Taus informed the MP he had a mission to accomplish and would try to make contact with the 25<sup>th</sup>. As Taus continued on the road, the fading shouts of the MP could be heard, “Better be careful sir. Watch for our unit on the left-side...”

Less than a hundred feet farther, an Army Lieutenant crouched by the roadside, signaled Taus to halt. Taus jumped out of the Jeep and ran over to the Lieutenant’s position. The Lieutenant told Taus, “Where are you going? Charlie’s out there to the west.” He pointed his M16 Carbine to the left side of the road. Then he looked back at the Jeep, which contained several classified envelopes and packages strapped inside.

Noticing the Lieutenant’s interest, Taus said, “I’ve got some advertising circulars. Tan Son Nhut’s Main Base Exchange is having a big sale today. We wanted to get the word out to the troops.” The Lieutenant dubiously looked at Taus who apologized for his joke. Taus said, “Got to give your headquarters some battle plans. It looks like the VC have their own.”

Small arms fire then hit the Jeep, causing both Lieutenants to run for better cover. The road shoulder had a trench lined with troops, waiting for the Lieutenant’s next order.

“Open-up men! Jordan, come here with the radio.” A thin black soldier crawled over to the Lieutenant as he reached for the radio hand piece. “Green Balls, this is Green Two. Can you drop some Willie-Pete into....”

Jordan, the radio-telephone Operator, handed the Lieutenant a map. The Lieutenant quickly oriented himself and called out eight-digit coordinates.

As the troops were returning fire, projectiles started to zoom overhead. Impacting into the low lying jungle scrub off the road’s western side, approximately 200 meters beyond where Taus and the other soldiers were huddled. “Thump-Thump, Whack-Whack!” The concussions trembled the earth, jarring the men with each impact.

The salvos silence the enemy’s guns. The Lieutenant looked at Taus and said, “Gotta go now. Let me know about the next big PX sale.” He stood up and yelled out to his men, “Alright people, let’s go! Follow me!”

The Platoon slowly rose and entered the jungle. Taus went back to the Jeep that suffered several bullet holes and a busted windshield and continued his trip to the 25<sup>th</sup>’s HQS.

An Army officer at the 25<sup>th</sup>’s G-2 (Intelligence Section) accepted the parcels from Taus. After opening and reading the contents, he went over to a confidential trash bucket, disposing of the documents, he turned to Taus and said, “Same old stuff. We already got this information from an alternate source.”

Taus was upset. He didn’t mind making the deliveries, if they were necessary. “Say, what is this stuff? How did you get it?” At first he started to explain, then he paused and said Taus did not have a need-to-know.

“I and my fellow officers carry that thrash around this country, in and out of combat areas. We risk our lives. At any time, any one of us could open the packages if we wanted. And you are telling me, I don’t have a need to know?”

“Don’t get excited lad. I didn’t mean it that way. We receive the same materials through other command channels. We use your system as a back up. The response did not satisfy Taus. “I’ll have to report this to my commanding officer; there’s no sense in risking peoples’ lives for duplicate information.” Distraught and tired, Taus sat down for a few minutes and then fell asleep.

“Say lad, are you alright, the officer said as he nudged Taus about an hour later. Taus’ eyes opened, as he wondered what had happened. “Would you care to sack-out on the cot over there. Lieutenant?” “Thank you. But I’ve got to get going. How are conditions down Highway One and the surrounding area?” “It’s clear. There’s some action just north of Tan Son Nhut in an area where 48 of our troops were ambushed last week.”

Taus had planned to see the attorney concerning filing papers for the adoption, and to visit Hoi Duk Ank Orphanage. As he drove down the road, Taus passed the now silent battlefield and the building where the MPs had first stopped him. He could still see the bodies of the dead Vietnamese family lying where they fell, with flies swarming around them. Their limited time on earth had ended, Taus thought, as he again checked his watch. The Lord had given him another day. He would use it constructively and with the remaining time left, visit the nearer Go Vap Orphanage located a few miles outside of the Airbase.

The Courier Station supported the local Go Vap Catholic-run orphanage, managed and operated by Vietnamese nuns. SSG Lockyear introduced Taus to the nuns at the start of Taus’ Vietnam tour. Taus decided to visit and see if he could assist them in some way. But that day was the wrong day for a visit.

The G-2 was right. Another battle had developed a few miles away from Go Vap. Most Vietnamese had sought cover and the usually crowded streets in the Go Vap area were nearly empty, except for U.S. and ARVN troop units. This time no one warned Taus where to go. The fighting was in an urban battlefield among buildings and stores that made it impossible to clearly define the friendly and enemy lines. The VC had lodged themselves in the buildings.

Occasional small explosions and the crackling of gunfire were heard in the streets as soldier advanced. Go Vap was nearby, with an ARVN Medical inside the Go Vap gates. The orphanage had been hit by an errant round and the Mother-Superior was directing the ARVN medics. Taus parked his Jeep inside the large courtyard and asked, “What happened, Sister?”

“Oh Lieutenant, we have been bombed. My children have been hurt.” She pointed her hand to several waifs who were being tended by the medics. For some, it was too late. A round of some kind had struck the outside of a dormitory wall, killing six youngsters.

Assisting the ARVN medics, Taus bandaged some of the wounded. A young Vietnamese Lieutenant, the unit's commander, approached Taus. He was also a Catholic. "I am happy to see an American help my people, Lieutenant." Both officers, Taus and the Vietnamese, knew about the horrors of war.

Low-flying helicopter, with their weapons blazing, flew over the courtyard, causing spent brass shells to rain down upon the orphanage. As heavy gunfire came from nearby buildings, the ARVN commander decided it was time to go. Mother Superior suggested Taus return another time and Taus felt there was little he could do. He wanted to climb upon the highest building and scream for an end to this useless war.

Tudor was standing at the doorway of the Courier Station when Taus pulled into the gravel parking lot. "Are you okay, Rich? What in thunder happened to my windshield?"

"There's a few bullet holes in your seat and the floor board. I came under enemy fires on Highway One." Tudor received an intelligence report about the battle near the 25<sup>th</sup>'s HQS. He was glad to see that Taus had returned in one piece, and also happy his Jeep was still operational. Tudor added it was not a good day; "Pullin's flight went down near Ban Me Thout. We don't know if he survived. Daniels has gone up-country to check out the crash site. We can only wait."

The remaining courier personnel stayed at the station rather than return to their quarters. There was still the question of the nearby firefights in the Go Vap area immediately adjacent to the airfield's northern perimeter.

Around 1 a.m. the front door of the station rattled and a voice yelled out, "Let me in there, Dammit!" Patterson opened the door, revealing a disheveled Pullins with his right arm in a sling. His aircraft had taken ground fire, knocking out two engines, causing it to crash-land outside of Ban Me Thout.

"Where's Lieutenant Daniels," asked Tudor, "I sent him to fetch you." Pullins replied, "Yeah, yeah! He's right behind me, carrying the materials I could not deliver." Daniels walked into the station behind Pullins saying, "It was a pleasure to rescue you, dear. I found him alive because not even the Viet Cong wanted Pullins' ass."



Richard Taus and Mother, Yolanda Taus  
Pennsylvania Military College



Yolanda Taus  
Memorial Day Parade, Rockville Centre, New York 1985

## CHAPTER TWO

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### Adopting Vietnamese Orphan

Taus visited the Hoi Duk Ank orphanage after the Tet Offensive and found Tran Minh's son there. The Colonel was killed in battle a few weeks before. And his wife perished in the battle and bombardment of Cholon. The orphanage director, Madame Chuang, told Taus that Tran Minh's orphaned son had no living relatives, at least none that would claim him. Perhaps there was a fear, given the Colonel death in battle.

Madame Chuang knew the hierarchy in Vietnam political circles. Since she knew of Taus' interest, she suggested he adopt the child, taking the waif out of Vietnam. She told Taus to start the process by publishing a legal notice in the local Saigon newspaper. After several weeks, and if no relatives emerged to claim the child, she would send Taus to a French attorney, Jean-Pierre Lambert, whose offices were in downtown Saigon, knowing he would expedite the adoption.

Papers were assembled and the adoption process proceeded quickly, at least, on the Vietnamese side. It would take the intercession of two Presidents, Nguyen Van Thieu and Lyndon B. Johnson, to grant the adoption and immigration of General Minh's grandson into the United States. This was achieved by the issuance of a special parole by Attorney-General Ramsey Clark. The Special Parole was the same legal device used to allow Stelena Stalin, the daughter of Soviet Dictator Joseph Stalin, into America.

Simultaneously, Taus started applying for a passport and exit visa for the child. U.S. Immigration & Naturalization laws had a 1965 amendment that forbid single Americans from bringing back to the United States an adopted child. Taus' action set a new precedent for other single persons who wished to adopt a child from overseas. However, Taus had to clear several huddles in the process.

On the Vietnamese side, two rules needed to be overcome. In Vietnam, only married couples over 30-years old could adopt an orphan. An unwritten rule was that male children would be retained in country for use in the military forces. Attorney Jean-Pierre Lambert and Madam Chuang could obtain waivers on these two rules, provided President Thieu agreed. Taus had to seek an audience with the President of Vietnam, while the U.S. Embassy

discouraged any American from adopting a Vietnam orphan. Nonetheless, thanks to Madame Chuang's influence, President Thieu granted Taus an appointment, and waived Taus' age and marital status, paving the way for a Vietnamese family court to grant the adoption.

### **Help from Local Congressman**

On the American side, Taus' congressional representative, Herbert Tenzer, agreed to assist Taus. Tenzer was active in the post-World War II plan for European economic and social recovery. When the Second World War ended, the new U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall, developed an assistance plan and operation for Europe, known as the Marshall Plan, and Herbert Tenzer was the leading congressman who expedited its employment. Consequently, Tenzer was sympathetic to the plight of orphaned children.

He introduced a private bill into Congress to circumvent the restrictive Immigrant and Naturalization Service law on single parent adoptions. By the time Congress passed the private bill, Taus' tour of duty would end. Therefore, Tenzer went directly to his old friend, Lyndon Johnson and asked for presidential assistance.

President Johnson directed his Attorney General, Clark, to issue a Special Parole, designed to expedite the child's entry, overcoming all INS objections. Separately, Taus asked his U.S. senators for assistance. Neither Jacob Javits nor Robert Kennedy offered any help. Senator Robert Kennedy sent Taus a letter of support but was reluctant to interfere with a law created by his brother, Ted Kennedy.

Surprisingly, when Taus and Attorney Lambert showed up in the Vietnamese Court requesting an adoption decree, the Vietnamese judge agreed, providing that Taus let the judge keep the original letter from Senator Kennedy. Celebrity status was accorded the Kennedys by the Catholic Vietnamese in power. Taus was more than happy to give the letter to the Judge who immediately granted the adoption.

Taus had made many futile trips to the U.S. Embassy in Saigon along with other Americans, both civilian and military, trying to accomplish family matters, marriages and adoptions. The CIA-run Embassy was interested in other matters: warfare and drugs. But the U.S. Army was helpful; MACV headquarters translated the Vietnamese court adoption decree into English and Taus sent them to Congressman Tenzer. These papers were given to Attorney General Ramsey Clark, who immediately issued the Special Parole.

Finally, the American Embassy took notice and agreed to an entry visa for Taus' adopted son as Taus was approaching his return date from Vietnam. The Army allowed Taus to leave Vietnam early so that Taus could bring the child to the United States on the basis that Taus had a dependant and that dependents were not allowed in war zones. To leave Vietnam, a dependent required a sponsor; consequently, Taus would have to leave Vietnam with his child.

A call to Tudor, at the ARFCOS station verified that Taus and his adopted son could board the next day's aircraft returning to the United States. Attorney General Clark's office authorized the immediate entry of

Taus' adopted son, Tran. The military authorized Taus to return to the United States thirty days early due to him now having a dependent in Vietnam.

Taus said, "The government reasoned that my adopted son was in the Saigon shell area with no adequate health facilities nearby. They wanted him safe in the states."

### **Celebration at the Orphanage**

It was a cause for celebration at the orphanage, especially for Madame Chuang, when Taus came to pick up Tran Minh's son. The staff workers and orphans were pleased that at least one orphan was leaving for a better world.

During the months of work trying to adopt the child, one of the staff worker's sons had taken care of little Tran Minh when Taus was not there. As a result, Taus gave him his motorcycle as he departed the orphanage with the child. The trip back home was aboard a Braniff Airline.

From San Francisco, Taus took a United Airline flight to New York, where the news media was waiting. Upon arrival at JFK International Airport, Taus and his new son, who Taus renamed David, were hailed as celebrities. For the next several weeks, television networks and newspapers carried the story of an orphan coming to the United States from a war-torn country. Taus described to me in a letter, the reception he and David received upon landing at JFK International Airport in New York City.

*When David and I arrived at JFK International Airport, the media met us. It was 3:00 a.m. in the morning; after long air traffic delays (July 1968) that we finally landed. We were exhausted by the long trip. Plus David was still anemic from his ordeal. Newsday newspaper did several full-page stories on the adoption, along with the Long Island Press, New York Daily News, and others.*

*We appeared on NBC's Today Show, CBS' To Tell the Truth, and a host of other news programs. Plus, North German National Television did an hour-long documentary for their European program called New York, New York. People besieged us at home, complimenting us and wanting to see David.*

*Many asked about adopting. Another soldier, an airman, stopped at Mom's store and asked how I did it. That was John Wettinger, who started several orphanages in Vietnam and later went to Guatemala City and started more orphanages. I never met him, but it was nice to know that others would be encouraged and succeed in doing more good.*

### **Bright World for Vietnam "Dondi"**

Long Island's *Sunday News* article (September 8, 1968), titled, "Bright World for Viet's "Dondi," showed a front-page picture of David sitting on Taus' back as Taus was on all four on the living room floor. The article told about David's health when Taus found him in the orphanage: "He was almost four then, and on the orphanage's "death list." He weighed 20 pounds, boils covered his body and he was coughing blood."

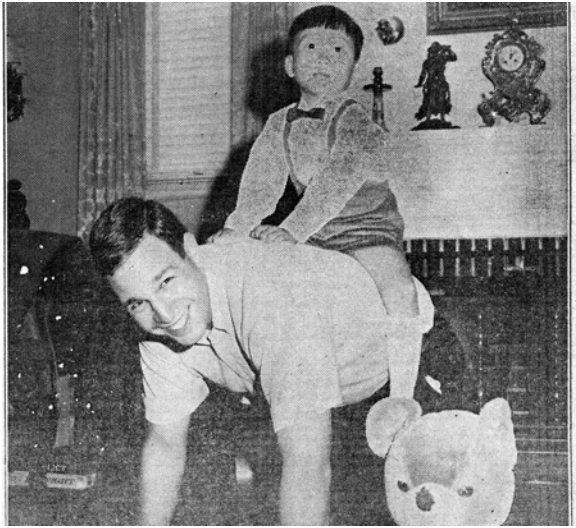
**Taus' Mother Cared for Tran**

Upon arriving in Long Island, Taus' mother, Yolanda, provided additional support for Tran. When Taus was ordered back to Vietnam, it was Yolanda who cared for the boy.

Taus' father, Maurice Taus, was a captain and infantry commander in the U.S. Army Infantry during World War II. While he was gone during much of World War II, Yolanda volunteered as a Gray Lady with the Red Cross, assisting wounded soldiers returning from the war.

After the war ended, Taus father served with the U.S. occupation forces in Japan. While Maurice was serving in Korea, Yolanda assisted with helping wounded military personnel at the First Cavalry Division located at Fort Drake in Japan.

After completing the first tour of duty, Taus was promoted to captain and sent to Army rotary-wing (helicopter) flight training. Yolanda provided full-time care for David when Taus was sent to his second tour of duty in Vietnam.



Newspaper picture of Richard Taus and the Vietnamese orphan,  
Shortly after arrival in the United States.





Richard and David Taus



David Taus in 2002

## CHAPTER THREE

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### Central America Operations

President Richard Nixon was involved in other global diplomatic initiatives besides Vietnam. The creation of agreements with the Soviet Union and the development of relations with Red China were political imperatives for Nixon, and events in Central America were given little attention. In 1958, Nixon went on a political trip to South America where he was met in Venezuela by an angry mob that besieged his limousine, shouting anti-United States slogans and damaging the car.

Things appeared calm enough in Central America in 1968. To insure it remained that way, another journey was planned for Governor Nelson Rockefeller of New York State. It was like throwing a bone to Nixon's Republican rival and fellow members of the Secret Elite. Rockefeller would be delighted to make the official trip, especially since his family had business and banking interests in Latin America. Rockefeller would make four trips and meet with foreign leaders, providing Nixon with recommendations for future actions.

After President Nixon's meeting with his National Security Council (NSC), his assistant for National Security Affairs, Admiral Rufus Lackland Taylor, was secretly instructed to mount a preliminary trip to Central America, seeking to determine the type of reaction Nixon would meet, trying to avoid any political miscalculations. This could have been accomplished through other U.S. government officials and agencies, but there were banking and business considerations affecting members of the power elite.

These interests had to be addressed without the appearance or knowledge of any outsiders. There were government officials and agents who might want to join the "loyal opposition" or provide them with sensitive information for their own personal gain. However, everyone's personal interests were the same in the Steering Committee, the group of Nixon's intimates that included Admiral Taylor, who could be trusted to handle the liaison trip.

Admiral Taylor's family roots went back to the American Revolution. His family had a long involvement in politics, and wealthy as a result. Tay-

lor had elected to join the Navy and continue the family's association with his political party. He would rise to a leadership position within the Steering Committee after receiving his first Navy star.

Attending the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Taylor exhibited tact and a keen sense of humor to accomplish his purposes. After 36-years of naval service, he was still active in the Navy's intelligence community (Office of Naval Intelligence—ONI). His last three years of government work was as a Deputy Director for both the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) and later the CIA.

### **Colonel Sturm**

Colonel Sturm was ambitious, but after 30-years in the Army, he felt left behind in his personal agenda for success. He stood 6-foot, 2-inch tall, in a thin frame. He had a short-fuse temperament. The office telephone rang and Sturm answered with a growl; his secretary, and sergeant major were on a coffee break. It was Admiral Taylor on the other end. "Jon, it's Rudy. Who pushed your buttons this morning?" To assuage Sturm, Taylor added, "I've got your nomination for a star before congress yesterday."

"That's great news, Rudy. It's just one of those days here, not much is happening now, but when things start happening, they all go wrong at the same time."

"You're right about that," replied Taylor. "If I'm not interrupting your plans for this evening, meet me at 7 p.m. It's important." Taylor did not have to mention where, they always had dinner at the Fort McNair officers' club when there was something important to discuss. Fort Lesley McNair was the home of the National War College, where there is taught a prestigious course for high-ranking military and naval officers. The Fort is located a mile south of the Capitol Building, alongside the Washington Channel as it flows into the Anacostia River.

As they sat for a few drinks, Taylor mentioned that both the NSC and the Steering Committee wanted to take a look at things in Central America before they send down a political entourage; the government didn't need another hostile reception. The Admiral had prepared a report explaining the mission and providing the names of foreign officials who should be contacted. "Get on it right away, Jon. We need this information now before State Department gets involved and an announcement comes out about the trip."

This left Sturm in an awkward position. The events in Vietnam had placed a serious drain on his operatives; they were in Southeast Asia, assessing and creating problems there. U.S. operations were also ongoing in the Middle East, in the communist spheres of Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and Red China. These operations drained Sturm's manpower pool and he had to go through personnel files for additional human resources. These files were supplied by Army Major Goulay.

As Sturm rummaged through his papers, he was looking at his heavily cross-indexed references of potential recruits familiar with Central America, and came upon Richard Taus' record. Major Goulay had captured a seemingly trivial piece of information concerning Taus' contacts with the Mayor of San Salvador, Jose Napoleon Duarte.

The Christian Democratic Party (PDC) was an emerging political force in El Salvador, the country that was believed to be the U.S. model for the "Alliance For Progress" program. That Alliance was created under President Kennedy in 1961 to stem the tide of communist influence in Central America, which was formed after Fidel Castro's rise to power in Cuba. The Alliance's 10-year program provided \$100 billion for economic development and reforms in Latin America.

Either the military or a ruling oligarch was in control of each country, hardly a desirable situation for the United States. These situations existed elsewhere and were tolerated as long as they supported the policies of White House politicians or CIA covert activities. Eight years of capital investments by the Alliance For Progress programs reflected dismal results for such large expenditures. Projected target figures fell far short of the intended goals. As had been done in South Vietnam, the United States assisted in the rise to power a person they felt would be supportive of U.S. interests: Jose Napoleon Duarte.

As Sturm reviewed Goulay's report on Taus, he noted the conversation between Goulay and Taus where Taus said he met some dignitaries from El Salvador, among them being Duarte, who had graduated from the University of Notre Dame and returned to the campus for a reunion in 1966.

Goulay's report continued, "Taus had befriended an undergraduate from El Salvador, who invited him to a university club meeting where Taus was introduced to Duarte. The report stated, "Taus said Duarte extended an invitation to him as an alumnus and friend to visit El Salvador." That was less than 3 years earlier.

From Sturm's depleted resources, he saw little alternatives but to approach Taus for service through another operative. At that time, Taus was the Executive Officer and Operations Chief of the Armed Forces Courier Station in New York City.

Relying upon another intelligence agent, Sturm contacted Greg Lawson, a Special Agent for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) at their New York Field Office in mid-town Manhattan. Lawson's loyalty was with the Steering Committee and he was not the dedicated field agent the Bureau imagined it had.

Most FBI Special Agents found it difficult making ends meet financially, working and living in "The Big Apple." Lawson had no such problems. He owned a twin-engine aircraft with full instrumentation, a colonial house in suburban New Jersey, a BMW sedan, and money enough to afford costly flying lessons.

With Lawson's costly assets it was highly probable that Lawson had a second job, which was forbidden by FBI Director Hoover, who felt that FBI agents should have only one master. Other idiosyncrasies Hoover exhibited included his lifestyle and his relationship to his constant companion, Clyde Towson, which some considered a homosexual relationship. Joining the FBI in 1928, Towson was appointed Associate Director of the FBI. Neither ever married.

Years earlier Sturm had earned Lawson's loyalty when Lawson was

loaned to the Defense Intelligence Agency. During a joint intelligence investigation, Sturm was the task force leader and his actions impressed Lawson.

Back in college, Lawson was actively recruited by a homosexual roommate who introduced the young Lawson to the college's Republican Party Club. By his senior year, Lawson was the president of the club and his name was forwarded to the more powerful county chapter.

From Lawson's standpoint, he appreciated being part of the ultimate intelligence circle which had a flare for adventure and intrigue. He was appointed a Special Agent in the FBI, a position that would prove useful.

Sturm had called Lawson on many occasions, and this time he asked Lawson, "Have any plans? I'd like to meet you tomorrow at the usual place." Sturm call was short. A prearranged meeting place was usually a luncheon at a midtown Manhattan restaurant.

Early the next morning, they met for the luncheon briefing in the rear of El Coyote Mexican Restaurant and covered some details about a trip to Central America. Sturm had several tasks for Lawson. "First, we have a person you need to recruit. Lawson listened as Sturm provided a scenario to be used with Lawson's introduction to Taus. "Lieutenant Taus handles government contracted commercial flights for the Armed Services, delivering classified materials. Identify yourself as an FBI agent meet him at the airport, get friendly with him." Taus' commander had worked for Sturm in the past, which would facilitate things.

Arrangements were made by the Commanding Officer, Armed Forces Courier Service in Washington, D.C., and Captain Howard Lloyd, Officer-In-Charge of New York's ARFCOSTA in Long Island City would instruct Taus to meet with Lawson at Teterboro Airport in New Jersey.

The Teterboro meeting provided Lawson and Taus an opportunity to get acquainted. It also provided an orientation ride for Taus and a chance for Lawson to determine if they could work together. Also, the opportunity existed for Lawson to suggest Taus take a trip to Central America, provided that Lawson felt Taus could be of assistance. Taus mentioned that he was interested in attending aviation training and becoming an Army pilot. After spending the day flying, Lawson called Sturm and said Taus could be used as a copilot.

Sturm contacted Taus a few days later and asked him if he was interested in taking a mission to Central America. Before Taus answered, Sturm offered a bone: "I spoke to Lawson about your desire to become an Army pilot. Since your Army records show you are qualified, I had orders cut for you to report to the Army Primary Flight Training Center at Fort Wolters, Texas on 26 May 1969. How does that sound?" It was just what Taus wanted to hear, thanking Sturm for the orders and agreed to the future mission.

### **First Central American Trip, 1969**

On the weekend, Lawson and Taus were flying out of Teterboro Airport, New Jersey on the first leg of their journey to Central America. Fort Wayne, Indiana was listed as the first fuel stop.

Upon landing, they were met by an elder statesman whom both Lawson and Taus knew. Lawson greeted him; "Professor Westlake, How are you?"

Lawson knew him years ago at a Virginia State Republican conference. Taus knew Westlake as his English professor at Pennsylvania Military College, since renamed Widener University.

“Gentlemen, Colonel Sturm asked me to meet you here and provide you with more input on this mission. It’s been years since we last seen each other.” Westlake possessed an uncanny memory for details.

With the social amenities out of the way and the aircraft serviced, they went to a secluded office for a briefing. Westlake said their next stop would be the U.S. Air Force Base in Little Rock, Arkansas. They would be met by Lieutenant Colonel James Osgood, who was stationed there as the Chief of Intelligence Operations. With the air of a university lecturer, Westlake could not help but include the economic and political realities in Central America in his briefing.

Finishing the briefing, Westlake turned the two flyers loose. On the flight to Little Rock, Lawson rehashed Westlake’s political observations on the future of Central America, combined with flying instructions. Westlake had told them that they would pick up another passenger who would be the team leader for negotiations: Nestor Sanchez, an aide to Westlake and a close personal friend of Anastasio Garcia Somoza, the Nicaraguan dictator.

The twin-engine Piper Aztec landed at Little Rock and was met by Osgood. As the aircraft was serviced, Osgood provided more details, with instructions to proceed to Mexico City and meet Nestor Sanchez. They then left for the flight to Mexico City, where Sanchez met them.

Sanchez who was very cordial, but when he spoke about the mission objectives, he became serious. His personality reflected the intensities of Latin emotions, which could be very compassionate and very cruel under the proper stimulants. “We have much to do,” said Sanchez with an anxious look. “That is why I arrived here earlier. Many people must be contacted, and arrangements made, before we begin our journey. We will be here for two days; no more. By then, arrangements should be completed.”

Sanchez was a team leader who was organized and took control of the situation. His black curly hair with its receding hairline looked like an abstract painting of the political realities in Central America. Both were dark, twisted, dense in some places, and sparse in others.

Walking with a slight limp, favoring his right leg, Sanchez’ labored gait led them to the customs area at the Mexico City Airport for a cursory check.

After clearing customs, Sanchez motioned them to a waiting taxi. “We’ll spend the next two nights at the nearby Hilton Hotel. You don’t mind?” Sanchez asked, as if their reply mattered. It was 2:30 a.m. when they finally went to their room. At 8:00 a.m. they received a wake-up call from the front desk, with a message to meet Sanchez in the Fiesta Room for breakfast at 9 a.m.

Sanchez was already having breakfast when the two entered the pale orange and yellow dining room. “Buenos Dias, Aviadores,” Sanchez said while dunking a glazed donut in his coffee cup. He spoke about the itinerary, waiting several seconds too long as half the donut broke away and sank to the bottom of his cup. Drawing a lesson from the social faux pas, Sanchez

noted, "When you think the situation is in hand, it just slips away. Our timing has got to be perfect, or the news media may distort our ambassador's visits to Latin America.

Here the analogy was correct. Ending the Vietnam War was still a campaign promise to be kept by the new administration in Washington. Nixon's other concerns dealt with the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT I) to be agreed upon with the Soviet Union. Meddling in Latin American affairs was not a high priority. Nonetheless, any potential damage or fallout from the trip had to be minimized, and any successes had to be capitalized.

### **The Itinerary**

According to Sanchez' plan, the trio would first travel to Nicaragua to solicit Presidente Somoza's support, then onto Costa Rica where some personal friends of Nixon would lend their assistance. Later, reversing their direction, they would head to El Salvador and Honduras. A stop at Guatemala was not seriously being considered. If they had enough time and if Guatemala's internal political situation was stable, then it would be included.

The Nixon Administration wanted to strengthen the Central American Defense Group. Nelson Rockefeller would also try to visit Venezuela, Chile, Peru and Colombia. A preparatory trip to those countries in South America was being undertaken by another liaison trip. Taus was more inquisitive than Lawson, who enjoyed the flying and did not question the reasons.

"Just what can I do?" asked Taus. "First, you can tell me about your friendship with Jose Napoleon Duarte; then you will have the opportunity to renew that friendship and help us as well," replied Sanchez.

Taus informed Sanchez that he met Duarte at the University of Notre Dame in the mid-1960s, and although it was only one meeting, Taus felt Duarte would remember him. "We had a very long discussion. Duarte understood my concerns for his country and invited me to visit him." Taus then asked, "One thing I don't understand, Mr. Sanchez, there are ambassadors and consul offices in each of these countries; are they aware of our activities?" Sanchez replied:

*It would be very hard to conceal it from them. The Presidents whom we visit may tell them about our meetings or an informant may very well reveal our plans. Therefore, our ambassadors and consulars are aware of this trip. They have been told it is designed to be a screen for them.*

*If things go wrong in the meetings or in the political arenas, the ambassadors can claim they were not a party to these affairs. On the other hand, we can deal with sensitive issues and, if successful, give them the credit. Another reason is that President Nixon wants his own men to research the situation. Many ambassadors will be replaced soon.* Returning to practicalities, Lawson noted, "We'll have to make a refueling stop before Managua," pointing to a navigational map of Central America.

Sanchez studied the chart and said, "Halfway between Mexico City and Managua lies Guatemala, unless you want to stretch it to San Salvador? It would be best to avoid both places, at least until we meet with our people in



San Jose.” Lawson then suggested, “We could fly due east and land at Belize, British Honduras. They are not a part of the five countries we are tarl.”

Sanchez agreed. Sanchez said, “You are aware of the turmoil in Guatemala last year?” Neither nodded as they looked back at Sanchez with blank stares.

Sanchez educated them on Guatemala’s current events.

*It is the most populous and economically powerful nation in the region. Presidente Julio Cesar Mendez Montenegro, a former attorney, walks a thin line between the right and left factions. For the ring wing, he allows the Army a free hand. There have been numerous assassination by the Army and, of course, retaliations by the leftist forces.*

*You fellows are paying too much attention to the U.S. casualty figures from Vietnam to notice the 28 U.S. soldiers killed in Guatemala. In January 1968, leftist assassins murdered Colonel Webber and Commander Munro, both U.S. advisors. You must remember the terrorist killing of Ambassador John Gordon Mein in August 1968?*

*Do either of you recall the Catholic Maryknoll missionaries that attracted media attention last year? They sided with the guerrilla movement in Guatemala against any U.S. involvement. There were several priest and one nun who denounced the United States and actually lived with the revolutionaries.*

*Presidente Mendez has given control to the Army to avoid being ousted from office by them. The Army is destroying the goals of the Alliance’s program. Army officers are becoming major landowners, contrary to the reform program, which has tried to return the land to the peasants. The Guatemala government accepts our money and arms, but does not heed our advice. A stopover there may be futile at the present time. That is why we shall leave them for last.”*

A long silence followed as Lawson and Taus absorbed Sanchez’ remarks. “Your check Senior,” a pretty waitress broke the silence. With their attention diverted, the trio smiled at the long silky black-haired seniorita. “Gracias,” replied Sanchez.

### **“Protection” Package**

“We shall refuel at Belize. For now gentlemen, I must make some more phone calls. We will meet back here at six this evening. Leave any messages at the front desk, but check with them every two hours.” Placing his hands on Lawson’s arm, Sanchez noted, “You will be checking the aircraft today.

Be there before noon, a courier will deliver a protection package. He will ask for a Senior Greco. You say that you are Greco’s brother, that’s all. Then he will give you the weapons.”

At 11:45 a.m. Lawson and Taus were at the airport checking the Aztec. A silver-blue Willy’s Jeep made a beeline for the aircraft and stopped within a few feet. Two Mexicans dressed in dark blue work clothes got out and asked for Greco. “Si, I’m his brother,” replied Lawson. A large olive drab canvas knapsack was pulled out from under the Jeep’s rear seat and handed to Lawson. It was heavy and rattled as he grabbed it. Just as quickly as the Jeep arrived, it departed, without another word from its occupants.

### **Combat Gun Loaded on Board**

Lawson climbed onto the right wing and opened the aircraft's door, placing the knapsack inside to examine its contents. Lawson retrieved two submachine guns along with extra magazines and cleaning equipment. He asked Taus if he recognized the weapons. "Swedish Ks," Taus said. "In Vietnam, the Green Berets, Special Operating Group (SOP) used them. It's a formidable close-quarters combat gun. Do you think we'll need to use them?"

"If we need them, we'll have them," Lawson remarked. "Do you know how to operate them?" he said, handing one to Taus, keeping it close to the aircraft's floor for concealment purposes. "Yes, I do. I am familiar with most weapons. Wouldn't Customs stop us if they search the plane?"

"They have been taken care of. They will be no problem." Lawson re-bagged the guns, storing the knapsack under an inflatable raft with the rest of the emergency gear. "An appropriate place," Lawson said. "It's certainly survival gear." The nearby airport chapel bells could be heard ringing out the "Angelus," a Catholic call to noon prayers.

At 6 p.m. Lawson and Taus were back at the Fiesta Room looking for Sanchez. The room was dark and empty. A Hispanic waitress informed them it was used only for breakfast, and escorted them to the main dining area in the Ambassador Room, where Sanchez was seated in the large dining area that contained flags and banners of different countries.

At dinner, the conversation covered the final preparations for the trip. Sanchez was worried, as he was unable to contact his man in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. "There is a problem, I fear."

The Honduran Army was in control, like so many of these countries. The wealthy landowners had organized a group called the "National Federation of Agriculturalists and Cattle Ranchers of Honduras" (FENAGH). Both the Army and FENAGH opposed the rebelling peasants. An influx of poor landless Salvadoran refugees from that country's beleaguered economy was creating more unrest by competing with the native Hondurans. Sanchez said he would try and contact his man the next day.

The Mexican enchiladas and the hot chili sauce had the trio asking for more ice water. "Montezuma's Revenge" may have been the blame for the symptoms surfacing later that evening, making for a restless night, which was made worse by a 4 a.m. call from Sanchez. Explaining that a new development had occurred, Sanchez told them to get ready for departure and meet him in the hotel's lobby in an hour.

At 5:00, Taus and Lawson met Sanchez, who told them, "Presidente Somoza is available later this evening for our visit. Tomorrow Somoza will be leaving Nicaragua. We must see him before he departs."

### **Belize International Airport**

A refueling stop was planned in Belize. While enroute, Sanchez told them about the strong support President Nixon was receiving from Somoza. Nixon had been given substantial personal funding for his presidential campaign from Somoza. Sanchez remarked:

*I believe Somoza is traveling to Washington tomorrow for just such a purpose. President Somoza has been successful in suppressing the Sandinista revolutionary movement in Nicaragua. He will ask Nixon for continued military and economic help."*

**"Take-Off Power!"**

Still feeling queasy, Lawson told Taus to take the controls as they approached Belize. Taus would make the landing, part of his on-the-job training. The narrow landing strip was surrounded by jungle, with only a few structures and a single-story terminal. As Taus settled the aircraft down, Lawson yelled out, "Take-off power!"

Taus did as instructed, and pulled the power levers back. Taus did not see an oxen approaching the runway and simply complied with Lawson's command, closing the throttle for a landing. Fortunately, the oxen caught sight of the aircraft and stopped short of the runway, allowing the aircraft enough clearance to avoid a collision. As the Aztec taxied to the terminal, Lawson complained, "Don't you know what 'take-off power' is? It's not take-off power!"

"Come again," said Taus knowing Lawson was displeased, but still not understanding the explanation.

"Take-off power is full power for flight, not closing the throttle for landing. I guess it's confusing," Lawson admitted. Both aviators were exhausted. Their digestive systems were still in an uproar. The aircraft neared the small dirty white building, which had a large sign on the roof, proclaiming in peeling yellow and blue letters the words, "Belize International Airport."

**"Take Off Power" Problems At United Airlines**

The problem with the "Take-off-Power" command is one that I recognized years earlier while I had the government's aviation safety responsibilities for the most senior program at United Airlines. I recognized the confusion from using that command, and recommended to United Airlines that the term never be used. The proper command for max power should be "max power" and not "take-off-power." The FAA had the authority to force United to change that terminology that could have fatal consequences, but did nothing. United management came back and stated they would not change as it would be confusing if, and this is no joke, if there was a pilot in the cockpit by the name of "Max."

**Parking at the "International" Terminal**

Taus taxied the aircraft at the terminal and Sanchez jumped from the three-foot high wing onto the pavement, causing his right leg to collapse at the knee and falling on all fours. Picking himself up, he dusted himself off after saying a few unintelligible Spanish words, adding, "That's all right.

I'm fine. I'm just not very good at jumping off airplanes."

Lawson, who held his sore stomach with one hand, motioned Sanchez with the other, saying, "It's a good thing you aren't a parachutist." Sanchez acted as if he were going to say something, but bit his tongue instead.

Inside the terminal they met the airport manager, who was casually attired in a wrinkled and faded sports shirt. The Customs agent was dressed in an old soiled and tread worn British Army uniform. In England's controlled

colony, no political favors were prearranged to expedite the stopover. Luckily, the authorities were not concerned with inspecting the aircraft or the purpose of their trip. They were interested in being paid-off. They were charged a \$50 landing fee, a mild bribe that would guarantee their safe departure.

While waiting for the fuel truck, the airport manager asked for a second \$50 payment for the departure fee. Taus asked Lawson what they were being charged for. The black airport manager heard his question and noted the use of their airport facilities and the fire truck on alert by the runway. There was no fire truck in sight. The manager added, "Our Legislature imposes the fees."

Then the manager held up an old tin coffee can with a slot in the top. He shook it like a piggy bank and said, "This is our Saint John's College Fund. Senors; would you care to contribute to our nation's future leaders. We are a very poor country." Sanchez handed over another \$50. "Gracias Senors.

Your aircraft will be ready immediately."

The stopover lasted less than an hour and the trio was airborne again, heading to Managua.

### **Nicaraguan History Lesson**

Given the nature of their sensitive diplomatic mission, Sanchez was compelled to provide detail information to Lawson and Taus. This should avert any miscalculations either in the air or, more probably, on the ground when they spoke with foreign government officials. Sanchez also wanted them to have an appreciation for the political situations based upon these nations' troubled historical backgrounds.

Since the first stop would be Managua, Sanchez proceeded to expound on its past.

*Our friend Anastasio Garcia Somoza is confronted by the National Sandinista Liberation Front. The NSLF was founded in Cuba in 1961 and has backing from Fidel Castro. In 1966, they started an urban terrorist campaign in Nicaragua. We recognized the threat they posed to Somoza's Regime. By 1967, the United States had sent 25 military advisors and spent \$1.2 million for their annual defense budget. We feel our military relations with them are the closest in the hemisphere.*

*You see the NSLF got its name from Augusto Sandino who fought a guerrilla war against the U.S. Marines stationed there in 1927. Sandino was a nationalist and wanted to end U.S. intervention. He hated the influence the U.S. had in his country. As a young man, he had worked for several U.S. companies. The experiences fueled his anti-yankee feelings.*

*He became very popular with the peasantry. They were taxed by the Somoza government and received little to no services such as road works, schools and hospitals. The peasants of both Nicaragua and Honduras provided food and shelter to Sandino's men.*

*That little war can be compared to the present situation in Vietnam. Its similarities with the Viet Cong are striking. Like the VC, the Sandinistas of the 1930s and the present NSLF live off the land with the support of the rural people.*

*Our government feels Somoza is supportive of our interests and politically stable. The Alliance For Progress has invested over \$50 million, more than any other Central American country. There are problems now with the economy. I feel those problems will escalate. We need Somoza's help in Central America and we must find out what we can do to assist him.*

“I hate to sound I,” apologized Taus, “but how is it that the common people are against the America?” Sanchez quickly corrected Taus, “My friend Richard, they are Americans too! You see how egocentric our culture has become, to consider only us as Americans. There are Central Americans, South Americans and North Americans. In fact all Mexicans and Canadians are Americans.”

“Yes, I understand your point,” conceded Taus. “But shouldn't Americans, that is, citizens of the United States support the people instead of a dictator? That's what we traditionally do. Isn't it?”

“Not quite, my young man,” counseled Sanchez. “There is a split personality here within U.S. capitalism. Nowadays we look for stability in these countries because our economic interests are there. A revolution creates instability. We don't know what the rebels will do if they win. After all, the dictators have supported U.S. capital interests. We feel the revolutionaries will target both the regime and the U.S. which supported the government.”



Refueling Piper Aztec during Central America trip

### Approaching Managua

Approximately 60 miles northwest of Managua, the mile high volcano, San Cristobal, was visible. The volcano belched white smoke signals from its active interior. The three million people of this Alabama-sized country had been subjected for years to volcanoes and earthquakes as crustal plates grind and shift beneath the earth. Of more than 27 volcanoes on the Pacific side of Nicaragua, eight were active. The geothermal energy and available hydroelectric power were virtually untapped.

Sanchez leaned forward from his rear seat in the Aztec to brief Lawson and Taus further on Nicaraguan politics.

*Our presence in Nicaragua dates back to 1909 when President Taft sent in U.S. Marines to intervene in the power struggle between the liberal government and revolutionary conservatives. The liberal ruler, Jose Santos Zeiaya, wanted a five state federation, uniting the Central American countries into a union. Zeiaya was brutal in persuading others to cooperate with him. Our State Department admonished Zeiaya for creating turmoil and tensions in that region. Also of concern to us, was the prevention of the construction for another inter-oceanic canal through Nicaragua that would compete with our Panama Canal."*

Reminding the two about the importance of Nicaragua in the overall U.S. programs for Central America, Sanchez noted, "Presidente Somoza's father came to power in 1936. The Somoza family has extended their hands to U.S. in friendship and have done things on our behalf down here."

Sanchez did not explain what "things" he was talking about. "As I mentioned, there is the possibility of another canal between the two oceans since this country has excellent internal waterways."

Radio contact was established with Managua Tower, and the landing-approach began. The international airport at Managua lacked the amenities of the larger stateside air terminals, but it was a far cry from the remote jungle outpost at Belize.

As the engines were shut down, a black Mercedes limousine stopped near the aircraft, and behind the Mercedes were two military Jeeps with armed soldiers. Two high-ranking Nicaraguan National Guard Officers got out of the limo and greeted Sanchez. Apparently the higher-ranking officer personally knew Sanchez, as they warmly embraced each other.

Lawson and Taus rode in the rear of the limo as Sanchez sat with the two officers engaging in a continuous dialogue. After several minutes, Sanchez turned around and informed Lawson they would be staying at the National Palace that evening and dine with Somoza.

The escorting Jeeps sped ahead of the Mercedes as they passed the Cathedral of Managua. Turning a corner, the lead Jeep approached sentries guarding the entrance to Somoza's city residence, causing the guards to immediately open the gates.

The bronze letters of "Palacio Nacional" were imbedded across the classical Greek stone front portico. With its many long white columns and neo-federalist architecture, the building could have been a city bank in the United States.

### **Meeting Somoza**

The ranking Nicaraguan officer was a general, who escorted the three into the front doors of the palace, taking them to a large office deep inside the building. Within minutes, Presidente Somoza entered the office. Everyone rose to his feet and the general saluted saying, "Buenos diaz, Tachito!"

Somoza extended his outstretched hand to his general while looking past him to Sanchez. "Nestor! How are you my friend?" greeted Somoza. "I am headed to your country tomorrow to see Richard Nixon. We have much to discuss." Somoza motioned the group to sit down.

"Our currency, the cordoba, is not as strong as it used to be on the world financial markets. Our increase in cotton corps has weakened our grain output. The attempt at changing the economy has not been successful. There is a labor surplus and many people are landless. We are importing too much and creating a large foreign debt." Then Somoza turned to his accomplishments, "We have beat the communist rebels in the fields."

There were no other achievements to mention; even the rebels were not finished. It was apparent that Somoza needed economic assistance and would visit Nixon for that purpose.

Sanchez also began his plea for assistance; "Your friend. Governor Nelson Rockefeller is planning a trip to Central America soon. We shall need your help." The many details of the conversation were agreed upon and the general, identified as Jose Rodriguez, was told to implement them.

During the conversation, Taus commented on Somoza's military education. "I understand you attended La Salle Military Academy at Oakdale, Long Island, and then West Point."

"Si, it provided me with an excellent background. In fact, many of my National Guard officers are being trained by the United States. All of my officers attended the "School of the Americas" in your Canal Zone. Central American countries are experiencing their own brand of Vietnam here. We need strong armies to stop these communist revolutionary activities."

Part of Sanchez' message to Somoza rested in President Nixon's Doctrine of 1969 to lessen the U.S. role as a world policeman. Sanchez told Somoza the U.S. would back him in Central America to keep order. The evening was short, as Somoza planned an early morning departure. Everyone retired early to be on hand.

Breakfast was served at seven in the presidential palace. There was little conversation; Somoza was not a morning person. The trio followed the presidential motorcade to the airport. After Somoza's airplane departed, Sanchez told Lawson and Taus that they were expected in Costa Rica to meet Jose Figueres Ferrer, nicknamed Don Pepe, a former presidente who may control the ruling political party.



President Anastasio Garcia Somoza

### **Liberal Costa Rica**

As their aircraft departed Managua, Sanchez started his briefing again from the rear passenger seat. “Now my aviadores, we have a difficult situation to confront. Historically, Costa Rica is a true democracy and, as you have seen, Nicaragua is a dictatorship. Politically Figueres is a liberal while Somoza is a conservative. As long ago as 1947, Figueres signed the “Pact of The Caribbean,” an agreement with Guatemala’s liberal Presidente, Juan Jose Arevalo, to rid Central America of its dictators.”

### **No Mention Or Record of Prior Stop**

While enroute, Sanchez said:

*Arevalo was very much like the liberal Figueres. They both despised Somoza. Back in 1945, Arevalo was Latin America’s best-known liberal official who wanted to create a democratic regional union for Central America. That confrontation between the two political extremes still exists today. Therefore, no mention can be made about our stop with Somoza.” Destroy any receipts or flight records you have of our stop in Managua.*

As all the papers, receipts and records were gathered together in the cockpit, they were ripped into small pieces. Lawson slowed the airspeed and placed it into a slight sideslip as he opened the small vent window; in that position,



he shoved all the incriminating paper out of the aircraft. Sanchez then continued his description of current events:

*Figueres' party is the "Partido Liberation Nacional" PCN. It is a liberal democratic organization. Costa Rica is the true model for the Alliance For Progress envisioned by President Kennedy. However, the United States has selected El Salvador for that title. In any case, Presidente Francisco Jose Orlich Bolmarcich is now in charge of Costa Rica. Orlich's party is the same, PCN. There is a disagreement between the two factions within the PCN and Figueres is on the other side. Last year the PCN split as a result of the economic crisis in the country.*

*We are not happy with Orlich's economic policies. The country is bankrupt now. You know what that means to U.S. banking interest. We expect the people to nominate Figueres and vote him into office in the 1970 elections. We will need to deal with him and what we consider his radical social ideas, which could conceivably include future trade with the Soviet Union.*

*The problem with Costa Rica is that half of its national budget is spent on education and the remainder on social reform programs. Yes, Costa Rica has the highest literacy rate and the highest national debt in Central America. The United States started cutbacks in its foreign aid to Costa Rica as early as 1965.*

Taus summarized Sanchez' thoughts:

*You mean the United States is providing the dictator with millions of dollars to conduct a conservative fiscal policy that represses his people. While in Costa Rica, the United States is chastising the liberal democratic government because of its vast social reform programs. And these programs are part of the Alliance For Progress goals, aimed at helping the common people."*

Sanchez replied:

*Exactamente, Senor Taus, but you fail to understand that the United States is a capitalistic society, not a socialistic one. Naturally, we endeavor to help our fellow man. But there are limits to social programs. Few business profits can be gleaned from such an altruistic approach. We must deviate from charitable philosophy to political reality and concern ourselves with the situations we face."*

Flying at about 14,000 feet, everyone was breathing hard, causing Lawson to reach for the portable oxygen tanks and masks. "We cannot go much higher without using them," Lawson explained. "To avoid these mountains, means we have to climb beyond the limits of a safe oxygen supply."

Compared to Nicaragua, Costa Rica is less than half the size, but with nearly the same sized population. Costa Rica has a more even distribution of wealth, as well as having been a democracy for close to a century.

Sanchez met Presidente Orlich without Lawson and Taus due to gastro-intestinal problems. Taus knew Sanchez had contacted the U.S. Embassy in San Jose first and probably took the Ambassador to the Presidential meeting. Meanwhile, Lawson and Taus remained in the downtown San Jose Hotel room after being treated by a physician for their stomach cramps.

Later, Sanchez managed some other negotiations with private business interests, reputedly close personal friends of President Richard Nixon. By the next day, Lawson and Taus had sufficiently recovered to accompany Sanchez on his next diplomatic visit, which was to the country's leader of the liberal party, Don Pepe Figueres.

As the city taxi drove them to Figueres' office, Taus noted the similarities of San Jose to its U.S. city counterparts. San Jose was known as the Star of the Meseta Central. Its urban architecture was modern. Advertisements covered most storefronts. There was little Spanish quaintness to be seen. There was a bustle of activities in the cosmopolitan city containing many ethnic groups.

Unlike other Western Hemisphere countries, blood ties remained strong. There were some exceptions; the Mestizos, half-breeds, melted together as social equals. The typical stateside fast-food restaurants were in abundance:

McDonald's, Kentucky Fried Chicken, and others. The smell of Spanish food was experienced as they passed the Miercado Central marketplace. Still feeling the effects of the bad water, neither Lawson nor Taus were hungry.

Before arriving at Figueres' office, Sanchez mentioned that his visit earlier with Presidente Orlich did not go well. Sanchez was upset over that encounter and sounded like a scolding schoolteacher as he warned Lawson and Taus about saying anything dealing with Somoza to Figueres.

At 63 years old, Figueres was in the lumber business, and politically active. He looked more like the owner of a mom and pop candy shop than the leader of his country's liberalism, a party that came to power in 1947, associated with over 2000 deaths.

The informal meeting revealed the opposite political sides which Sanchez and Figueres represented. Figueres said he would campaign against Orlich because of the split within the PLN due to the economic problems.

Sanchez alluded to contacts with Nicaragua, but avoided any specifics.

Figueres said, "The United States can begin by guaranteeing me more financial assistance and stop punishing us for our liberal views." He warned about making a deal with the Soviet Union:

*It is in my country's best interests. You know the dictator Somoza is allowing conditions to develop in his country for revolution. Nicaragua will soon have a civil war.*

*We are a middle class society here. We do not want communism to take root here, but U.S. economic policies must change. I cannot understand how the U.S. can support a dictatorship, which is a breeding ground for communist insurrection, while not more actively supporting our true democracy. I think it is because you know we are in your hip pocket. No?"*

Carefully answering, Sanchez stated, "The United States does not take any of its friends for granted. I am here to listen to you and offer you guarantees."

"Buenos, Embajador!" resounded Figueres, knowing that this meeting had reached the bargaining stage. Figueres was direct, "Now, what do you want from me?"

“Assurances, Don Pepe.” Sanchez told him about Nixon’s plan to send Rockefeller to Latin America. The meeting was ended with an agreement.

At San Jose Airport as they prepared to leave, Sanchez said to Taus, “I will take his [Figueres] requests back to Washington with my recommendations. President Nixon must approve any negotiations. Figueres should be satisfied with Nixon’s response otherwise we would not have made this trip.

Figueres knows that.”

The Piper Aztec took off and headed northwest for its next stop at El Salvador.

### **San Salvador, El Salvador**

During the flight, Sanchez said:

*Presidente Orlich could easily pass for Figueres’ older brother. While you both were suffering from abdominal pains, I met Orlich in his office. As he sat under a portrait of Simon Bolivar, I felt Orlich would meet the same fate as Bolivar.”*

Taus asked for an explanation, “How’s that?” Sanchez responded:

*Bolivar was called the liberator of South America. He freed Venezuela, Peru, Colombia, Bolivia and Ecuador from the yoke of the Spanish Empire in the early nineteenth century. He was too ambitious though. He wanted to create a confederation of Hispanic American countries in the 1820s and he held a congress in Panama. It failed. Later, he tried again to achieve a union called the Federation of the Andes. That also failed. Bolivar’s problem was his failure to recognize the forces of nationalism in the Latin American countries. Bolivar was ousted from power and died shortly thereafter. In time, his legend grew and he became known as the “Hero of Latin American Independence.*

*Orlich is not as ambitious; and, it is a different time. Yet Orlich was Figueres’ candidate in the 1962 election there. Remember it was Figueres that had befriended Guatemala’s Presidente Arevalo who wanted a union of Central American countries. Unfortunately for Orlich, Costa Rica is living beyond its means and the economy has slowed down. I understand some government workers have not been regularly paid due to the financial crisis.*

Changing the subject, Sanchez said:

*But of more importance is our mission to El Salvador. The smallest country in Central America. It is less than half the size of Costa Rica and has twice the population, making it the most crowded. In charge is Presidente Fidel Sanchez Hernandez, a former Army colonel. And before you gringos say anything, he is not related to me!*

*Presidente Sanchez Hernandez acts solely on behalf of the ruling wealthy oligarchs. They do not want to share their fortunes with the masses. He was selected by another corrupt former leader, Colonel Julio A. Rivera, who was encouraged by the U.S. Military Mission in San Salvador and recognized by President Kennedy in 1962.*

*It is President Nixon’s decision on how to handle these rulers, not ours. In fact, Nixon will be making an announcement on his new foreign policy dealing with these countries later this year. That is part of the*

*reason why we are down here. I can only suggest to you again that the United States cannot afford to be a world policeman. We must deal with other governments realistically and protect our own national interests."*

Taus responded, "You mean capitalistic interests!" Sanchez responded, "Yes, call it what you want," chiding Taus, "As one gets older, he understands these are our interests too."

Carefully omitted from Sanchez' statement was his meeting with some of Nixon's personal friends prior to Sanchez' meeting with Orlich. That previous meeting dealt with private business interests that really were not particularly concerned with the plight of the people. The social reform programs were hurting them and this needed to be addressed by both countries' administrations. The diminishing amounts of U.S. foreign aid dollars also brought out the fears of these private businessmen. At this point, Sanchez stayed mute, knowing that such information would only further distress Taus.

Lago de Ilopango reflected the shimmering setting sun as the Aztec neared the Salvadoran's capital airport. Lawson had been quiet for much of the trip. As sunlight slowly stretched across his face and faded into shade, Lawson removed his sunglasses.

As the medication started taking effect, Lawson, who had sat relatively quiet and not interested in the political climate, but rather the possible use of the weapons, said, "Except for Costa Rica, we are facing dictatorships ruled by Army officers. Sanchez responded:

*We are encouraging them to hold free elections, but it is very difficult for these men to give up their power. Presidente Sanchez Hernandez has pledged agrarian reforms, but he told us privately that he will not interfere with the only wealth his country possesses in the form of the large estates. I don't think he will remain in power if he did. Again the military rulers support the oligarchy and many become a part of it. Military coups and juntas do not help the average Latin American."*

"You want to take it again. Rich?" Lawson said while releasing the control wheel and tiring from the current affairs lecture.

Arrangement had been made for the trio to stay at the San Salvador Intercontinental Hotel. Sanchez met with his namesake Presidente the next morning. Later in the afternoon, Sanchez returned to the hotel and in the dining room they all got together for a late lunch. Taus asked how the meeting went.

*Fine, but this man does not have much substance. He lacks any structure. He's spineless. We need to talk with Jose Duarte, the Mayor of San Salvador. He leans much more to your way of thinking. Rich,"*

Sanchez was encouraging Taus for a special reason. "This is where your friendship with Duarte may payoff. He's apt to listen and trust your feelings more than my promises. You must be careful though; Duarte is very powerful here. He can influence the Presidente and will be running for election in the near future."

"We will meet him at five this afternoon," Sanchez noted. Still speaking to Taus, "Your acquaintance with him in the past must be exploited. Tell me

all you remember about your 1966 encounter with Duarte at Notre Dame University. Taus recalled Duarte's catholic sentiments on helping the needy, his moral conviction of service to others and his interest in the Boy Scout program.

Lawson asked, "Maybe Duarte was just saying what the Notre Dame audience wanted to hear?" They were all aware that even a chameleon could change its colors to suit the situation. "Perhaps so," Sanchez agreed, "but we need to work from some common grounds."

"He appeared quite genuine to me," as Taus reinforced his opinion. "His sincerity was evident when he emotionally addressed the Notre Dame assembly." "Good," remarked Sanchez, feeling Taus' firm position on Duarte would contribute to a successful visit.

Mayor Duarte wore a gray business suit at San Salvador's City Hall. The trio arrived at 4:45 p.m. for the appointment and sat down with Duarte in his office. Surrounding Duarte's desk were memoirs of his Boy Scouting past, a family picture on his desk, diplomas on the walls, including one from Notre Dame, and a three foot long black baton with a gold cap; the symbol of his office as mayor. He spoke first, "I recognize two of you," referring to Sanchez and Taus.

The introductions were made by Sanchez. As Taus shook his hand, Duarte smiled and embraced Taus, saying "My Fighting Irish, Graduado!" The discussions initially centered on both Sanchez and Taus' recent past, as Duarte tried to update himself on their activities. Sanchez told Duarte that he had met the Presidente earlier in the day. "Sanchez Hernandez has expressed great concern over the dispute with Honduras. He said he would institute agrarian reforms to accommodate the peasants. Can you explain the difficulties here?" Duarte was happy to render his explanation:

*It started quite simply. There really is no defined geographic boundary between us and Honduras. For years, many Salvadorans have crossed that region to secure jobs with the mighty U.S. banana companies in Honduras. They remained there as squatters on land belonging to Hondurans; and then, starting small businesses there.*

*Further border disputes occurred inflaming tempers. The Honduran government has used these events to distract the people from their own failings. Presidente Lopez uses this nationalism and tries to take away land from the Salvadoran squatters. There are many tales of violence.*

*The press plays up these stories. I have conducted several inspection trips throughout the country. We found no examples of the violence reported in the press. Again, it is the Hondurans that are persecuting our people. Presidente Sanchez Hernandez does not want a war with Honduras. I am speaking with our Presidente now over this problem."*

Sanchez stated he suggested to Presidente Sanchez Hernandez that the matter be referred to the Organization of American States [OAS] and warned about doing damage to the Central American Common Market.

Sanchez then maneuvered Duarte to telling stories about his university days. Duarte turned to Taus and recalled their 1966 graduate conference.

Duarte said:

*I am glad you accepted my invitation to see El Salvador, whether it is an official trip or a vacation. Troubled times have arrived here. The economy is faltering and hostilities exist with our Honduran neighbor."*

Duarte was pessimistic and needed some encouragement. Sanchez could easily salvage the situation with his "guarantees." Sanchez explained the scope of his political journey and the support Nixon wanted for U.S. business interests. Duarte agreed to provide whatever assistance he could. Duarte stated he was disappointed with his country's presidente, stating that Sanchez Hernandez was an Army officer who behaved more like the general he was than the president of a country. "I will run again for presidente," Duarte promised, disappointed by the present leadership and knowing that President Nixon would support him. Duarte added, "My party will welcome the Rockefeller visit."

As the meeting concluded, Taus shook Duarte's hand. Duarte hugged him and whispered in his ear, "Father Hesburgh expects me to accomplish great things here; pray for me." The Reverend Theodore M. Hesburgh was the president of Notre Dame University. When Duarte attended the school in 1945, one of the first teachers he met was Father Hesburgh, who befriended him.

Returning to the Intercontinental Hotel, each man was free to pursue his own personal affairs. For Lawson, that meant a casual stroll through the streets of San Salvador and over to the large central marketplace to speak with the young peasant *senoritas*. Taus accompanied Lawson, but left early to make a telephone call back to his Long Island home.

Things were the same as usual in Freeport, New York. Taus' young adopted son still had medical problems. Living conditions in Vietnam resulted in a bad case of parasites that had not been eliminated. Doctors were stymied on a cure for a bad case of intestinal worms. Eventually medical specialists found the solution, but the bills had mounted.

As for Sanchez, he was pursuing his own brand of happiness, renewing his friendships with several middle-aged *senoritas*. He must have had an enjoyable time because he was in a much more relaxed mood for the next day's flight to Honduras, which departed early the following morning.

### **Tegucigalpa, Honduras**

Midway in their flight, the Aztec started experiencing engine troubles. Lawson was having difficulty with the synchronization of the aircraft's twin engines. Suddenly the airplane started shaking as one of the engines ran rough and out of synchronization. Eventually the engines started running normally. Sanchez then started talking about Honduras:

*Their flag has five small stars on it, which represents Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Costa Rica. These five countries were involved in an organization established in 1824 known as the United Provinces of Central America. It did not last long, only until 1839.*

*As with the other countries, Honduras had its share of economic woes. It is nearly six times larger than El Salvador and with a quarter less population. It is considered the poorest nation in the region.*

*The peasants suffer since their land is taken up by the two large U.S. banana corporations: Standard Fruit and United Fruit. There are few jobs for them in the cities and towns where many Salvadorans compete with them for employment. With the economic problems in El Salvador, we estimate over 300,000 Salvadorans have immigrated to Honduras. The mountainous terrain leaves little land worth farming.*

*General Oswaldo Lopez Arellano came to power in 1963 with a military coup. By 1965, Lopez became the Presidente of Honduras. Here the military is the main political power; and, U.S. capitalist policies totally influence the economy. The country is ruled by the military.*

*The only fortunate thing here is the presence of a U.S. trained and equipped Army. The reforms desired by the Alliance For Progress have gone by the wayside.*

*Foreign investors have stripped the nation of its wealth. Both Standard and United Fruits influence the fate of the country. Not only does the United States control the banana industry, it also controls their mining company and financial institutions. A recent boom in cattle and cotton exports caused the takeover of peasant farms by the oligarch. The rich and the poor are confronting each other.*

*The landowners have formed an association known as the National Federation of Agriculturalists and Cattle Ranchers of Honduras, known as FENAGH. It was created by the wealthy oligarchs to counter the national campesino activities. The national campesino movement was organized to regain the lands lost by the peasants. FENAGH tried to blame the influx of Salvadorans for the problems of the native campesino in order to turn one against the other. The Army comes into play as the central force between each group, but the Army sides with FENAGH.*

*The Alliance program failed to diversify the economy, which resulted in greater exports of bananas and coffee. This took land away from the peasants and sowed the seeds for the class struggle, which is only contained by the Army.*

*We hope to buttress their government to insure support for our large investments. At the same time, we want to quell the conflict between Honduras and El Salvador before it gets out of hand and interrupts Mr. Rockefeller's visit.*

*An agreement was signed in 1960, called the Managua Treaty. It was the beginnings of the Central American Common Market [CACM]. Four nations agreed to remove tariffs. Costa Rica became the fifth nation to join CACM and sign the treaty in 1962. We feel this market may be destroyed and that will hurt all its members.*

Events at Tegucigalpa proceeded much the same as in San Salvador. Except Presidente Lopez was not on very good terms with Sanchez. Lopez was angry with the U.S. and insisted something be done about the Salvadoran immigrants. Sanchez agreed by informing Lopez that he would immediately act as a negotiator with Presidente Fidel Sanchez Hernandez.

Needless to say, Sanchez' less than enthusiastic reception from either presidents left him as an impotent arbiter for the disputes between them. He simply referred the matter to the U.S. Ambassadors in each country. Sanchez called Duarte to assure him that he had handled the situation and would keep Duarte appraised of any future developments.

Sanchez knew he could not accomplish more here. Neither dictator would listen to a U.S. representative, especially one that was unofficially engaged. These Army rulers would settle things the only way they knew, militarily, by force-of-arms. Disappointed that he could not assist, Sanchez realized his limits. He also recognized that any U.S. capital interest would remain after a war.

That evening, Sanchez instructed Lawson and Taus to wait until they heard from him concerning a late night planning session. He was coordinating with local and Washington contacts for the next day's itinerary. The dust settled by 9 p.m. when Sanchez met with Lawson and Taus in the hotel's lounge for the anticipated briefing.

### **Protection Package**

Away from prying ears and eyes, they sat in a far corner of the lounge. Sanchez explained the next day's schedule. Turning to Lawson, Sanchez asked, "Are you sure we have the protection package in the aircraft? Is it fully operational?" Lawson replied, "Sure. It's all set to go." Taus was concerned and asked what was happening.

"All along I intended Guatemala to be our last stop, that is the reason for the weapons." Sanchez noticed the pale expression on Taus' face and added, "It is strictly for our protection. Defensive only, since we have good cause to believe Colonel Weber and Ambassador Mein were assassinated by guerrilla terrorists. We shall be permitted to carry them with us, concealed of course, in canvas holsters. We don't want to alarm anyone with a display of our firearms in public."

At least Taus knew it wasn't an assassination mission. He certainly started drawing the wrong conclusions after seeing how intractable the other presidentes acted. An assassination might have been the only solution. But the trip to Guatemala was a surprise and Taus asked for an explanation.

Sanchez replied:

*There are several reasons. First, Presidente Mendez does not have control; he has yielded to his Army generals, the most notorious of whom is Carlos Arana Osorio. We must gain General Arana's support for the future. He may well be their next president. Our goal is to protect U.S. business interests. Secondly, the U.S. State Department had long felt this country is ripe for a communist revolution. I don't think it's going to happen, but we shall see for ourselves. Third, both El Salvador and Honduras border Guatemala. Any dispute there will overflow into Guatemala."*

"One more time," Taus asked, "just when do we consider using the Swedish Ks?" With a faint smile, Lawson answered for Sanchez, "Just before someone tries to kill us." There was a reason for the large compensation that both aviators would receive. The term, "services rendered," included



more than flying duties. It would be a restless night as the trio prepared for their Guatemala visit.

### **Guatemala City, Guatemala**

Nearly due west and 225 miles from Tegucigalpa lay Guatemala City, the largest urban center in Central America. Guatemala was the most populous Central American country and slightly smaller than Honduras. It was the land of the classic Maya Indian civilization that flourished until 900 A.D.

A final warning from Sanchez broke their silence, as he noted President Mendez only wanted to survive his term in office, saying that the Army was the real power. As a consequence, the Guatemalan military officers had become major landowners and members of the upper class, not paying homage to a ruling oligarch as in other Latin American countries. Sanchez added:

*We are not satisfied with the weak leadership of Mendez. U.S. dollars are applied to programs for the rich. The gap has widened between rich and poor. Our State Department views Guatemala as the ripest of all countries in this region for a communist revolution.*

*The Army commander in charge of the counter-terrorist offensive is General Arana. Colonel John Weber served as the U.S. Military Attaché there until his murder in January 1968. Colonel Weber was an advisor to Arana. As you may gather, General Arana is highly respected by the so-called ruling oligarch. The left wing is politically disorganized. Although the right wing constituency received a minority of the votes, they still came to power due to leftist factionalism.*

*Arana is known as the Butcher of Zacapa. When Presidente Mendez rose to power in 1966, the Army united with the National Liberation Movement [NLM], an extreme rightist political party. They organized death squads under Arana in the provinces of Zacapa and Izabal to attack the guerrilla forces there. Several hundred guerrillas were killed, along with thousands of innocent civilians. Arana earned his nickname, using terror as a weapon against the alleged communist guerrillas. We must meet both men and gain their support.*

Suddenly, the Aztec yawed to the right as the starboard engine failed. It spinning propeller quickly froze in position. Lawson said, "We'll try a restart." The right engine initially started and then stopped again, sending out a trail of bluish-white smoke. The Aztec slowly began to descend until Lawson applied backpressure on the control wheel, which halted the descent but slowed the airspeed. "This bird can fly single-engine," Lawson assured. "We're not far from the airport." The loss of the engine was a bad omen.

The landing at Guatemala City was uneventful. When Lawson mentioned it was the first time he ever landed the aircraft on only one engine, Sanchez pulled out a whiskey flask and took a long sip, then passed it to Taus and Lawson.

The airport police were suspicious of their arrival. Lawson and Taus rested their luggage on the Customs clearing tables with the exception of the canvas knapsack that was slung across Lawson's shoulder. A police sergeant grabbed his revolver and aimed it waist high at the trio.

A fast exchange of words flew between Sanchez and the sergeant who signaled another guard to contact someone in higher authority. Shortly, they were surrounded by rifle-wielding police and the airport commander. Sanchez slowly presented a batch of official looking documents, which caused the airport police to disperse the crowd that had gathered.

Sanchez noticed that Lawson's right hand was inside the knapsack. He told Lawson, "I hope you did not plan on using the gun here. This is not the reason we are carrying them." The two flyers remained at the airport with a maintenance crew to repair the starboard engine, while Sanchez secured hotel accommodations downtown.

Once settled at the Guatemala City Hotel, the trio walked into a restaurant, where a long discussion followed dinner on the reasons for being armed. Taus felt it would only bring more trouble. Sanchez seemingly agreed saying, "We must respect the proper law enforcement authorities here. I do not think they will harm us. The guns are meant for the unexpected terrorists. Like the ones who shot Ambassador Mein and Colonel Weber." Taus asked, "And who were the terrorists anyway, the communist guerrillas or the government police?" Sanchez responded: "We really do not know for certain."

Alcoholic beverages were served before dinner, and the cabaret's dancing senioritas finally brought smiles to their faces. The next day they would face the Butcher of Zacapa.

Set on top of a plateau, Guatemala City's 750,000 inhabitants incorporated a mixture of commercialism and cultural architecture in their modern and colonial buildings. The ostensible stability of the city belies the underlying fractures within the political and economic structures of the country.

### **Meeting President Mendez**

On the following morning, the trio met the Presidente Julio Mendez in the national palace. The presidente was resplendent in the black dress uniform of a Guatemalan General and welcomed the trio to his office. Mendez had been a distinguished attorney before his entry into the political arena. A timid grin from Mendez seemed peculiarly out of character while he wore the garments of a military dictator.

"Caballeros, let me welcome you to our growing country. What can I do to make your stay more comfortable?" Sanchez responded, "Gracias Presidente, I bring you warm greetings from President Richard Nixon."

Without further delay, Sanchez expressed his deep concern over their economic policies and programs. He asked Mendez whether Arana was available for the discussion since the previous arrangement included that Arana be present.

Mendez answered, "Certidumbre, let me call him in." Mendez reached across his desk and flipped a switch on his intercom. Arana entered the office, greeted the trio, and sat down near Mendez, looking stern and lacking any humor. Sanchez focused the discussions on the brutality in the countryside and their internal struggle.

Listening, Mendez gave no comment. He leaned back in his chair allowing Arana to respond. "Anyone who does not abide by the law will be bro-

ken in two. Our policy is to rid this country of the communist cancer which infects it.” It reflected his attitude about accepting U.S. aid and equipment but continuing to conduct its affairs as they saw fit.

Sanchez realized that he would have to overlook that attitude and try to solicit cooperation solely in current economic areas. The Guatemalan leadership did not entertain Washington’s views on how to run their country.

Nonetheless, Mendez and Arana both agreed to assist in the success of Rockefeller’s visit.

On the way back to the hotel, Sanchez said, “We will leave now. We have accomplished what we could. I don’t trust them. The longer we stay, the more dangers we expose ourselves to.” Lawson and Taus were glad to leave and both had an unpleasant feeling after the meeting. “Destination?” asked Lawson. Sanchez said, “Mexico City, Senors. From there we will take our separate journeys back to the States.”

During the flight to Mexico City, Lawson hinted to Sanchez that his report should include one recommendation for additional funds to acquire a better aircraft for future operations. Sanchez agreed, as he glanced out the window at the starboard engine cowling streaked with oil, and then viewed the rugged mountainous terrain below.

### **Mexico City**

By the time the Aztec landed in Mexico City, Sanchez had debriefed Lawson and Taus and then checked into the Hilton Hotel. During dinner discussion, Sanchez discussed formulating a realistic intelligence report on the region to pave the way for Rockefeller’s trip, stating it would take a few days in its preparation.

He lamented to Taus that little was gained against human rights abuses, but at least, the dictators were aware of U.S. displeasure in such violations. Taus suggested, “Perhaps world opinion would have a greater impact upon them.” Sanchez responded, “It may also have an impact on the United States since we support these oppressive regimes! That will be one of my recommendations. Rockefeller must note U.S. concerns to thwart any adverse public opinion about our support of these despots.”

“Now Rich, you are a young man,” counseled Sanchez. “Missions such as these need to be undertaken without any emotions. There is little we can do to change the world. We may try, but we do have certain duties to perform. We must never allow our personal feelings to interfere with our job.”

“I understand that, and I am grateful for the opportunity to join you and Greg in this work,” acknowledged Taus. “But why doesn’t President Nixon use his normal intelligence agencies to obtain this information?”

Sanchez responded:

*President Nixon hired Henry Kissinger to revamp the foreign policy decision-making process. It was slow and awkward and produced inconsistencies. Instead of action, crisis management and reaction was the norm.*

*Nixon was also unhappy with his left wing State Department and the liberals at the CIA whose reports were exercises in philosophy rather than reality. Kissinger often called CIA officials the ‘theologians of in-*

*telligence.' Their intelligence reports conflicted with other agencies. Personal self-interests were always involved in the different bureaucracies.*

*In Kissinger's opinion, the ability to anticipate and evaluate threats before they happen is the true measure of a statesman. He uncovered many faults within the intelligence community. Jurisdictions frequently overlapped and there was reliance upon shoddy methods to obtain information. These were just a few of the problems. That is why we are here. Kissinger is the U.S. Intelligence Czar now.*

Taus was still concerned: "I have some training in Intelligence. How am I suited for such operations?" This question puzzled Sanchez who felt Taus was especially prepared, reminding him of his academic credentials and military experiences, which included combat and aviation qualifications.

Lawson provided the answer, "Rich, my special training as a foreign counter-intelligence expert for the FBI was practically nil. A few stories were told to us in the FBI Academy at Quantico. They were boring stories, hardly educational. Intelligence work comes from experience as well as formal training. You have just gained some of your training with these experiences. Perhaps the boys in the CIA have a better training course, but their results, based on Kissinger's opinion, do not indicate it."

Adding his own opinion of the FBI, Lawson said, "The Bureau relies upon the resourcefulness and initiative of their agents. They had too. The sixteen-week Quantico Special Agent training course is too fundamental. Then, the FBI stifles their agents with archaic internal rules and regulations designed for management to protect the Bureau rather than the country.

That's why I am glad to be of assistance."

There was more than one report that Sanchez prepared. A separate one went to Sturm on the mental and emotional fitness of Lawson and Taus. Sturm also held the purse strings and would contact Osgood in Little Rock, Arkansas to pay Lawson and Taus for their involvement.

That evening, a last farewell from Sanchez included a future mission, "You two aviadores are excellent! I hope to see you both again soon." Lawson and Taus were ready early the next morning to begin their return flight to the United States. Lawson quipped, "First stop, Little Rock." Taus hardly smiled. He was still absorbed in the events of the past several days. He did not like the human rights violations.

Osgood met the aircraft at Little Rock, and inside an Air Force hangar, Osgood gave each man a leatherette folder. He then passed a paper to each and asked for their signatures, telling them to first count the contents of the envelope. Taus read the lengthy paper that noted "for extraordinary services rendered," but he was not provided a copy. Lawson appeared satisfied and asked Osgood about securing a better aircraft for future operations. Osgood was well informed and cut him off saying, "Yes, I know. Tell us exactly what you have in mind. Let Colonel Sturm know too. He'll handle the financing through First National City Bank (later renamed Citicorp). I'm glad you both took good care of Mr. Sanchez. Congratulations men!" It had been

less than two weeks, and Taus still had a reporting date to meet at Hunter Army Airfield for the advanced portion of his Army flight training.

By February 10, 1970, Taus was a rated Army Aviator with the rank of captain. Sturm asked Taus to come to Washington for another chat. During the meeting, Taus was asked about his future plans. Taus was anxious to continue his flying career. His school performance was good enough to have him selected for more advanced training in the Boeing CH-47 Chinook transport aircraft. Sturm added two more courses to Taus' credentials, sending him to Fort Eustis, Virginia for Aviation Maintenance Officer and Test Pilot training course. These courses were normally reserved for exceptional Aviators who had successfully completed at least one flying tour in Vietnam. Taus had a friend pulling strings for him.



## CHAPTER FOUR

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### Back to Vietnam

The First Cavalry Division (Airmobile) needed an aviation officer with some combat experience; its ranks were depleted by supporting the ground forces. Further depletion resulted from the ongoing incursion into Cambodia during the Vietnam War. Its air fleet had flown far more hours than expected when President Nixon ordered the U.S. military to intercept the supply lines from North Vietnam to South Vietnam that used Cambodia. Whenever the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) sought sanctuary from U.S. military attacks in Vietnam, they simply retreated across the border from Vietnam into Cambodia, thinking the U.S. military would not follow. But President Nixon reacted by approving U.S. military operations inside Cambodia.

By the time Taus arrived in Vietnam for his second tour, the First Cavalry was exhausted. Despite public announcements that the U.S. withdrew from Cambodia, Cambodian operations continued. Some Army commanders felt a precedent had been established and continued military operations into Cambodia, using the excuse that the borders were undefined in the jungles of Vietnam and Cambodia.

#### **The First Cavalry Division, August 1970**

The same people who influenced U.S. policy during his Central America trip in 1969 were the same people, the power elitists that controlled affairs in Southeast Asia. Taus was at the lowest level where their policies were carried out by people who followed orders and unquestionably assumed them to be correct, morally justified and in the best interests of the country

No pretension was made by Taus to explain the morass in Vietnam; such debates were reserved for the dissidents or students of political science. Taus was an Army officer who would do his duty as he had been instructed. He would not linger on questions as to his country's right in this struggle or in any other affairs. There were problems enough to confront in his new unit without philosophical discussions about political justifications and their moral ramifications.

Military personnel were replaced after 12-months in Vietnam, leading to a crisis in various military management and leadership skills. Army enlisted men turned to drugs, while their officer corps lacked the leadership traits needed to develop and lead subordinates, and to help military personnel avoid the perils of drug addiction.

### **Second Enemy of U.S. Military: Drugs**

Taus, now a captain, had received a special Counter-Insurgency course in Washington, D.C., but it could not sufficiently prepare him for Vietnam.

The officers were not prepared to handle a second enemy, from within, which was the drug problem. The U.S. military had never experienced a drug problem on the magnitude that occurred in Vietnam.

Given the pressures of a guerrilla war, where the battle lines were everywhere, the American Military was seemingly limited to react.

Drugs from the Golden Triangle were flown into Vietnam, much of it using military and civilian aircraft, including Air America, a CIA proprietary company. Some drugs were sold immediately to American servicemen, causing them to be addicted, and taking this addiction back to the United States. A new breed of drug-abusers was being developed for consumption of drugs by the CIA.

At a late 1970 Battalion briefing for the division commander, the use of drugs was discussed as a major problem facing U.S. Forces. Lieutenant Colonel Edward Waldron told Major General George Putnam, the Commanding General of the First Cavalry Division, about the drug problem in his helicopter battalion. "We don't have the crews available to repair and safely fly our aircraft. More than half of my unit is strung out on narcotics which are being transported into the compound by the CIA."

### **Don't Tell Me about the Problems**

Either to cover up, or refuse to accept a problem that required corrective actions, disturbing the status quo, Putnam said, "I don't believe it." To admit the problem would have required Putnam to reveal the CIA's involvement, and probably lead to retaliation against Putnam.

### **Drug Use Resulted in Heavy War Casualties**

Combat and related war casualties in 1970-71 were one-fourth the amount of casualties incurred by drug use and addiction.

The general knew the situation. He saw his troops each day, struggling with heroin addiction, marijuana use and other illicit drugs. His Army's former problems with alcohol abuse were infinitesimal compared to the havoc wrecked upon his fighting soldiers' ability from the CIA's drug-trafficking.

Later, when the drug addiction could no longer be ignored, Putnam presented this problem, as did other senior commanders, to their Headquarters, the United States Army Command, Vietnam (USARV) and the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV).

The Army then set up drug rehabilitation centers for troops addicted to drugs. Instead of court-martialing its soldiers, an attempt would be made to help them. A new generation of Americans had been introduced to drug addiction by the CIA.



The 228<sup>th</sup> Assault Support Helicopter Battalion (ASHB) had 48 Boeing Chinook (medium-lift) helicopters, based in the III Corps area of South Vietnam, approximately halfway between Saigon and the Cambodian border.

Edward Waldron was dismissed from the United States Military Academy at West Point in the early 1940s, and he entered the Army in World War II as an enlisted man. Later, he went to Officers' Candidate School (OCS) and became a "90-day Wonder," commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. He served under General George Patton. Waldron resented the Officer Corps for what had happened to him at West Point. As a Lieutenant Colonel, he was a difficult commander and often belligerent.

Division Headquarters of the First Cavalry was located at Phouc Vinh, an airbase approximately 65 miles northeast of Saigon, and the 228<sup>th</sup> was spread across the provinces in III Corps. One hundred kilometers east was Bearcat, where A and B companies were stationed with their 32 Chinook helicopters. At Phouc Vinh, Headquarters Company and Charlie Company were situated under the Division's flagpole to respond to any urgent missions. Charlie Company's 16 Chinooks were over utilized, and had many maintenance and other problems.

In the late 1980s, aircraft manufacturers recognized one of the problems, as did commercial airlines worldwide: stress failings on aircraft components. This became one of the problems for the 228<sup>th</sup> and other aviation units in Vietnam, where jungle climates were harmful to the sophisticated equipment.

Designed like a shoebox and resembling a bumblebee, the CH-47 Chinook was aerodynamically unstable, requiring a computer to control its flight, which was called Stability Augmentation System (SAS).

Charlie Company's aircraft were nestled in an eight-acre gravel-filled parking and maintenance area just off the main and only runway. The various aircraft components were harmed as the aircraft taxied through the gravel and mud, compounded by a constant swirl of dust and gravel generated by the rotating aircraft blades. Dirt permeated everything.

The hot tropical sun, with temperatures above 100 degrees, took a toll on the troops.

President Richard Nixon's decision to draw down the war effort made war materials more scarce to support the present combat. The 228<sup>th</sup> experienced these shortages and was under great pressures by the war efforts and a more demanding boss. It was hard to tell if Waldron was concerned about his troops' welfare. With just enough time to become acquainted with the 228<sup>th</sup> and its tactical situation, an event unfolded for Taus to handle.

Taus was the commanding officer of the 255<sup>th</sup> Transportation Detachment which took care of Charlie Company's aircraft. His command consisted of six officers and over 100 enlisted men. They were all specialists in aircraft repairs, recoveries and rescues, with most troops having served more than one combat duty tour. Taus' duties included test flights, rescues and recoveries, as well as occasional combat missions. On this particular day in September 1970, Taus was informed by the Division Operations Officer that

a CH-47 from his unit went down near Duc Phong after receiving hostile fires.

Automatically and expeditiously, the unit readied a recovery aircraft.

Before Taus could assign a crew, men had volunteered for this unknown rescue mission. With another radio call from Waldron, Taus took control of the recovery operation. The downed aircraft had successfully negotiated a forced landing near a friendly Fire Support Base (FSB) which provided covering fires for them. Unluckily, it was the Fire Support Base that was under attack and which had accidentally drawn the CH-47 into enemy contact as it attempted to resupply them. It was late afternoon and immediate repairs would have to be made. Approaching darkness could provide the enemy the opportunity to overtake the fire support base.

“Affirmative Sky Warrior 440. We are still receiving enemy fires. Your downed aircraft is sitting on the supply pad, 150 meters beyond our position. They report receiving some sniper fires from Victor Charles (Viet Cong, VC). I suggest you stay away for now.”

“Thank you Duc Phong. We got no choice.” Waldron had ordered Taus to rescue the other ship, period. Taus could not accomplish that from 3000 feet overhead. He had to land. “Please hold your outgoing fires so we can insert our ship.”

The fire support base had an impressive arsenal of firepower consisting of 105 and 155-millimeter howitzers and eight-inch artillery that could easily devastate an enemy’s position, if they knew exactly where it was located. The Viet Cong attack was joined by North Vietnamese Army (NVA) soldiers.

Several NVA divisions had decided to overtake this American bastion in the jungle. In 1954, Viet Minh Forces defeated the main French outpost at Dien Bien Phu, and in 1968, the NVA nearly accomplished a similar feat over the U.S. Marine garrison at Khe Sahn.

“Our guns are tight, Sky Warrior 440. You can try and nest. It’s still hot out there. We have a platoon out assisting your men. Do not fire on them.” Executing a high overhead landing maneuver, the CH-47 performed an 180 degree turn, while rapidly descending from altitude. It was an auto-rotation with the engines taken off line for the quick descent. A UH-1D Bell Iroquois, nicknamed a Huey or Slick, was also at the landing site. It was Waldron’s command and control ship, and they were now also pinned down by sniper fires. He bellowed over the radio intercom, “Captain get that ship out of here before nightfall!”

Taus thought the old man must have had another bad night. He drank every night and was an obnoxious drunk. The next day’s hangover made him even more difficult. “Colonel, allow me to suggest that none of us leave this area until nightfall. The NVA know our position and as soon as one ship takes off, it will draw their fires. Nightfall will provide some cover which we’ll need for the take-off.”

Waldron may have been a drunk, but he was not stupid. He grumbled another slight remarks over the intercom, but agreed. The downed aircraft commander told Taus that his ship needed repairs to its rear fuselage due to

numerous bullet strikes. The hits accounted for leaks in the aircraft's oil and hydraulic systems.

Enemy fire from the nearby hills was now combined with FSB's gunfire into the hillsides, causing the repair crew to wonder if they would be hit by both sides. Artillery rounds whooshed over their position at a dangerously low level before impacting on the near hills. One of Taus' mechanics said, "Perhaps a short-round will do us all a favor and hit the ole man!"

An infantry rifle platoon stood around the stricken Chinook, commanded by the platoon leader who asked Taus: "Where do you want to place my men sir?"

"Anyplace would be better than here. Lieutenant. Your men are too close to my aircraft. We need some outposts to warn us of any probes if the NVA decide to attack us in force. The platoon leader said:

*Captain, it's intense out there. The enemy's making his presence known. My platoon was out there earlier. The NVA want your aircraft. We would be better off back in the FSB and let our artillery pound the cramp out of this area. I think the Air Force boys will bomb the hills as we retreat to the base. If they did it now, they might hit us by accident."*

Reviewing the platoon leader's tactical map, Taus selected outposts for the platoon, setting up a perimeter defense around the three aircraft. While the platoon moved out to their new positions, Taus' attention shifted, focusing on the downed aircraft crew. He told their aircraft commander that they would take Taus' ship after nightfall. Engines would be cranked 30 minutes prior to their liftoff to deceive the enemy. Taus and his crew would stay with the downed ship, hoping to accomplish repairs and fly it out. Taus had considered another option, towing the aircraft into the FSB's compound, but that could not be done. The path leading to the FSB was gutted by the enemy's earlier mortar attack.

"Whack! Whack!" Suddenly two explosives occurred nearby flinging Taus, who was midway between the two Chinooks and the platoon, against a tree trunk, along with one of the platoon's riflemen lying near him. They were both stunned, but further away two riflemen were badly injured. A third cried out, "Medic! Medic!" We've got wounded here!" Medics came from the platoon to assist, along with Taus and the rifleman. The wounded men were carried back to the FSB. The platoon sergeant approached Taus, who was still shakened, with his ears ringing from the explosion. The platoon sergeant had to yell, "Sir, the Lieutenant wants to withdraw. It's too hot here!"

Taus agreed this time and staggered back to the Chinooks. Darkness had crept into the area. Only partial repairs had been done. Taking the aircraft's radio, he called Waldron's ship, which was only a hundred meters at most from them, but still receiving sniper fires. Earlier the Colonel had landed away from the FSB supply pad to allow Taus' rescue and recovery ship to land closer to the stricken Chinook. "Sky Warrior Six, this is Sky Warrior 440. Presently the area is insecure. Platoon reporting enemy contact. Request permission to remove aircraft radios and move our personnel to the FSB."

“Negative Sky Warrior; continue repairs. I’ll let you know when to retreat.” The colonel’s order was relayed to the platoon lieutenant and his boss, an infantry captain inside the compound. Now working in darkness, mechanics used hand-held lights. Fortunately, the resupply pad was protected by its lower ground and surrounding trees.

Suddenly another chorus of cannon fires erupted from the jungle hillsides, and within minutes, the lieutenant returned, frantically asking Taus to order withdrawal.

This time Taus notified Waldron that he was launching his recovery ship with the downed aircrew and suggested the colonel launch at the same time. Without hesitation, both ships coordinated their take-offs into the moonless night skies. Waldron circled high overhead to continue monitoring progress with the lone downed ship. The repair crew told Taus that one hydraulic system was repaired. “That’s enough for me to make a takeoff and pray the other systems don’t fail.” Turning to the desperate lieutenant, Taus directed him to evacuate his troops back to the FSB, taking Taus’ repair crew with him.

Chief Warrant Officer Jim Peterson, Taus’ copilot, objected, “Sir, I’m going with you.” Taus’ crew also joined in the request. Most were former infantrymen. They would take their chances on a risky flight rather than endure the night at the FSB under attack. A final call to Waldron showed that the colonel had no change of heart, “Get that ship out of there!”

The downed Chinook started. Aqua tracer rounds could be seen searching the blackened skies for the helicopter. Both Taus and Peterson took the control stick and applied full power, lifting the ship off the ground and quickly gaining altitude. Pings could be heard as enemy bullets struck the aircraft. At 1500 feet, Peterson took control and nosed the Chinook over to gain airspeed and depart the battle area below. It was Peterson’s second tour as an Army pilot and he knew how to handle the helicopter. Taus concentrated on the engine and transmission instruments, searching for any further indications of leaks or damage.

Phouc Vinh Airbase was under a thunderstorm, causing Peterson to divert to Phu Loi Airbase, where the ship safely landed. This would not be the only time they diverted to Phu Loi. Early the next morning, they returned to Phouc Vinh. The FSB had held off the enemy throughout the night and the following morning, massive air force strikes terminated any further NVA thoughts of overrunning the compound.

Waldron never gave any of the aircrews credit for the successful recovery, or for that matter any recoveries. However, Waldron did manage to obtain approval for two civilian maintenance teams from Lear aircraft services to augment Taus’ maintenance personnel.

### **The Air Assault**

An auxiliary turbine engine started on one of the larger troop transports at dawn, filling the air with the whining sound. Each transport aircraft has an auxiliary turbine unit to provide power to start the two main engines of the Boeing CH-47 Chinooks. Huge rotary wings swept across the tarmac, as

troopers waited to board. The wind created ripples in the troopers' fatigues and flapped about the soldiers' loose straps and gear.

The Monsoon rains had pounded the airbase a few hours earlier, which had nearly abated with the approaching dawn. A staccato refrain was provided by the crackling blasts from 155 mm howitzers fired by the base artillery located on each side of the sprawling base. These surrounding batteries provided a crescendo of friendly fires, preparatory artillery barrages before the air assaults began.

The Division Tactical Operations Center (TOC) closely coordinated the air launches. Two squadrons of AH-1G Bell Cobra helicopter gunships took off from the north end of Phouc Vinh Airbase, slowly circling through the east, south and finally the west battery zones as artillery fires ceased to allow the formation to fly through a safe corridor. Three gun ships paralleled the trajectory of the outgoing shells.

Gunship crews of the First-of-the-Ninth (1/9) considered themselves real cavalymen from the Ole West. They strutted about in the base camp areas wearing \$65 dark blue Stetson hats ordered from the States. The hats had yellow cords on the outside of the sweatbands and a small metal insignia of two crossed cavalry sabers on the hat's front crown. Like the beret cap worn by Special Forces detachments, the hat was uncomfortably hot. Unlike the beret cap, it could not be folded into a pocket. Often a Stetson hat floated across the runways followed by the careless owner who did not account for wind gusts created by the constant rotor wash.

### **Gun Ships**

The Bell Cobra was a highly refined utility helicopter, modified and completely redesigned to fulfill its role as an aerial weapons platform. Its narrow heads-on silhouette presented a smaller target than its counterpart, the UH-1 Iroquois. The pilot sat behind the gunner/copilot, slightly higher so he could see over the gunner's helmet. A newer rotary-wing system, known as the 540 Rotor Head contributed to the ship's superior speed and maneuverability. This improvement in performance was welcomed, as pilots tended to fly beyond the aircraft's design performance, exceeding the safe envelope of flight.

Charts in the back of the Operator's Manuals (US Army Field Training handbooks, termed "dash-tens") graphically depicted areas called "safe operating limits." Areas beyond those limits were termed "outside the performance envelope" which could result in catastrophic consequences.

The gun ships were armed with an assortment of rockets from pods mounted underneath short stubby wings, a mini-gun and a grenade launcher mounted in the fuselage nose, pivoting in a turret directing under the gunner's seat. The gunship could bring a torrential downpour of lead munitions upon any enemy position. There were times when misplaced "friendly fires" had fatal consequences of U.S. and allied troops.

Experience assisted the accuracy of the aerial gunner, but short-rounds, incorrect coordinates, and other errors added to the "friendly-fire" casualty list. The aerial battle could move more rapidly than plotted lines from the

Division TOC. When the battle area was close, weapons did not discriminate between soldiers on either side.

### **Personal Irritations**

With the last cloudbursts, there lingered a humid dampness, cloaking the ground until it was heated and evaporated by the sun. The whole weather package seemed to be GI-issued, reeking from the odor of camphor pellets and petroleum products. Military equipment and machinery were now given an additional scent with a pungent smell from the fungus that thrived in the dampness. Mosquitoes festered in small puddles, which had iridescent colors from spilled lubricants. Men's groins reddened from fungous rashes.

And there were the ants and flies, sweat and irritations from heavy packs and GI gear straps. Even the aviation fuel (JP-4) created a breeding habitat for the fungus in aircraft fuel tanks.

The stench of the jungle helicopter war pervaded the airbase. Every air assault trooper was familiar with the smell of burning jet-fuel exhausts, the stench from dead rats, burning feces, and unbathed bodies. Every morning the airbase woke to a helter-skelter pattern of activities as it prepared for military assaults.

The GI-Joe of the modern Army was the new sky trooper, a government trained and issued soldier who would charge into battle mounted on a magnesium cavalry steed known as the helicopter. Troopers had only the faintest idea of where the mission would take them. It did not matter; the jungle was the same except for the delta area in southern Vietnam, which was flat. The troopers huddled in bunches, by units adjacent to the flight lines. They were just another piece of the military planning that was assembled for the deadly operation—and expendable.

Monsoons had caused soil erosion under the protective steel plating that tiled the runways and taxiways. Ruts created by small water streams washed away the support underneath many plates, causing the plates to quiver when an operation was underway.

As the mechanical birds stirred in their sandbagged nests, the steel plating vibrated, beating to the refrain of the large rotary blades of the olive drab whirlybirds. Debris was kicked-up, and rubbish not properly disposed of, loose sand, were scattered back and forth across the runways. Once blown away, the debris would lie dormant, waiting for another whirlwind to provide the external life force necessary to generate its movement again. The monsoon seasons had one advantage; there were fewer fine particles of Vietnamese sand to fly into the troopers' bloodshot eyes.

By gestures and timing, a trooper understood the inaudible orders barked at them by nervous junior officers and senior sergeants. There was a sound developed by a chorus of roaring noises coming from the copters' engines, the screams from the high-pitched whine of transmissions, and the "thumpa-humpa-thumpa" pounding of the turning blades.

### **Alcohol and Drug Abuse Problem**

Both the improvised unit officers' club and the more lavished non-commissioned officers club were active that night, prompting Taus to tell his senior aviation sergeant, Bill Brandenburg, "Lord knows how these guys

will be able to fly tomorrow?" Taus and Brandenburg were working on maintenance for the Boeing CH-47 Chinook helicopters that needed to be launched for the morning missions. The Chinook carried a platoon of 44 fully loaded and equipped combat soldiers.

"They certainly will be fully-loaded tomorrow, captain." Brandenburg's assessment did not make Taus happy. They were performing unscheduled maintenance because the ships were worn out from the recent Cambodian incursion ordered by President Nixon. It was now late August 1970, and both the men and the equipment were fatigued. The festivities at the clubs could only adversely affect the man's performances the next day. Assigned to the First Cavalry Division, Taus was the commander for the 255<sup>th</sup> Transportation Detachment, the unit that was responsible for all the lower echelon maintenance and rescue-and-recovery operations for C Company, 228<sup>th</sup> Assault Support Helicopter Battalion (ASHB) with its 48 Chinooks.

Aside from alcohol use, there was the serious drug abuse problem.

Whatever Taus had been taught in his military education seemed to have been violated in this war. It was a wonder that any missions were accomplished at all. After the Vietnam War, General Westmoreland would state, "Our Armed Forces never lost a battle!" They did not lose battles, but they took some heavy losses at times.

"Call me at the 0-Club Sarge, when the ships are ready for a test flight." It was already night, 2100 hours to be exact. Army Regulations prohibited test flights at night. But the ships needed them to be accomplished prior to the early morning missions. Taus was headed to the club, not to party, but to secure a copilot and crew chief for the test flights.

As Taus passed by the NCO club in his jeep he heard a voice cry out, "Hey Skipper, how about a lift?" It was Tony Ippolito, the Division Operation Sergeant. Ippolito was a highly respected senior non-com. He coached the varsity soccer team back at the military academy, and Taus enjoyed his company and his advice. Taus needed some words of encouragement that evening. "Hop in Coach. I'm heading to see some pilots at the 0-Club."

"I know Skipper. You guys have got a helluva mission tomorrow. I warned the ole man not to use the big ships since the area is really hot according to our G-2 intelligence reports. Ippolito was telling Taus what he already knew. Just like the test flights, the CH-47s were governed by Army regulations on their employment. Since two-multi-million-dollar ships were lost several months ago, Westmoreland restricted their use when intelligence knew that an operational area would be insecure or hot. Stopping in front of the 0-Club, Taus told Ippolito, "That's another reason why I want to see how polluted these jockeys are tonight. I'm not going to allow any of them to ruin my ships!"

"Still keeping your eye on the ball, huh Skipper. Well, don't kill yourself tonight." It was not any secret that Taus launched ships at night for test flights. The regulations were overlooked when it came to mission-essential things.

How does a concerned commander tell his officers, in a tactful way, to quit drinking and get some sleep? One semi-sober pilot told him that the

club just got a call from the Division Aviation Officer (DAO) asking for him. Taus had to go. As he exited the door, he said sternly, "Quit the drinking and get some sleep! You'll need all your senses for tomorrow's hot LZ."

The DAO told Taus to be careful with the night test flights since the ole man, Edward Waldron, was concerned. The final test flight was completed by 3:30 a.m. when the troopers started arriving at the airfield from their company areas. The smell of burning jet-fuel exhausts permeated the airbase. In the distance, artillery fires could be heard, pounding several different areas, only one of which would be the real landing zone. The other areas were to confuse the alerted enemy.

Preparatory artillery barrages always occurred before sending in the Chinooks. The Division Tactical Operations Center (TOC), where Ippolito worked, closely monitored the air assault missions. On the taxiway, the blades of one giant olive-drab bird slowly came to a stop as its engines were retarded. It suffered a mechanical breakdown. Commanders issued hand signals to troopers to dismount and go to another waiting ship.

Taus was also waiting with the rescue-and-recovery ship when the Battalion Tactical Operations Center radioed him to release it for the mission, replacing the one which had broken down. A disappointment for Taus, knowing the ship was not "operationally ready." They had worked hard that night, but the ship now needed further repairs. And Taus needed another recovery ship. Since there were other missions that Taus had scheduled after the landing zone operation, he decided to inform the Battalion TOC that he would accept the mission rather than surrendering his ship to the other hapless aircrew. He also instructed his assistant maintenance officer to repair the downed ship and, if it becomes available, to use it as a backup.

Army Infantry Commanders recognized the Chinook's capabilities and would plan their operations using their intelligence staffs to report landing sites as being reasonably safe for troop insertions. They would pay a high price for misjudging an area, but a battlefield victory, with a large enemy body count, could advance an officer's career.

Eight Chinooks launched, accompanied by a score of smaller Bell UH-1 Huey Iroquois helicopters which were busting at their seams from the load of troops, equipment and munitions hanging partially outside the open cargo doors. Bell AH-1G Cobra gun ships had proceeded them to the landing zone. Several different landing zones were strafed and bombarded to deceive the enemy as to the intended landing site. Still, the enemy knew. Sometimes the leaks came from a covert system of spies within the South Vietnamese military staff, other times from a strict tactical interpretation of the terrain and the objective.

The enemy had carefully planned a quick strike at the enveloping umbrella of aircraft immediately before the troops debarked. Then the enemy would withdraw into the dense jungle foliage, heading back to the sanctuary of Cambodia.

### **Landing Zone Ambush**

The Cavalry was airborne, headed towards the landing zone, and columns of gray and white smoke were already billowing from the distant jun-



gle. The aircraft formation started to lose altitude, approaching the open field area 100 feet above the trees. A tree line from the nearby forest rose on both sides of a vale, which was tended by Vietnamese farmers, now absent due to the bombardment.

According to Intelligence estimates, the farmers were Viet Cong sympathizers, and like many G-2 reports, were often exaggerated. The sympathizers were described as members of a local VC battalion now reinforced by the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) regulars. They were said to be conducting hostile operations against the local populace and attempting to subvert South Vietnamese government control of the countryside.

Most aircraft had landed when ribbons of aqua-colored tracer rounds criss-crossed the landing zone from the forest sides. Several rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) soared wide of the aircraft on the ground. The ambush was sprung. Steams of red-tracer rounds replied from the ships. The tracer rounds created web-like netting around the contested terrain. Red tracers rounds from friendly fires pelted trees, breaking branches and uprooted bushes as they traced their way to the enemy's machine gun positions.

The attacking forces were committed; it was too late to abort the mission. Commanders bellowed over their headsets for all ships to insert their troops. Taus ship, 460, would be the fourth Chinook into the tight landing zone. One hundred feet aloft and fifty yards short of the intended landing spot, Taus' helicopter took its first hits.

For Taus, the impacts reminded him of a rockslide he had experienced while driving along the Pennsylvania State Turnpike. Those falling rocks had dented his Pontiac and nearly caused him to hit the road's side rail. Aircraft 460 wobbled and shook, jarring it out of the steady rhythm on its descent. It began to vibrate and pulsate violently, just as other rounds hit the ship's fuselage. Pieces of metal sheeting, canvas equipment—and GI flesh, ripped apart as the bursting shell fragments peppered the ship's interior.

Troopers cried out in pain and agony, as the ship echoed its mechanical death cry with beeping warning signals over the radio intercom and an array of brightly lit red and yellow cockpit caution panel lights.

A splash and several thuds from the flexing rotor blades occurred as 460 hit the water levee at the far side of the landing zone. The helicopter was grounded like a crippled hippo in a shallow pond. The troops who were not hit scrambled out of the rear cargo ramp and scattered into the adjacent forest.

Taus unlocked his seat and shoulder harness and jettisoned his emergency door. His copilot, James Rodgers, looked dazed. Taus leaned over, unbuckling Rodgers harness and telling him to exit through the door on Taus' side. Fortunately, there was no fire, thanks to the self-sealing fuel tanks. Both of the ship's gunners were still firing their M60 machine guns into the tree lines, providing some measure of covering fires to the beleaguered platoon. Taus instructed them to unlatch their guns and take up positions near the levee. Both crew gunners knew exactly what to do. They had

been “grunts,” former “ground-pounders,” on a previous tour of duty. They extended their duty for the more glamorous duties of a flight crewmember.

Medics were assisting the wounded troopers off the helicopter. When the last man got off, Taus gambled and turned on the battery switch to radio the command and control ship that was circled overhead. The commanders tried to understand the unfolding battle panorama and the heavy radio transmissions, making for poor communications. Taus could not break into the garbled transmissions.

Changing radio frequencies, Taus hoped to raise the Division Aviation Officer. Luckily, Ippolito’s answered. Taus recognized him and used some old soccer terms rather than “talk in the clear” about the tactical situation. “Is that you striker, over?” Ippolito picked up on the jargon already aware that 460 went down in the hot landing zone. Division Command already requested recovery operations to commence when the artillery fire subsided.

“Listen Coach, we are out of substitutions and I need a replacement!” shouted Taus. “Understood Striker. I will alert Bearcat Six to relieve you as soon as the team comes up to play, over.” There was nothing further to say. Ippolito would take care of the rest, just as he had at the academy when the team was down.

Bullets sprayed into the opened pilot’s door hitting the radio panels. There would be no further transmissions as Taus scrambled out of the cockpit and through the main cargo area towards the open rear ramp. He stumbled upon some GI equipment left behind by a wounded trooper. A steel pot helmet was exchanged for Taus’ Bakelite flight helmet. On the battlefield, the old World War II helmet was better protection than the flight helmet. Taus also grabbed an M16 rifle and ammunition magazines, providing substantially more firepower than the pilot-issued 38-caliber revolver that dangled from Taus’ survival vest.

A fleeting view of some blood and guts reminded Taus that his problems had just began. He bounded off the rear ramp into the muddy rice paddy that was still being raked by machine gun fire. Most troopers had found some form of cover near the forest’s edge. Those who were in unprotected areas, and wounded, cried out for help, soaked in their own blood and the stagnant rice paddy waters. Brave medics tried to assist, tending the wounded. While enemy fires ripped into their positions, medics ripped open uniforms searching for bleeding puncture wounds. It was chaotic, like most battles.

The enemy now fled, with elements of the remaining organized platoons advancing deep into the forest searching for them. On occasion, they drew fires from their own supporting troops. Slowly, the gunfire ceased. Men regrouped. Rain started to fall, drenching the troops. An approaching Chinook created a heavy rotor downwash, further soaking everyone. The wounded were evacuated first as additional troopers exited the newly arriving ships.

A pilot from Division Headquarters asked for Taus, stating he was sent by Ippolito to get the “ball team.” Taus collected his flight gear and radioed Division Headquarters, and was informed to return to base with his crew and take back a flyable ship to make repairs at the landing zone.

All four Chinooks on the initial approach had taken hits, but 460 was damaged beyond repairs. Four Hueys and one Cobra sustained battle damage and were scattered around the landing area, which looked like an aircraft junkyard. Some commander would pay with his military career for the lost 460 Chinook. It wasn't Taus' Battalion commander, who only obeyed the orders of his higher commander.

A flow of maintenance requisitions and repair parts forms covered Taus' hangar desk the following days. As he completed another form, Ippolito entered the hangar. "Well Striker, we won another one!" Ippolito's smile faded as he saw Taus' stark expression. "I'm not so sure, Sarge."

Walking over to the hangar window, Ippolito looked at the approaching rain clouds and said, "Looks like another thunderhead approaching Striker." "When does the season end? Coach," Taus sadly asked. Division Operations had already alerted Taus that they needed more aircraft readied for tomorrow's early mission. Again, Taus would spend the night working and conducting test flights. The next day he would also fly the rescue-and-recovery ship.

The Boeing CH-47 Chinooks could each carry a full platoon, 44 soldiers and all their equipment; whereas, the much smaller Bell UH-1 Huey Iroquois could carry only a squad, 11 soldiers at most. Both aircraft had cargo hooks underneath their fuselage. The improved CH-47C model could "sling-load" over 10,000 pounds. Neither aircraft would enter an unknown landing zone with any loads on their hooks. Cargo displacement would occur only after the LZ was secured. The CH-47 had a third seat in the cockpit area which was no more than folding harness slung between the cockpit entrance way. It is termed the "Commander's Seat," providing a unit commander with a front row view directly behind the pilots. Unless the leader, using the commander's seat, was at least a field grade officer, the pilots rarely allowed anyone to sit there.

### **Next Day: Taking Fire**

Whether in the attack or on defense, the mind becomes mesmerized when confronted with terror. Following are two episodes that deal with both situations and the visual spectacle on a battlefield. Witnessing an abnormal event, the brain can misinterpret the factual messages conveyed by the senses. "Can I believe what I am seeing?" The mind wants to dismiss the awful reality. Confirmation by the other senses is needed. All of one's senses are on high alert. In the first true situation, there is a defensive scenario; and later, there is an offensive one, both conducted from the air.

### **On Defense**

Streams of tracer rounds shot skyward from the jungle, accompanied by the sounds, "Ping, ping-aping," as they hit the helicopter's fuselage. The Army's Iroquois utility aircraft, a Bell Helicopter Company whirlybird designated as the UH-1D model costs the U.S. taxpayers \$400,000 in terms of early 1970 dollars. One of its sophisticated systems provides the pilots with both visual and audio indications of power loss, a condition that would be obvious to any pilot without the warning systems. The instrument panel's master caution and warning lights illuminate, followed by several of the

more than twenty other amber cautionary lights that are clustered on the middle pedestal panel between the two pilot seats. A bright red RPM warning light dazzles the eyes, competing for the pilot's attention.

Nearly simultaneously, a warning siren and a tooting cautionary noise sounds through the intercom system, indicating the aircraft is in serious trouble. There will be several different emergencies to contend with as more rounds punch holes into the crippled Iroquois, better known to the troops as a "Huey."

The pinging sounds of enemy bullets penetrating the fuselage and vital engine and transmission components are now masked by the blaring sounds of the emergency warning system. The visual and audio signals only added to the pilots' confusion. Both experienced aviators knew that the Huey had been mortally wounded and that they are going down. They feel it through their bodies as the aircraft starts losing altitude and the flight controls feel mushy. Losing altitude rapidly, the stricken ship sunk into the jungle foliage below.

There would be no recovery this time. No practiced emergency procedures would solve the problems this time. The aviators' instantaneous reactions might save them from a hard crash landing. An autorotation was needed, provided that the transmission did not seize-up. (This flight maneuver uses the remaining inertia in the rotary blades to guide and slow the helicopter to a safe area for the forced landing.) There were no safe landing areas, no cleared fields below, just triple canopy jungle. Their altitude was too low anyway to enter the autorotation mode now.

Taus bottomed the collective pitch stick on his left side, trying to save whatever main rotor momentum that was remaining while hoping to develop a safe glide and searching for an immediate landing area. At the original cruise altitude of 200 feet, a hard landing was inevitable. Providence had created the jungle over rolling hills and small mountains. The Huey crested a hill when it received the lethal wounds. As the leeward side of the slope quickly and precipitously fell away, so too did the Army aircraft and its sky troopers, saving them from a quicker and harder landing.

The treetops soon snared the magnesium bird. Higher tree limbs were pruned until the larger denser branches below blunted the chopper's blades, clipping off the two main rotary wings. Fortunately, the fuselage was spared from any chance encounters with the larger jungle timbers. And equally fortunate, there was a river that flowed in front of them.

Nonetheless, the Huey slammed into a narrow river embankment, careening like a flat rock across the shallow surface, skipping a few times before coming to an abrupt halt by the far riverbank. From where it was initially hit by gunfire, the aircraft had covered several hundred meters before final crash. The aircraft hit the far riverbank, crushing the Huey's nose and forward battery compartment. All systems immediately went silent, leaving the shocked humans who had braced themselves for the sudden impact before going limp upon compression from the fast stop.

Taus' shoulder harness held him against the back of his armored-plated seat. The co-pilot's restraining reel was not set, so the co-pilot's torso jerked

forward until his head cracked against his left kneecap. The cyclic control stick which stood between the co-pilot's legs had gratefully pressed into his right knee, avoiding what would have been a skull crushing fracture.

There was no fire, thanks to the self-sealing fuel tanks. There were no more enemy fires as the aircraft had cascaded over the sloping jungle hill, finding a temporary refuge from the hostile guns. The jungle creatures were quieted when they heard the unusual noises made by the slashing manmade object that plummeted from the sky.

Looking on his right, Taus saw his copilot's, Chief Warrant Officer Pete Everett, slumped in the co-pilot's seat. A wet crew chief, Paul Camell, approached from the right side of the aircraft, shouting, "Are you guys alright?"

Staring at him, Taus thought how the hell did Camell get there in the jungle and why was he soaked? Camell added, "I jumped just before impact sir. I knew we would hit hard and so I took my chances and dove into the river. It saved me. Is Chief Everett okay, sir?"

"I hope so Paul," Taus replied as he unfastened his harness and moved over to Everett's position. Only the three of them were aboard the aircraft. Camell had loosened Everett's harness and was massaging Everett's face with the muddy river water, and Everett slowly regained consciousness.

Feeling with numbed hands, then squinting with dazed eyeballs, Everett groaned before stating, "I know I ain't in heaven, cause you are the ugliest angel I ever saw, Camell!"

"Great," Taus shouted, relieved to see Everett was still kicking. Are you going to make it? Can you move? We have to get away from this ship ASAP!" Camell assisted Everett to exit the aircraft while Taus grabbed a portable radio that had been strapped in the rear cargo area and turned it on. "Rightside Six, this is Rightside Two. We splashed down hard, south of the landing zone in your vicinity. How do you copy, over?"

The static increased as Taus turned the radio volume up, then set the squelch switch to its off position. This flick of a switch was supposed to help carry the radio signal. After a second transmission, Taus heard, "This is Six. Report damage One, over."

"The aircraft is a total loss, but we are okay, probably three clicks from the action. We will be moving towards you and Oscar-Papa Niner, over."

Machine gun fires started strafing their position, shredding jungle foliage, surprising Taus at how quickly their position had been pinpointed. Taus' ship was the last aircraft in formation, a reserve aircraft for rescue with no combat troops on board except the three-man crew. Scampering across the jungle brush, they headed toward Observation Post Nine where they would rendezvous with the forward artillery support base.

Taus, Everett and Camell wore the new ripcord outfits just issued the previous day; none had any identifying marks or patches. They carried standard U.S. issued jungle survival gear. Both Taus and Camell remembered to take along their "Swedish Ks" and ammo pouches. Still dizzy and guided by Camell, Everett staggered through the underbrush armed only with his 38 caliber Colt Revolver.

Climbing up the forward slope of another hill, they found a temporary refuge behind a fallen tree trunk. Taus radioed again, "Rightside Six, how about some artillery support?" As he fumbled with a folded topographical map, a reply squawked, "Rightside Two, where do you want us to place it, over?"

Struggling with the map, Taus read off a 6-digit coordinate over the radio, trying to precisely locate the area for the artillery barrage. "That's not good enough. Two. We need an 8-digit location, otherwise we may hit your position, over." Several AK-47 rounds ripped apart the decaying bark where they had taken cover. "Six, just place some rounds 200 meters south of the river ASAP, and I will march them into the enemy position, over."

"Roger Two. Fire mission ready..." The transmission faded off as the gunners prepared to fire. The first several rounds overshot their position initially, whooshing overhead and dully impacting into the distance hill. "Drop 100, Rightside Six, over." Taus desperately called, "Too far away, Six."

The approaching enemy was within 100 meters and only the dense tropical scrubs masked their position. Taus was tempted to return fire. Perhaps the enemy did not know their exact position. The shots that hit the tree trunk could have been randomly placed. It did not matter, ammo was in short supply and they needed it all if the artillery proved ineffective.

The next salvo from Rightside Six impacted much closer and louder, shaking the surrounding ground, silencing the wildlife. It also told the enemy he was being squeezed from behind. "Drop another 50 meters," yelled Taus. This time the rounds landed on target. The blast from high-explosive shells echoed throughout the jungle as tree limbs, scrubs and dirt were convulsed up in all directions. It sent the enemy in retreat. The trip back to the landing zone was uneventful and quiet, except for the constant ringing in their ears from the artillery barrage.

### **On Offense**

At first, the idea behind dropping napalm from a CH-47 Chinook helicopter was to clear an area for the air assault and insertion of troops. First Cavalry Division commanders found that napalm cleared other things as well. They employed it as a tactical weapon when any enemy forces were located.

Rather than relying upon the U.S. Air Force for tactical support, the "Cav" used its own resources. An aerial napalm strike was accomplished by placing a large number of 55 gallon steel barrels containing aviation fuel or napalm on an aluminum pallet (normally reserved for loading materials on Air Force cargo aircraft). A large net was placed under the pallet and after the barrels were placed on the pallet, the net was folded over it and tied together using a sling-and-donut arrangement. That would allow the load to be picked up by the hook on the underbelly of the Chinook. Incendiary grenades were attached to the net webbing to ignite the load upon impact.

Flying at tree-top level, the Chinook would pass over a suspected enemy position and either pilot could "punch-off" the load, while either of the ship's gunners would fire M60 machine gun rounds into the dropped load, just in case the grenades did not ignite it.

Taus received the order to assign an extra aircraft for the next day's launch to carry the deadly napalm pallet. It would have to be his aircraft due to maintenance problems. It was five months after the Cambodian Incursion (April to June 1970). The fleet was still hurting from that exhaustive campaign. The 228<sup>th</sup> ASHB Operations Officer notified Taus that Chief Warrant Officer Bob Weir would pilot his aircraft, while Taus acted as co-pilot. The decision was based on Weir's experience in performing such napalm strike missions.

By 0600 hours the next day, Chief Weir and Captain Taus were flying towards the objectives with the cargo pallet slung underneath, loaded with napalm drums. Weir gave Taus the briefing he received from the Tactical Operations Center (TOC). "There's a Viet Cong village which Division wants annihilated. We are to drop the load dead center on the village. We'll only have one pass over it before we return to hit it. When I say so, Captain Taus, press your hook release trigger. If the hook fails to release, then use the emergency hook release to blast it open."

It was not what the Army had taught Taus as a cadet, a subordinate officer was giving him orders. But Weir was competent and he was the "Aircraft Commander" on this mission. It was just as well, Taus thought, he had only a few hours of sleep in the hangar prior to the morning mission. Combat does not allow much time for thoughtful insight.

Only a few nights ago, there was a heated discussion at the battalion officers' club over the war effort. It was obvious to everyone that there was a draw down in military troop strength and equipment throughout Vietnam. It was part of President Richard Nixon's promise to untangle America's involvement in the war. Some officers argued about the futility of the war, its destructiveness to the Vietnamese people, the wasted resources and the ethical aspects to it all. Taus entered the "0" club that night to check on aircraft problems from the aviators themselves. Often an aviator would discern an aircraft problem but not write-it-up for maintenance to inspect and repair.

After listening to the inebriated beefing and complaining, Taus was approached by Chief Warrant Officer James T. Rodgers who solicited Taus' opinion. "We have a job to do, that's why I am here. And so do you! As military officers, we must carry out our assigned missions unless there is a real moral issue or unlawful order given to us. What more can I say?" Taus sought to curtail further engagement on the heated topic. His concern was his duty, to launch mission-ready aircraft for the next day's flights.

The village was only a few miles in the distance as the olive drab bird approached its target. Chief Weir pointed out the location to Taus as the Chinook started its first pass. Taus scanned the ground below. It was a typical Vietnamese village. There were people in it. Men, women and children all looked up as the large bird roared over their hamlet.

Because of the pallet underneath, the Chinook had to make a large circle before returning; otherwise the load would sway uncontrollably. Within a few minutes, the aircraft was again making its final pass over the village. Taus' hand gripped the cyclic stick with one finger beginning to press the hook release trigger. There were some women and children below. There

were no anti-aircraft fires coming from the seemingly peaceful village. Perhaps G2 (Intelligence) or G3 (Operations) made a mistake. It did not matter,

Taus saw innocent people below and his finger relented on the trigger.

“Punch-off!” yelled Weir, as the Chinook swiftly approached the village center. Again, Taus saw women and children scurrying for cover. He deliberately hesitated. “The Colonel will court-martial you for not dropping the load. Captain!” screamed Weir. In an instant, Weir pressed his trigger. The pallet would land just beyond the village in the dense forest. No innocents would be killed.

Struggling to gain altitude to escape the explosion below. Weir said in disgust, “We’ll catch hell for missing the target. Both aviators could now view a plume of red flames and black smoke engulfing the forest below. “Relax chief, I’ll inform the Colonel that it was my decision to delay the release.

I’d rather answer to the ole man than to God later.” Nothing further was said as the Chinook returned to Phouc Vinh Airbase.

Taxiing into the aircraft revetment. Chief Weir spotted the Battalion Commander’s Jeep. “Looks like the ole man got the initial reports from Division on our mission. He looks mighty pissed-off the way he’s standing there!” Waldron was standing in the jeep’s passenger seat with his hands on his hips.

While both aviators were shutting down the aircraft engines, LTC Waldron entered the cockpit area and tapped Taus’ helmet, as he bellowed at the top of his lungs to overcome the dying drone of the turbine engines. “You missed the village. Congratulations! First reports from Division Operations say we have the highest body count in months. I got to hand it to you fellows for figuring that “Charlie” would run into the woods for cover. You placed it right on top of him!”

Weir and Taus looked at each other with astonished expressions. They were dumbfounded, expecting to be severely reprimanded, not praised for missing the village.

### **Leadership Problems**

Interference by the Battalion Commander and his staff lackeys aggravated the aviation problems. There was little time for Captain Taus to attend to all the problems. Disciplinary and drug problems intermingled. Either one being the cause or the result of the other. There were no holidays in Vietnam. The 1968 Tet Offensive had taught that lesson. Sunday was another working day.

A Philippo Rock Band was hired by one of the companies to entertain the men. The aircraft hangar was use for the performance. An outdoor picnic was prepared with steaks and beers. The improvised rock concert attracted other units to the airbase. Some started partying earlier in the day. The event was a success.

The aircraft hangar was a mess for the next day’s missions. Few soldiers turned out for duty the next morning. Perhaps, the entertainment reinforced the fact that life could be enjoyed, so why put up with the suffering. More probably, drugs were used to excess after the beer and alcohol ran out.



Drugs were always present, brought into the airbase by Vietnamese laborers if not already air-delivered by the Air America planes that frequented the airfield. These carriers obtained the drugs from other sources in the Golden Triangle region: Laos, Burma and Thailand.

Promotions, recognitions and rewards, such as Rest and Recreation trips were sporadic. Mission requirements always had a priority. Without a consistent merit system, there was no reason to perform. The American Press added to the dilemma, stating it was an unjust war and that American troops should be withdrawn. Lieutenant Colonel Edward Waldron, the battalion commander, administered the kick-in-the-butt so often that it was expected no matter what efforts were made.

Living and working conditions were hardly ideal. The soldiers in the field had it worse. The Cavalry Troopers struggled to line up for a combat assault mission. They looked haggard and fatigued before they boarded the helicopters for the battlefield. Aviation crews always felt sympathy for their brother troopers going into combat. Though part of the combat assault, the crews would "usually" return to home base that night, if they were lucky.

The battalion commander addressed this fact. Many of the crews were composed of former "grunts" that welcomed flight duties. They did not want to return to the jungles or rice paddies. Many had earned their flight status.

Despite heroic performances, there was little to encourage and maintain a flying fleet that needed skilled mechanics too.

The busy runway caused a constant swirl of dust, covering the airbase.

Army tanker trucks sprayed creosote to hold down the dust and dirt. The black oily fluid mixed with the dirt and lacquered everything. Aerial dioxin sprays destroyed vegetation, but had little effect upon the mosquitoes, ants and cockroaches. The sun mercilessly beat down upon the flight line where temperatures exceeded 100 degrees. The shade of the aircraft hangar was no better, too sweltering to allow a maintenance crew to function.

Worn out and damaged unit equipment needed to be replaced in order to accomplish repairs. Special tools and repair equipment, such as hydraulic ramps and forklifts were inoperative or unsafe after years of abusive use and exposure to the elements. Replacements would require more than a maintenance request form from the unit.

At the highest command levels, the generals knew the units were "standing down," part of the troop forces being returned to the States. But company commanders and their troops were never informed, until the very last moments. The new American Policy called for the "Vietnamization of the War."

The First Cavalry Division was to undergo what was termed a stand down as the troop levels declined in Vietnam. Battalion commanders, knowing their last battles were being fought, required a maximum effort from both their men and equipment. Their relentless demands were ruthless. Troopers who borne the burden of battle were denied the courtesy of knowing the official policy, that a light existed at the end of the tunnel for the American efforts in Vietnam.

Leadership was a problem. An officer was promoted too rapidly. Within two years of commissioning as a Second Lieutenant, an officer found himself holding the rank of a Captain. There was a serious shortage of officers. Campus unrest and student apathy diminished the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), which was a prime breeding ground for future officers.

Some colleges even abandoned ROTC programs. The more experienced officer pools found in the Army National Guard and Army Reserve Components remained mostly immobilized to a large extent based upon political decisions. The National Guard was a safe place to avoid the war as the son of the future President George Bush discovered. The sad fact was that many of these experienced units became sanctuaries for those avoiding the draft and service in Vietnam.

As a consequence, many junior Army officers were thrust into leadership positions before they were prepared to assume the higher supervisory responsibilities. Competent decisions based on experiences and maturity were woefully lacking in many situations.

Within the officers' corps, there were serious problems as some refused to execute lawful orders or developed excuses for not carrying them out. Worse, some officers engaged in unethical and criminal activities. During the mid-1960s, the breakdown of law and order in America's cities contributed to disorder within the military ranks.

Oddly enough, the demand for helicopter pilots presented another form of leadership problems. Often high school graduates, with limited or no military experience found themselves at training bases becoming Army Aviators. They graduated from flight school with the rank of Warrant Officer.

Assigned to an aviation unit, they were mixed with the young commissioned officers. Whoever was the senior aviator, commanded the aircraft. As aircraft commanders or flight instructors, warrant officers were in charge of the flight and its passengers or students commissioned officers (in flight training). Problems would arise.

In combat, the commissioned officers were in charge of mission responsibilities, but they could very well discover that the ultimate authority for a flight rested with the "aircraft commander." A flight could be terminated by the decision of a warrant officer pilot. The commissioned officers' fate as student aviators also rested on passing a flight examination administered by warrant officer instructor pilots (IPS). This resulted in ambiguities in the rank structure. Often confrontations and disputes arose.

From a technical standpoint, both commissioned officers and warrant officers pilots were highly competent and proficient. They were diligent and responsible individuals. Nonetheless, the two brands of officers would occasionally lock horns. Given more experience and maturity, these confrontations would not have occurred.

### **Drugs, Discipline and Another Duc Phong, 1971**

In July 1971, Lieutenant General W.J. McCaffrey, commanding general of USARV, acknowledged that mission accomplishments had undergone degradation in some units. The general mentioned officers were more inter-

ested in advancing their careers than in caring for their men's welfare. Taus found this charge to be accurate in Colonel Waldron's Battalion. Few officers, most of whom were pilots, considered their duty to be much more than flying responsibilities. The root causes of the Army's disciplinary problems were several, the primary one being the epidemic of drug-use in Vietnam.

Nearly 20-years later, General McCaffrey would be selected as the U.S. Drug Czar. It would be a political appointment for the alleged U.S. government's war against drug trafficking. McCaffrey's new office would coordinate with the various law enforcement agencies to combat the drug problem.

His appointment only added another bureaucratic layer to the situation. Funding for McCaffrey's office was limited compared to the job requirements.

Disciplinary problems continued to plague the First Cavalry Division and other Army units, as well as Air Force, Navy and Marines Corps forces. For the First Cavalry, the Cambodian operation sapped the physical stamina of both men and machines. Unit resources were diminished with the approaching stand-down of many American units in Vietnam. U.S. troop strength levels were being rapidly decreased.

Enlisted men were apathetic, if not just downright mutinous. The anti-war movement back home in the United States encouraged hostility among those drafted for an endless war. There were too many broken promises made to the men that were never carried out. The only thing that mattered to every man was his "DEROS Date" (Date Eligible to Return from Overseas).

#### **Lack of Respect for Law and Authority**

Men sought refuge in a number of ways. The usual servicemen's vices abounded in Vietnam: alcoholism, gambling, and prostitution. But there was one new threat, more disabling than all the others, the breakdown in discipline needed in a fighting force. And this breakdown was further precipitated by drug use. Back home, the country was facing a rising crime rate.

Waldron was only mission-oriented, and lacked concern for his men's welfare. His command Sergeant Major accepted his attitude probably out of his own survival. Senior non-commissioned officers could do little to affect the deteriorating troop morale.

#### **Assassinating Officers**

Late in 1970, the senior NCOs attempted a strike. It did not last long; perhaps a few days. The command sergeant major got to their leadership, the companies' first sergeants. Some considerations were provided and the strike quickly ended. But the problems remained and the lower ranking enlisted men knew it had to be addressed. The more radical men took matters into their own hands. Assassination attempts were made on officers.

#### **Fragging: Murdering Fellow Soldiers**

The term "fragging" was applied to these incidents. Often officers found live fragmentation grenades tossed into their quarters by angry soldiers. There were 788 fragging incidents recorded between 1969 and 1972, a third resulted in deaths. Refusals to go into combat also occurred. The First Cavalry Division logged 35 combat refusals in 1970. Stateside desertion rates

reached unprecedented heights. Statistically, there were 73.5 desertions per 1000 men.

### **Sabotage of Aircraft**

As a unit commander, Taus was inundated with mission priorities that took his full attention. The lack of operationally ready aircraft and skilled personnel continued on a downward spiral. Aircraft recoveries, test flights and maintenance problems were enough to handle. Outright sabotage became another problem as crew personnel, who did not want to fly, damaged components during pre-flight preparations.

When needles were found in the aircraft's electrical wire bundles, it was obvious that the malfunctions were caused by the crews. Officer pilots were not immune from apathy. More often than not, a disgruntled pilot would reject a marginal aircraft by indicating it had "a safety of flight problem."

It did not take long to find a problem or induce one. By writing a suspected problem into an aircraft's logbook, technical inspectors had to look at the condition and decide if the aircraft was flight-worthy, taking precious hours and technical specialists from other vital areas to check into the phantom problems.

### **Maintenance Nightmare**

To more expeditiously handle the various maintenance headaches, Taus combined test flights with parts' runs into the supply depot at Phu Loi Army Airfield. At that location the Army Maintenance Management Inspection (AMMI) Team controlled all aircraft components valued in excess of \$200. Units could no longer maintain a stockpile of parts. The only way to secure a part was by the direct exchange of a worn-out part. To make matters worse, Taus had to forecast the need for the item. Scheduled maintenance was troublesome enough. Factoring in combat damage made the situation much worse. Fragrant acts of vandalism by drug-using crews totally upset any smooth repair operation.

If aircraft were ready to be launched, their number would be compared against the total aircraft assigned to a unit. The resulting figure was called the "Operationally Ready Rate." It was this "OR" rate that aviation commanders measured the effectiveness of their subordinate units. To survive both the real war and the statistics, one had to be resourceful, Taus tried wining and dining the officer-in-command of the AMMI team to secure vital aircraft components. Other units had tried the same tactics on the OIC of the AMMI team before. Taus had appealed to his patriotic values. The OIC had also heard the same stories about supporting the fighting men in the field.

### **Cannibalizing Aircraft**

Cannibalization was a common practice with aircraft in maintenance. If one ship went down for any lengthy repairs, then its parts could be "borrowed" for another ship rather than wait for delivery of replacement parts. It was faster than securing separate parts for two ships. The trick in cannibalizing an aircraft was not to dismember any single ship for parts. Such a practice would lead to a "Hangar Queen," an aircraft that had been stripped of its original parts so that it became nearly impossible to reconstruct its records.

The OIC operated by the book, but the book was not written for the conditions existing in the Vietnam War. Taus told his co-pilot, Chief Warrant Officer Peterson, to take the controls and return to Phouc Vinh Airfield, completing the maintenance test flight. Peterson was also Taus' assistant maintenance officer. To minimize flight time, a low-level approach was begun into the 228<sup>th</sup>'s parking area. As the Chinook crossed the perimeter's barricade, concertina wire caught the rear tire, dragging the wire across the corrugated steel plates that were the landing pad.

When the aircraft quivered and dipped the crew thought the test flight was unsuccessful. The aircraft was landed and quickly shut down as the crew dismounted to examine the problem. Wire was entangled around the left rear tire. Peterson asked the flight engineer for wire cutters. (The flight engineer is the senior enlisted crewmember responsible for the aircraft. Normally, Chinooks have a five-man crew: Pilot, copilot, flight engineer, crew chief and assistant crew chief/gunner. Both the crew chief and assistant crew chief man M60 machine guns on each side in back of the cockpit. A third machine gun position exists in the rear cargo ramp, but was seldom used.)

As Peterson clipped the wires, the tire went flat. The flight engineer never respected maintenance work done by an officer. Looking at the flat tire, he bemoaned, "Geez sir! I could have done that myself. It'll take me another hour to replace that tire."

Peterson was not very happy either. "Look, the wire was embedded in the tire. It was going flat anyway." The flight engineer reminded Peterson, "And who put the tire into the wire, sir?" Taus needed the ship for another mission. He was ready to settle the argument when the man he disliked the most, next to Waldron, arrived.

Driving his jeep up to the pad, Captain Denis Dunne, the battalion aviation maintenance officer asked, "Where the hell have you been? The old man is looking for you." Taus asked, "What is it this time?"

"There's another ship that's down near Snuffy FSB [Fire Support Base]. The old man wants you to get out there ASAP. The ship is just northwest of Snuffy." Taus stated, "Northwest of Snuffy is Cambodia," Are you telling me, it's in Cambodia?"

"Yeah, that's the problem. You better get going. The ole man is expecting you." Dunne provided Taus with a quick briefing of the situation. It did not look good. Injuries were sustained and the aircraft could be lost unless repaired immediately or evacuated from the contested area.

With another aircraft completing its maintenance inspections, Taus decided to test fly it on the way to Snuffy, even though a test flight had to be a separate event and not combined with any mission flights. But there were no other aircraft available.

"Flight Operations, this is Sky Warrior Four. Can you raise Sky Warrior Six and notify him we will be in his area of operations by 1630, over." As Taus cleared Phouc Vinh Airbase, Flight Operations radioed, "Sky Four, this is flight operations. When you arrive at the AO, come up four-two-point-seven and check with Sky Six, over." Waldron wanted to talk to Taus over the FM radio system.

By 4:45 p.m., Taus' ship was over Snuffy. The FSB controller reported heavy enemy ground fire 10 miles northwest in the vicinity of the downed ship. Waldron monitored the frequency and contacted Taus' ship. "We got another Duc Phong down here. I want you to switch ships and get the other aircraft out and fast!"

The downed ship had strayed over the Cambodian border, something that was easy to do since there were no markings in the jungle to show the boundary between Vietnam and Cambodia. FSB Snuffy was created to fire artillery barrages into the Cambodian jungle that hid part of the southern routes of the Ho Chi Minh trail, the route used to resupply the North Vietnamese forces fighting in South Vietnam.

### **Intruding into Cambodia**

On January 30, 1971, a group was organized in Saigon known as the Military Equipment Delivery Team, Cambodia. It was a joint U.S. Armed Forces organization responsible for the military involvement into Cambodia.

Numerous flight operations were flown into Cambodia.

The intent of the flights into Cambodia was to eliminate the movement of North Vietnamese troops and supplies into South Vietnam. On February 3, 1971, an ARVN (Army of the Republic of South Vietnam) task force consisting of 10,000 soldiers was sent to Cambodia, with air support provided by the U.S. military. The operation went far beyond the border sanctuaries and into the Kompong Cham Province of Cambodia.

"Snuffy, Med-Evac three-zero, on the go to Echo-Lima-Lima, over."

Taus' replacement copilot, Chief Warrant Officer Brian Albers, said, "Sounds like some people were hurt down there." Snuffy held their outgoing fires as Taus' recovery ship inserted itself into an improvised landing area. An infantry platoon first lieutenant ran to the Chinook. He said, "Looks like you lost your crew, captain. They are all injured."

The lieutenant described what happened. While performing a resupply mission, the aircraft was hit by what appeared to be a 37-millimeter anti-aircraft cannon, injuring the pilot and a crewman. Unable to control the aircraft, the copilot executed a forced landing in the nearest clearing. Once on the ground, friendly troops were dispatched to attempt a rescue. But the enemy also sent a rifle company to the location, resulting in a firefight that lasted most of the day. Caught in the crossfire, the copilot and another crewman were wounded. A heavy barrage from the FSB prevented total destruction or capture of the aircrew. Reinforcements were sent to assist with the rescue. Finally, a Med-Evac chopper was able to land and take off with the injured. The lieutenant added, "Now, we have one of our infantry companies in the area. Can you get the aircraft out, captain?"

Taus asked: "Where's your company commander, Lieutenant?" The lieutenant replied, "With your battalion commander, Waldron, at the FSB."

Taus wanted to insure the ground activities were coordinated.

The lieutenant replied, "My company commander is on that Med-Evac flight with your crew. We took some casualties here too. The NVA is out in full force. I was the executive officer; Guess I'm the acting CO now sir."

“I’ve got to take a close inspection of the downed Chinook to see if we can repair it. If it’s flyable, I’ll split my flight crew and fly it back to Snuffy.” A defensive perimeter was established, allowing Taus and his recovery team to inspect the downed helicopter, finding damage to be minimal, allowing repairs to commence as darkness fell.

With nightfall, Waldron flew his command and control Huey into the clearing. After being informed about the situation, Waldron volunteered his copilot, Captain Dunne and one of his crew members, to assist Taus in flying out the two Chinooks, leaving Dunne displeased about the arrangement. Waldron then departed with the remainder of his aircrew. Limited repairs were completed. Taus, with his crew chief, Alberts, and Dunne readied to fly the Chinook over to the nearby FSB for the night.

The short flight was done with only the dimly lit red cockpit instrument lights. Both pilots listened for any strange noises. Though the din and clamor of a helicopter flight would mask most aberrations, a knowledgeable pilot could detect some unusual sounds. Given their heightened alertness, any odd sounds increased their nervousness.

The recovery flight was successful, and they landed inside the FSB. Taus, Dunne and the crew chief deplaned, with plans to wait for the arrival of spare parts and a repair crew the following day.

There wasn’t much sleep that night for Taus and his crew, as heavy artillery barrages from Snuffy base pounded the surrounding jungle, followed by illumination flares and marking the enemy areas for an Air Force bombardment. Heavy fog blanketed the ground around Snuffy, mixed with smoke from the surrounding artillery fires and the air campaign, creating a psychedelic battlefield environment.

### **Repeated Penetration into Cambodia and Laos**

In April 1970, American troops conducted military operations in Cambodia until June, damaging North Vietnamese supply lines and NVA forces moving into south. A similar military mission into Laos occurred a year later, as U.S. Troops supported South Vietnamese forces attacking enemy forces on the Ho Chi Minh Trail in the southern panhandle of Laos. That invasion of Laos was called Operation Lam Son 719, beginning on February 8, 1971. Because of heavy casualties, the operation was terminated a month later.

Prior to Lam Son 719, ground activities had intensified throughout South Vietnam, which compounded the already overworked men and equipment of the First Cavalry Division caused by the Cambodian invasion.

U.S. military involvement was slowly being turned over to the South Vietnamese, resulting in U.S. units being withdrawn. Many other units were being reassigned to other in-country areas; portions of the First Cav would be moved north to support Lam Son 719. In the meanwhile, preparations were underway for the drawing down men and equipment, the reassignment of U.S. units for routine military operations in the III Corps area.

### **Early Morning Risers**

By 6 a.m., the Phantom flight line at Phouc Vinh Airbase was a hub of activity as the aircraft of Charlie Company, 228<sup>th</sup> ASHB, cranked-up for the

morning missions. Division Headquarters needed seven helicopters for assorted missions in support of the division. Five Boeing CH-47 Chinooks were slowly taxiing for takeoff, while two others were delayed in their re-ventments due to maintenance problems.

### **Drugs and Unflyable Aircraft**

“Where the hell are my mechanics, Sarge,” asked Taus. It was 8 a.m. and the temperature was already 85 degrees. Sergeant Ammons whispered his reply. “You said something. Sergeant?” Taus knew the answer without hearing it. Many of his men were strung out on drugs. The local Vietnamese labor force managed to bring opium and other hard drugs into the compound. Military police checked the local work force everyday for contraband, but drugs came in at night through the tangle of protective barricades surrounding the base. Besides the air war, Taus was engaged in a drug war, and losing the battle.

Returning to the billeting area, Taus searched for his missing troops. He found some still asleep in their cots, looking more dead than alive. Taus spotted several syringe needles indicating that they had “main-lined” the drugs. Division G-2 intelligence claimed the drugs came from Laos.

It was a serious problem that even the battalion commander could not handle. There was a critical problem of personnel available for maintenance and missions, which Taus had to conduct, causing Taus later that day to again discuss the drug problems with the unit commander, Edward Waldron.

### **Recognizing the CIA’s Air America as the Drug Source**

The Army was beginning its experiments with drug counseling and rehabilitation centers. Taus informed Waldron about his conversations with Division G-2 and the Laotian drug connection. A crack appeared in Waldron’s tough armor as he agreed and acknowledged that the CIA-operated airline, Air America, was involved in transporting the drugs into Vietnam.

Recalling an event, Waldron noted:

*One of Bravo Company’s recovery ships was sent to the site of a downed Air America plane a few weeks ago. The company commander found the aircraft completely destroyed and none of its crew survived.*

*However, there were remnants of cargo containing opium. “We reported this information to G-2. Never heard anything back. I don’t even think higher headquarters looked into the matter.”*

In the following weeks, Taus encountered another Air America flight that went down due to maintenance problems, where Taus actually saw the drugs being carried on the aircraft.

The crack in Waldron’s armor did not last long; he demanded that Taus improve his launching capabilities despite the lack of maintenance personnel due to the drug problems. Before Taus left, Waldron promised him additional civilian maintenance crews who would be arriving from the United States. These crews were contracted by Department of the Army from civilian aviation companies such as Lear Jet. The cost to the government was astronomical compared to the Army maintenance crews.

Back on the flight line, Taus was approached by Sergeant Branenburg. “Say Captain, can you do anything about the civilian aircraft over by the



maintenance revetments?” The Sergeant pointed to a silver twin-engine Air America plane that was checking out its engines, evidently having had some mechanical problems. “Captain, our maintenance crews there are upset since the aircraft’s blowing debris and dust at them. I’ve tried to approach them, but they waved me off.”

Responding to Taus’ signals, the Air America pilots shut down their engines. Taus explained the problem and asked if his men could be of assistance to them. The two pilots stated they had a magneto problem with both engines. Sergeant Branenburg worked on reciprocating engines in the past, so he took a look. Within an hour, the problem was fixed and the flight took off.

### **Air America Plane Down: Taus to the Rescue**

Several weeks later, while flying a routine repair parts run. Taus overheard a distress call from an Air America aircraft, announced over the guard frequency that it would be making a forced landing in a rice-paddy area near to Taus’ flight route. Taus decided to assist.

The C-46 Curtis aircraft landed safely and the crewmembers could be seen walking in the rice-paddies near the aircraft. Upon landing, Taus went to speak with the pilots but was waved off. Ignoring the wave off, Taus spoke to the pilots while an Army crew chief examined the C-46. Both pilots stated they did not need any further assistance and that one of their own recovery ships would be arriving shortly. The lead pilot became particularly unnerved when Taus approached his crew chief who was looking inside the Curtis. “Sir, they probably crashed because they were using too much of their cargo.”

The crew chief’s joke was no laughing matter to Taus or the Air America pilots. Both Taus and his crew chief estimated the cargo to between 3000 to 4000 pounds of heroin and partly processed opium, explaining why the pilots did not welcome an Army rescue.

### **Written Report of CIA Drug Smuggling**

Upon his return to base, Taus made a written report through his battalion commander to division headquarters concerning the drugs on the Air America flight. He also sent a copy of that report to his congressman in New York, Herbert Tenzer, along with a report describing the effects drugs were having upon his combat troops and the criminal involvement of the CIA.

### **A Congressional “Investigation” Followed**

Congressmen arrived in Vietnam within a few weeks to, ostensibly, conduct an in-depth examination. Their junket was meant to secure votes in upcoming elections. In their congressional report, the congressmen noted that the drugs found in the Air America flight were for the pilot’s personal use. 4000 pounds of opium for personal use?



Richard Taus 1971 Bell Cobra



Richard Taus receiving Air Medal for bravery.

## CHAPTER FIVE

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### Post-Vietnam Assignments

With the stand down of the First Cavalry Division around March 1971, Taus was transferred to the 307<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion in the Mekong Delta region at Can Tho, Vietnam. The 307<sup>th</sup> would also stand down. The battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Miguel Bonifacio, called Taus into his office ahead of the usual status report briefing time, indicating something unusual. Bonifacio said:

*You'll be leaving in a few weeks. Rich. We're all getting reassigned. The 307<sup>th</sup> is standing down. USARV wants you to report to Long Binh in a couple of days. Specialist Cole will be traveling with you. He's got about the same time left in 'Nam as you have. Those who have less than 45 days left before their tours end are being shipped back home early. The rest of us will have to wait for our next assignments."*

Bonifacio pointed to the unit flags on poles propped in back of his desk. "Cole and you are the color guard escorts for the unit. You'll both be taking these flags with you to Fort Lewis, Washington where, I understand, a ceremony will be held to retire the colors. Your first stop here will be at Long Binh."

The last time Taus was told to report to Long Binh, it concerned a covert operation. Were they planning on asking him to participate again? Taus was concerned and asked Colonel Bonifacio, "Sir, why am I supposed to report to Long Binh? Bien Hoa and Tan Son Nhut are the two airbases for those leaving country."

"Don't know. Rich. Just go there, report to Lieutenant Colonel Fortunado." Cole was the colonel's Jeep driver and stood an enormous six feet nine inches tall, a mountaineer from West Virginia. His large appearance more than made up for the Colonel's small stature. Bonifacio's leadership was low-key, so it helped having an enforcer by his side if needed.

At Long Binh, Taus and Cole went directly to USARV headquarters' main building, carrying their duffel bags and the colors, still mounted and wrapped around their flagpoles. Taus met Lieutenant Colonel Fortunado, whose office was adjacent to Colonel John Singlaub. Entering his office and saluting, Fortunado said, "I've got another mission for you. Captain Taus.

You were with the First Cavalry Division's 228<sup>th</sup> ASHB. We want you to carry their colors home too." Another captain entered the office carrying two more flags on their poles; one was the stars and stripes and the other, the 228<sup>th</sup>'s emblem on a blue background. Glad that the assignment did not concern any clandestine operation, such as the earlier Central America operation; Taus smiled and said, "I would be honored to do so."

They were scheduled out of Vietnam the next morning on a flight from Bien Hoa Airbase. Carrying the four eight-foot flagpoles, they boarded a military bus the next day that was already loaded with troops who had completed their tours and were anxious to get home.

It was a hostile group of some forty soldiers, reeking of marijuana. Surveying their shoulder patches, they came from service support units, and probably none had seen combat. Taus said, "Please give us some room, men. I've got these unit flags to bring back home." The men could care less. They were totally undisciplined. The fact that a captain had made the request did not bother them in the least, nor did Cole's imposing presence. Taus had seen their faces before on the drug-addicted soldiers in units he commanded.

There was little doubt these men were coming to or from the Long Binh  
Drug rehabilitation center.

They were disgruntled, moody, and ill tempered, instead of being happy about leaving Vietnam. They were suffering from their drug addictions and addicts looking for another fix. They were just enough malcontents to create a commotion, which Taus tried to ignore. He had dealt with drug-users before and could expect little cooperation.

The commercial airline departed from the Bien Hoa Airbase with that group of 40 plus a 100 or so from other units. Unlike Taus' first departure in 1968, there were no joyous cheers as the airplane lifted off the runway bound for the United States. Instead, many swore and uttered profanities.

An Army staff car was waiting for Taus and Cole at McChord USAF Base, which took them to Fort Lewis. They entered the headquarters building and a short ceremony was rehearsed and executed. Within a half-hour, both unit colors were taken off their flagpoles, and the colonel who headed the simple assemblage said the wooden flagpoles could have been left in Vietnam. The flags were placed into their canvas shrouds and into cardboard boxes addressed to a storage facility at the Department of the Army, Washington, D.C.

"You can leave now, captain." The colonel whose name Taus never knew wished him good luck on his trip back to New York. The ceremony was too simple; Taus knew the colonel had no idea of the sacrifices that so many men had made for the colors that they had brought home. There were no combat ribbons on the colonel's uniform for service in Vietnam.

#### **The Adjutant General: New York Army National Guard**

Now stateside, Captain Taus was assigned to the Fort Hamilton Command in Brooklyn, New York as its Adjutant General. One morning, his chief warrant officer has some bad news for Taus.

"I'm sorry sir. This letter came this morning from the adjutant general's office at the Department of the Army." Chief Warrant Officer Angel

Rodriguez nervously handed the document to Taus, knowing that the letter was not what Taus wanted to hear. The letter was Taus' release from active duty, changing Taus' military status from "voluntary indefinite," meaning he would serve until relieved by "TAG." The letter stated:

It is with the deepest appreciation and gratitude that the United States Government recognizes your active military service. At the present time, the force structure of the active Army is being curtailed. As a Reserve officer, you will be able to continue your career part-time in one of the Army Reserve Components. To assist in your readjustment to civilian life, a service bonus in the amount of \$10,000 will be paid to you.

The second combat tour of duty was endured by Taus since it was his intention to have a career in the Army; but the reduction in force ended that intent. The congratulatory letter from the Department of the Army meant little to him. He had served two tours in Vietnam, more than most men who stayed in the service with fewer decorations. The readjustment bonus was of no consequence, being \$6,666 after taxes.

The chief warrant officer stood by Taus' desk trying to be of assistance, and stated, "TAG may not have fully considered your record in their desire to reduce the Army. Perhaps if you visited them, it might make a difference."

"That's exactly what I intend to do. There's a bloody major down there that owes me an explanation, especially since half of those senior grade officers never had a tour in Vietnam or any other combat area."

"Should I make arrangements for you, captain?" The chief displayed a loyalty unknown to many other men. He had already served more than 25-years in the Army. "No thanks, chief. This has got to be a surprise attack, otherwise they wouldn't be there when I arrive."

On the drive to Washington, Taus thought about the promises made to him two years ago by Major Goulay. That was in the early spring of 1969 when Goulay asked Taus to come to Washington to discuss Taus' future assignments. From the Armed Forces Courier Service, Goulay moved to the officers' records branch of the Adjutant General Corps, which was an ideal position to review Army officers' qualifications, skills and assignments. He could also control their destinies, as he had with Taus.

In 1969, Major Gouley's office was deep within the maze of wooden barracks buildings that lined the streets of Fort Meyers in Washington. Taus was late and Goulay was always prompt. Fifteen minutes was an unreasonable amount of time to keep any field grade officer waiting. Still, Major Goulay waited and was in good spirits upon Taus' arrival.

"You don't want another tour in Vietnam, do you Lieutenant?" Goulay had asked Taus back in '69. It came as an implied threat. "What's the alternative," asked Taus. Goulay sat behind a gray metal desk and reached for a pencil that he used repeatedly to tap on his spiral notebook. "We have a number of operations to carry out. It may mean you'll have to leave the service, at least for awhile."

"I appreciated the Central America trip, but that kind of thing seems to be infrequently done. I want to pursue a military career full-time. My military records show that I never made any such trip. That type of job is risky

and doesn't reflect credit upon my military career. If it had some guarantees connected to it, I might be inclined to consider it. However, I'd rather be a regular Army officer."

Since Taus appeared not to be interested in another operation, Goulay raised his voice saying, "You mentioned guarantees. What kind of guarantee do you want? We pay a good bonus for the extra services. There are no real guarantees in any government jobs in spite of security many people claim exists. Do you think that an Army Officer has a secure job? Don't kid yourself. You may be killed overseas or ousted from the service when they don't need you."

Taus did not want to pursue the argument with the excited Major. "I certainly don't want to return to Vietnam and then find a letter thanking me for my services. I know that President Nixon promised to end the war; and, that there will be a reduction in troop strength."

Goulay's main objective was to get Taus to agree to another clandestine mission. He quit tapping his pencil on the notebook and stood up. Walking over to a large wall chart, he said "We figure that when you complete a tour of duty, we'll assign you to an Army Aviation Center like Fort Wolters, Rucker or Hunter. This way, your Adjutant General Corps background and aviation experiences could be put to use."

Now that Taus got Goulay back on track with the Army, Taus stated, "Can't say I've had much AG experience. All of my service has been with the Combat Arms branches. I'd like to transfer to a combat branch, sir."

"Forget about that. You are better off staying with the AG Branch like I said. We'll take care of you."

Now it was 1972 and Major Goulay and the Adjutant General Corps had not taken care of Taus. As Taus approached Fort Meyer's main gate, his thoughts returned to the "RIF" letter he received a few days ago recalling Goulay's words, "We'll take care of you."

Two years had not changed the parking situation. Every space at Fort Meyers had a sign painted near it or on it. Taus circled, looking for a space. Those most infrequently used were the "Reserved—General Officers Only" spaces. They owed him one, Taus figured. For that matter, he would soon be out of the service anyway. He nosed his Pontiac Grand Prix into the empty space. Two passing military policemen quickly saluted him without noticing his "railroad tracks" (captain's bars) were not stars.

This new air of authority carried Taus to the building directory. It was all dispelled as he read the large signs listing the real generals and their offices. Midway down a directory listing was Lieutenant Colonel Goulay's name. So he took care of himself, Taus thought as he climbed the staircase to conduct his surprise visit. A civilian secretary met him at the inner office. "I'd like to see Major Goulay."

"You mean Colonel Goulay, Captain," the secretary's eyes looked closely at his black nametag. "Taus? Let me see if he's busy. Captain."

In a few minutes, she returned saying, "I'm sorry. He's unavailable. May I help you?"

"No thank you. May I see his boss?"

“You mean General Sturm? His offices are at the Pentagon.” The surprise attack was running into difficulties; Taus decided to wait. “Please tell him that I’ll wait here. Let him also know that I waited a second year in Vietnam, so I can spend several hours waiting here.” The secretary took the message into Goulay’s office. In a few minutes, Goulay came out with an attaché case in his hand and greeted Taus, apologizing that he was off to an important conference “You should have called me first to arrange an appointment.”

“Would that have done any good, Major?” Taus knew Goulay’s rank, but he wasn’t going to correct himself. “I’d like to talk to you about this RIF letter I received.” Goulay relented, “Well, I suppose I can spare a few moments, but I do have a class to attend.”

“What class sir?” Taus acted interested, only he was really looking for an opportunity to launch his attack. Goulay provided him the opportunity, “For my master’s degree in management.”

“Then sir, may I suggest you earn it on your own time. While you were being promoted and educated by the Army, I was in combat and now I am the one being terminated. Please tell me how the Army takes care of its own?”

“Please come into my office.” He closed the door and sat behind the same gray metal desk, again nervously tapping his pencil on the desk blotter. “Well, I did warn you, captain, that there were no guarantees. A lot of good officers will be ‘rified.’ Besides, we need you for other operations. The timing of your RIF letter was a mistake. General Sturm and I should have spoken to you first.”

“Colonel,” Taus shifted his attack now that Goulay acknowledged his mistake, “I’ve always did my duty as you asked of me. Now I would like to stay in the Army. The last time we met, you were anxious for me to take another mission after the Central American trip. If I had done that my military record would surely have disqualified me from retention considerations. That’s why I went back to Vietnam, to guarantee my military career.”

“I’m sorry. We did put you in touch with Lieutenant Colonel Nelson Williams at USARV Assignments while you were being reassigned from the First Cavalry Division. He told me you weren’t interested in another operation.”

“That was back in March 1971, after the congressional inquiry into the Air America drug shipment I discovered. I wasn’t interested in a covert operation involving criminal activities. Colonel, those drugs were being used by our own troops. What the hell was the CIA doing distributing and selling drugs?”

“Relax Captain. That’s not what the investigating congressmen reported. They found the drugs were being used by the Air America pilots.” Taus replied: “Really Colonel! Four thousand pounds of opium was on that Curtis C-46 when it had a forced landing.

A long discussion followed. Taus did not want to become involved in any criminal operations. “I’m willing to be of assistance for the good of my

country, but with the CIA's drug-trafficking operations, I saw the harm being inflicted no matter what good came from it."

Absorbing what he had said, Goulay offered some alternatives. "Your duty performance was always reported as outstanding. We can still use your unconditional assistance. I need experienced people for other missions, nothing to do with drugs." Goulay hesitated, "At least, not as far as I know."

"Well, I would like to remain in government service, in the Army."

"I understand, but I cannot withdraw the letter without having others wonder about it and our reasons. There'll be opportunities for you to return to active duty later if you can cooperate with us. And, as you say, it's government service. It helps our country. Are you still living in New York?"

Taus nodded.

"Let me see," Goulay reached into his pocket and produced a ring of keys. Selecting one, he tried opening a bottom desk drawer. Lifting out a large red ledger journal, he thumbed through it until he reached the information he wanted.

"In your area, our contacts are with the New York Army National Guard. Let's see, you're a pilot. That's ideal. The 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division has an aviation battalion. Our men are there. I will assign you to them. You will be transferred from the Army Reserves to the Army National Guard. It will provide you with more time to work our missions as needed. I'll take care of a full-time position for you. I understand you have a college degree in business administration."

"Good, we can place you. Give me a few weeks to make some contacts. I will get you situated. You'll have a full-time civilian job that will allow you to participate with our projects with no questions asked. Plus, you will have a part-time job with the Army National Guard. Our people are in both places."

### **Web of Intrigue Involving Companies Acting as Fronts**

Taus was not sure what to say. Goulay was making every effort to accommodate him based upon the needs of higher government officials. Who were these masters? "Sir, are you talking about me working for the NSC or the CIA?" Taus knew he was becoming embroiled in a career path he never wanted. At least Goulay could identify who was running the show.

"The CIA, NSA, DIA and other agencies work for us. We work for the National Security Council," Goulay explained. You are at Fort Hamilton. I will call you. Don't worry we will take care of you."

Two weeks went by when Taus' secretary, Maria Gabolli, answered the phone at Fort Hamilton. "Captain Taus, it's Washington calling, a Colonel Goulay is on the phone for you."

Arrangements had been made by Goulay for Taus to be interviewed at First National City Bank (later called Citibank, N.A.) for employment in Manhattan. Goulay told Taus to call the bank's senior vice-president, Jonathan Sturm, to arrange the interview.

"Is this Mr. Sturm any relation to General Sturm," Taus asked.

"The very same," Goulay replied. "The good general retired a few weeks ago. He'll be working with us in the future. I rather not say too much



over the phone. Please call him.” After his conversation, Taus contacted Sturm’s bank offices and spoke directly to the retired general. They agreed upon a meeting for the following week.

First National City had its corporate headquarters in Manhattan as a new towering Citicorp skyscraper was under construction near the United Nations. Sturm extended a warm greeting to Taus as he entered, followed by discussion as they updated military backgrounds. Citibank’s history was recited, but Sturm mentioned a position only in broad terms. “We’ll fit you into a managerial position where you can use your college degree and military background,” Sturm said. The meeting lasted two hours, with Sturm promising a follow-up call.

In August 1972 Taus began employment in Citibank’s commercial division as an account manager at the 39<sup>th</sup> Street branch office in Midtown Manhattan. Taus received his appointment as a captain in the New York Army National Guard (NYARNG) and was assigned to the 42<sup>nd</sup> Aviation Battalion as an Aviation Staff Officer. The unit’s headquarters was located in Freeport, New York. A State Aviation Facility was located 15 minutes away at Zahn’s Airport in neighboring Suffolk County.

#### **Similar Embedding in Financial Institution Of Another CIA Asset**

Years earlier as I received information from one of my main CIA assets, Gunther Russbacher, he described to me how the CIA embedded him into several major financial corporations, which was later followed by the CIA establishing him in separate financial operations, including a savings and loan.

#### **Citibank, A Depository For CIA Asset**

At Citibank, Taus had met with Gary Smith, and their discussion quickly turned from customer accounts to flying matters. Smith flew fixed-wing aircraft in the Army and Taus was primarily a rotary-wing pilot. The need for copter pilot for the Vietnam War produced fewer fixed-wing pilots as the Army’s interest turned towards the helicopters.

Attending Army flight training in 1963, Smith initially managed to avoid helicopters and Vietnam. His first assignment was to Germany. But it wasn’t long before he was assigned to Vietnam. Taus was interested in Smith’s background and asked him about it and his relationship to General Sturm.

Taus noted, “I took your place when Sanchez and Lawson went to Central America a few years ago.” But Smith was not forthcoming about his experiences. It should have been no surprise to Taus, since Sturm had indicated there were problems with some of his operatives. Sturm’s manpower pool was very low in qualified people for covert missions.

#### **Army National Guard Assignment**

By the summer of 1972, both Sturm and Taus were officially out of the active Army, and their Army-acquired skills utilized by the Steering Committee. The war in Vietnam was winding down, but there were ventures started by White House politicians throughout the world. Neither Sturm nor Taus was totally disconnected from the Armed Forces. Sturm had contacts with the Army National Guard Bureau in Washington and the Reserve Com-

ponent Services. Sturm was also a senior vice president for Citicorp in charge of their Latin American operations.

Taus was a part-time soldier in the New York Army National Guard where he maintained his pilot's proficiency and was available for other government-related missions. Sturm secured Taus a full-time position with First National Bank of New York (later to be renamed Citibank). The parent company for Citibank was Citicorp, with links to covert government activities. This relationship opened a window into how corporations intermingled with the intelligence community.

Major Gary Smith was also in the Army Reserves and worked at an uptown Manhattan Branch of Citibank. Sturm knew both Taus and Smith were within easy reach of his Citicorp office. Sturm has selected Smith for the bank position before arranging for Taus' hiring. Smith had worked for Sturm in the Army and was recruited in much the same way as Taus was recruited.

Smith looked like a banker when he reported to Citicorp Headquarters in a three-piece black pinstriped suit. Despite his new civilian uniform, Smith rendered a snappy salute when he entered Sturm's office. Surrounded by walls of military awards, Sturm asked, "We want you to do us a favor and use another one of our people, a Captain Richard Taus." Smith knew it was not merely a request; it was an order, and, he quickly agreed without knowing the mission.

"Get acquainted with Taus. See what his present interests are and what he wants to do. Be discreet as always. Major." Sturm issued a general order; the specifics would have to be worked out by Smith.

During the next several weeks, Smith developed a close rapport with Taus, assisting him with learning the business and handling his accounts. Taus admitted he was disappointed with the mundane operations at Citibank and wanted a career that was more exciting. "Maybe, I'll put in my application with the major airlines," Taus confided in Smith.

Sturm, upon learning of Taus' dissatisfaction, told Smith, "Tell Taus about the Pan American training program at JFK International Airport. They have a course for new applicants who want to become airline pilots. I think he'll be interested. Let me know what happens."

Two days later Smith called Sturm and reported that Taus was interested in the Pan American program. Sturm said, "Good, I'll handle the rest." He then called the FBI New York Field Office, asking for Greg Lawson's extension. When Lawson answered, Sturm suggested they have lunch the next day. Lawson had several reasons to be agreeable. Citibank had financed a loan to a dummy corporation at Sturm's direction for the purchase of Lawson's new Piper Navajo. Further, any mission would be more interesting for Lawson than working his dull FBI foreign counter-intelligence cases.

Sturm instructed Lawson to take the Pan American Flight Engineer's course in which Taus was enrolled, which consisted of evening classes designed to have applicants pass the Federal Aviation Administration's written portion of the Flight Engineer's rating. Sturm told Lawson to renew his

friendship with Taus in preparation for other trips to Latin America and to determine if Taus was interested in another trip.

Lawson's life had not changed in the 3 years since he last saw Taus. He had flown other missions with Gary Smith while Taus was on his second tour of duty in Vietnam.

### **Pan American Airways**

By 1973, U.S. air carriers were experiencing deep losses, and with the war effort ebbing, air carriers lacked contracts to keep their fleets airborne, which reduced the need to hire more pilots. Pan American was not hiring but they continued to train pilots on a paid-tuition basis, for which the GI bill provided the money.

About 20 students were in the flight engineer class. The Pan Am instructor looked impressive in his dark black airline uniform with four embroidered gold stripes on the sleeves. "My name is Phil Costa. I'm one of your Pan Am instructors for the next several months. Let's start class by having each of you introduce yourself to the others."

Greg Lawson appeared in class and took an empty seat next to Taus. During the break, Taus expressed his surprise at seeing him and asked what brought him there. Lawson responded: "Say, I was about to ask you the same question. You know I'm still with the FBI. It's boring work for me. I love to fly and this is an opportunity to have another ticket punched. I bet you have the same feelings." With the break ended, Costa asked the class why they would be studying the Boeing 727 instead of any other passenger aircraft. No one knew the answer. "There are more 727 jets flying than any other civilian airliner. With its three engines, it is the airlines' work-horse."

The course was intensive, as would be the FAA written test. At the end of class that first night, Lawson invited Taus to have dinner at a local hamburger joint. A tired waitress came over as Taus said, "You surprised me being in class." Before Lawson could reply, the waitress said, "Listen Honey, I wasn't in any class tonight, but let me educate you before any more surprises. We're closing soon, so can I take your order."

Lawson and Taus updated one another on their past three years activities. When Taus spoke about his National Guard flying position, Lawson saw the opportunity to invite him out for a ride in his Piper Navajo aircraft. Although Sturm arranged this meeting, both men shared common interests in aviation.

The following Sunday, Lawson met Taus at Teterboro Airport. Inside a general aviation hangar, Lawson told the operator that because of the high fees for parking his aircraft he was moving it to nearby Linden Airport. Lawson then flew the plane to the Linden Airport and Taus followed in his car. By the time Taus arrived, Lawson had landed and made parking arrangements. Lawson then proceeded to give Taus an orientation and pre-flight inspection of the aircraft, pointing out several modifications. The new Navajo was equipped with extra fuel tanks which had a quick disconnect lever inside the cockpit, allowing them to be dropped in flight, an unusual option. Part of the cockpit controls included a panel with several lights and

switches that controlled release mechanisms connected to hard mounts located under the wings.

Taus had seen similar arrangements over in Vietnam, particularly on Air America aircraft. "Who fabricated these features?" Taus asked.

"It's not an option from Piper Aircraft, that's for sure," replied Lawson. "Cadwell Armalite Corporation installed the system. I understand they make armament systems for military aircraft."

"That's right," Taus joked, "All you need now is a machine gun for this bird." Lawson opened the front nose cargo panel and showed the mounting system for a gun. In the cockpit, he pointed out the triggering button on the pilot's control wheel. "I've already received instructions from Cadwell. It included making aerial practice runs with live ammunition."

"Incredible!" remarked Taus. "The boys are really serious about starting a war." Taus' understatement produced a stern look from Lawson. "They have always been serious. These modifications are only for defensive purposes," noted Lawson. Lawson gave Taus a three-hour flying lesson, demonstrating every maneuver and having Taus execute the same. Every maneuver except for the Cadwell features. It did not take much deduction for Taus to realize Lawson was doing this for some type of secret operation.

Upon landing, Taus asked the evitable question, "When's the next trip to Central America?" Lawson grinned and answered, "Soon, pretty soon I think. Same places as in '69. I need a co-pilot again." Lawson paused to see Taus' reaction. "Interested?"

"No one has approached me yet." Lawson replied: "I just did. General Sturm set up our chance meeting at Pan Am. He wanted you to feel comfortable with a new operation and asked me to see if we can work together again. I think we can."

"What about Gary Smith? Is he involved too?" As Taus put two-and-two together, he found the answer, "Of course; Gary told me about the Pan Am course. You guys are really organized, but not very subtle." Taus respected their paramilitary organization. It was tuned like a fine machine. Competent people accepted responsibility and carried through on their jobs, as if on a holy crusade. Taus shared the same ideals. He had a sense of mission, now he would have a sense of purpose beyond his present positions in the National Guard and in the bank. "What's the next step?"

Lawson said, "General Sturm will call you now and tell you the details. I'm glad you're back. Gary could be a pain-in-the-ass at times. We need someone reliable and sober."

### **Preparing for a Second Central American Trip, 1973**

A week after flying with Lawson out of Linden Airport, Sturm called Taus into his corporate office to discuss a future clandestine operation.

Sturm said:

*You did an excellent job during the 1969 trip to Central America. We are having problems in that region again. You should be aware that the Soviet Union views Latin America as a vulnerable area for communist expansion. The Soviets know we are ready to intervene with military forces if necessary. They consider the close economic and political ties*

*that we have with the region and they are willing to create problems. They operate through local communist parties, which play a major role in left wing coalitions. Also, they get involved with the various popular fronts and new military regimes.*

*The Soviet Union does not want these countries to fall under their rule until these countries can sustain themselves. Russia is already obligated towards supporting Cuba. The Soviet Union does not need more demands placed upon them by other weak economies. Don't be mistaken; Russia will pursue any actions, whether violent or peaceful. They'll use Cuba or any Eastern Bloc country to avoid an embarrassment that a faulty operation could trigger. Our country's influence in Latin America can actually work against us. We are the main scapegoat for all their woes. Latin Americans accuse U.S. of meddling in their own affairs, forgetting what our capital has done to build their nations.*

Taus thought Sturm's last comments were disputable. Taus had witnessed conditions in Central America and met with members of the ruling oligarchs. Sturm continued:

*We feel the local communist parties are very active in this new anti-US movement within the middle class elements, the bourgeoisie and mid-level government and military officials. By 1970, the Soviets had established diplomatic ties with nearly all the Latin American countries. They are weaning these countries away from their dependence upon us. We're concerned about other minor countries such as Jamaica, Trinidad, Guyana, and Barbados recognizing Cuba, as well as larger nations like Chile and Peru. They are ignoring the Organization of American States (OAS) sanctions.*

*We need to talk again with the rulers of all our Central American countries where the local Communist parties are active; that includes Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala and Panama. Are you interested in making another trip with Nestor Sanchez and Greg Lawson to see what's happening in Central America?*

It would certainly be more interesting than the Citibank job, Taus thought.

"I'm all set, sir."

"Good then. You'll be leaving in a few weeks. By the way, expect Colonel Joseph Healey to sit down with you and have a chat."

"That's the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division's First Brigade commander, sir?"

"That's correct. Also, Lieutenant Colonel Charles Endy, the former Commanding Officer, 42<sup>nd</sup> Aviation Battalion, will be speaking to you. Both Healey and Endy are fine people. Do as they instruct you."

"Yes sir, they are my Army National Guard commanders."

"I am aware of that," Sturm wanted to be certain Taus understood. "I am talking about our other operations. They will instruct you further on them."

It was clear Sturm, high in Citicorp, controlled a major part of the Army National Guard in New York State.

During the First World War, General-of-the-Armies Douglas MacArthur, then a colonel, was the Chief of Staff for the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division, New York Army National Guard. It was dubbed the Rainbow Division for

the various ethnic groups that comprised its membership. Most people remember the performances of actors James Cagney, Pat O'Brien and Alan Hale in the 1930s movie titled, "The Fighting Sixty-Nine." There were equally famous subordinate units within the Division that contributed to its reputation. One such group of neglected heroes was the "Hellfighters" of the 369<sup>th</sup> Infantry, an all Black unit from Harlem whose exploits in the Meuse-Argonne woods earned the regiment the French Croix de Guerre. The entire division was steeped in tradition.

The Rainbow Division's newest component was the 42<sup>nd</sup> Aviation Battalion. Originally consisting of single-engine observation aircraft known as "bird-dogs," the unit rapidly assimilated the rotary wing aircrafts surpluses from the active Army component. With the stand-down of troops and equipment in Vietnam, more modern helicopters were turned over to the Army National Guard and Army Reserve components. These aircraft included the Bell UH-1 Iroquois, nicknamed the Huey, and the Hughes LOH-6A Cayuse, known as the Loach. An influx of Vietnam veterans who crewed and flew these helicopters also came into the battalion, and Taus was among them.

Taus' experience and expertise secured him the position of battalion Aviation Maintenance Officer, a position similar to the one he held in Vietnam. The battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Charles Endy, was already prepared to offer him a position with the approval of Colonel Healey.

The active duty reserve components of the Army are the Army Reserve and the Army National Guard. The Reserve has a federal mission while the National Guard had a state mission, unless it is federalized by the President for a national emergency.

Active duty performance in each component consists of two weeks of annual training, usually in the summer months and two days each month during the year, usually on weekends. Since paperwork flooded the system, an administrative person was needed nearly every weekend, but in a non-pay status. A reservist could earn points that count toward his retirement during all duty sessions. Taus would earn two points for a Thursday drill which consisted only of his meeting with Endy.

Off the Babylon Turnpike in the Village of Freeport sat the New York Army National Guard Armory for the 42<sup>nd</sup> Aviation Battalion. Its men and equipment were in an armory formerly occupied by an armored battalion, and situated twenty minutes from their aircraft and aviation resources at Zahn's Airport in Amityville, Long Island. It would take the State of New York another eight years before relocating its men and equipment and aircraft together at one location, at Islip-MacArthur Airport, during the late 1970s.

Endy was a Federal Aviation Administration air traffic controller at JFK International Airport. "I just spoke with General Sturm about you. They tell me you have done an excellent job."

"We make quite a number of training missions as you know. Keeps Army pilots proficient. Most are a waste of time otherwise. All we accomplish are some Army training requirements. Often the aviators just go for a

joy ride. Endy reminisced, “Why, back in the fifties, when this unit had the old “bird-dogs,” and when Long Island was less congested, we’d set the airplane down in someone’s backyard if a nearby field wasn’t big enough. We’d spend the time watching a ball game on TV. Before we returned to Zahn Airport, we would empty out the fuel to show we flew during that time.”

Colonel Endy was telling Taus about past misdeeds for a reason, gauging Taus’ reactions and preparing him for a future mission. Taus commented, “Since I work with the maintenance crews and test-fly these ships, that may not be a bad idea for our unit now, especially considering the way some of these aviators fly.” Taus indicated he was on the same wavelength with his new commanding officer.

“Yes, I’m sure my battalion pilots are wasting government resources today, also, but there are plenty of missions that are useful and not in the books. Our national security as a nation can depend upon what we do with the resources we have.” Endy was appealing to Taus’ patriotism.

“Instead of circling Manhattan Island and taking in the sights or flying off to the Mexican restaurant at Groton Connecticut Airport, we can do some important missions. You can participate in these missions. Sturm said they are well within your capabilities.”

#### **Strange Political Bedfellows**

“Yes sir,” Taus nodded, waiting to learn more about these special flights. “Occasionally, we deliver some important mail or communications around the tri-state area. Governor Rockefeller prefers using this method.”

Taus recalled his 1969 trip to Latin America, paving the way for Nelson Rockefeller’s own diplomatic mission. Taus could see the connection between the Steering Committee, the Republican Party and the New York Army National Guard. He thought it’s no wonder people said that the Guard is a political animal. Taus noted, “I have flown a mission for the Governor, sir.”

“I know that too,” replied Endy. “We sent you some of the hardware you used in Honduras.”

“We arranged for the installation and delivery of the ordnance; Iing those Swedish K assault guns.” Endy looked at his wristwatch and said, “Colonel Healey should be at his armory now. We both have the same administrative nights. Colonel Healey wants to speak with you.” Endy disconnected a small locking device on one of the telephones on his desk and dialed.

“Sir, it’s Lieutenant Colonel Endy.” Pleasantries were exchanged before Endy told Healey that Taus was in his office. Taus was handed the receiver. Hearing Healey voice, Taus could only imagine that Healey was an overbearing commander. Even though he was cordial, an air of authority pervaded his conversation. “We’ll meet next week if possible. I believe General Sturm will be giving you mission directions.” Healey did not convey any new information to Taus. It was Healey’s way of trying to sizing up a man, though the phone conversation was an inadequate measure. After the brief chat, Healey asked to speak with Endy.

A very cryptic exchange followed between the two colonels. The conversation concerned several other furtive operations. When Endy finished, he informed Taus that certain clandestine missions were in progress and Taus would be involved in these operations on his return from the upcoming Central American trip.

The next day at work, Taus reported to Citibank's training facility in Long Island City where he attended mandatory classes given to all account officers. He was tired from the previous night and from juggling too many balls at once. In addition to the banking classes, he managed several accounts at the branch office. His reserve duties required another dual effort. As a staff officer, he was responsible for the readiness status of the Army air fleet. And, as a rated pilot, he was responsible for maintaining his own flying status by attending additional drills that involved flying duties.

Later that afternoon, Taus returned to the bank branch in mid-town Manhattan, where there were several messages waiting for him. One from Sturm and another from Lawson. Taus called Sturm, who then told him the mission was set to go on the next weekend and that he should contact Lawson immediately. Lawson wanted to take Taus on another orientation flight before starting the trip.

Lawson and Taus met at Linden Airport on a rainy day, making for poor flying conditions. Lawson looked haggard. The two-hour flight was uneventful, but the conversation that followed was not. Lawson reported recent Soviet successes made it necessary for them to undertake another trip to Central America. Again the purpose was to have Nestor Sanchez gain support for U.S. policies in the region.

Taus asked, "Just how does Sanchez manage to convince those little dictators to do anything. He's not an official envoy of the U.S. government. Is he?" A smile appeared on Lawson's face as he said, "He caters to the most basic instincts of these men, greed and fear. He's more powerful than any government official. He represents the more powerful U.S. business interests that control these countries' economies. They agree to do his bidding and he agrees to meet their demands. Once they arrive at an agreement, then the U.S. Ambassador conducts the official business."

"Sanchez arranges the deals: What can be offered or exchanged, and when threats must be made. A U.S. official can only recommend foreign aid be extended. Those recommendations tend to be lost in the congressional labyrinth in Washington unless outside business interests support such measures. Then of course, our special interest groups lobby Congress. In reality, it's the corporate leaders that tell Congressmen which way to vote if they want campaign funding and support. Greed's the motivator, followed by fear."

"Fear," Taus said. "What kind of fear?"

"Fear can be instilled in both dictators and congressmen. Frankly, a dictator can be assassinated, deposed, or the U.S. can launch an all out invasion. We used every method this century. And as for congressmen, there are other options, including false criminal charges." Taus also asked about Gary Smith, "Why isn't Gary doing any more missions? He's a very experienced



pilot. He said he flew cargo and passenger flights over Germany for the Army.”

“He did more than that. Rich. The Cadwell Armament System was acquired by him. In Laos and Cambodia, he flew combat missions for the CIA using Douglas Skyraiders. He instructed me on strafing techniques and bomb-drops.”

“Where did he take you for gunnery practice?”

“Upstate New York. There’s a restricted area owned by Adirondack Mountains, Incorporated, a Citibank company. It’s very secluded. They set up a range, the whole war bit, you know. It was kind of fun!”

“It’s also deadly,” Taus said. “No wonder Smith backed out.” To dismiss Taus’ concerns, Lawson added, “It’s only precautionary. We’re not going to strafe and bomb people. They’ll run away from us and be out of harm’s way. It’s only designed to intimidate them and influence a particular course of action.”

“We influenced people to death in Southeast Asia,” Taus replied.

“Well, maybe you’re right. So let’s go without the armament, and if we need it, then we’ll be damned! I’ve got to instruct you on the system too.

Are you still willing?”

“Only for defensive purposes.”

Lawson implored, “Hey, come on! That’s our national policy. You know, peace through strength.” Plans were made for a meeting early the next morning. The flight itinerary would be the same as in 1969. Sanchez would make any changes.

At 5:00 a.m. on Sunday, weather conditions had deteriorated. Airport lights were blurred by the heavy mist. The take-off would be done on instruments. Lawson wore a leather bomber jacket with a thick sheep’s wool collar. His brown boots and beret made Taus comment, “This looks like a night scene from a World War II film about the Royal Air Force. The weather conditions are similar to those in England.”

“You’re half right, I bought this outfit at the “Flight Squadron Shop” on lower Broadway. As far as the weather, London was never this bad. We’ll have to go in any case.

They obtained clearance for an instrument takeoff to on top of the overcast, reported to be at 5,000 feet. After takeoff the Navajo headed in a westerly direction. As they broke out of the overcast the rising sun became visible. Taus suggested contacting the Flight Service Station to report weather conditions as a courtesy. Not liking the idea, Lawson said, “We could have ran a classified ad in the newspapers too, if we wanted everyone to know about our flight.”

The first fuel stop was at Fort Wayne, Indiana, where Lawson made a telephone call to Lieutenant Colonel Osgood, notifying him of their estimated time of arrival in Little Rock, Arkansas. At Little Rock, they were met by Osgood, who drove them to the Air Force officers club to meet a friend. Sitting at the bar was Nestor Sanchez, who greeted them as they entered, “Buenas noches, senors!”

"I thought we would be meeting you in Mexico City," announced Lawson. "There was a change of plans, Greg. One must always be flexible," Sanchez remarked. A briefing by Sanchez was in order before the morning departure. Sanchez felt that informing them would assist the overall mission.

"Gentlemen, we have our work cut out for us. The Soviet Union has been extending its influence in our hemisphere through local communist parties."

Both Taus and Lawson had heard this part before, from General Sturm.

"The collapse of the Central American Common Market and the destruction of the Alliance For Progress will cause further troubles for these countries. This past year was a disaster for them. An earthquake in Nicaragua, a corrupt election in El Salvador..." Sanchez turned to Taus and said, "Your friend, Jose Napoleon Duarte, was nearly assassinated after General Sanchez Hernandez rigged the Presidential elections. Duarte's living in Venezuela now, an exile from his own country."

Sanchez continued his litany of woes. "Human rights violations are occurring everywhere. Costa Rica is trading with the Soviet Union; many countries have established ties to Cuba; and, the Organization of American States is losing its influence."

The problems of Central America did not disturb Lawson. He enjoyed the flying trips, speaking to the people, and detached from any of their suffering. Osgood excused himself before they ordered dinner, as he was needed at flight operations.

Sanchez strained with a leathery piece of steak and asked to borrow Lawson's knife. Lawson asked, "Which one, Nestor?"

"The one in your boot." Sure enough, Lawson produced a switchblade stiletto with a rather large blade. It was just as ineffective on the meat as the steak knives. "Senorita," Sanchez called to the blond waitress, "Please tell the chef, the next time he has meat like this, to make a pot roast out of it." She smiled and showed him a menu that listed the pot roast. She remarked, "That was last week's steak."

The three stayed that evening at the Bachelor Officers' Quarters (BOQ). Before they retired, Sanchez came to their room to cover the flying itinerary.

"First, we must go to Guatemala. The greatest U.S. investment lies in that country. It is the most populous. Costa Rica and Panama, in population, would follow next, followed by Nicaragua and El Salvador, unless I am informed of any new developments." Taus was curious, "Who notifies you of the new developments, Mr. Sanchez?"

"Washington. Our people in the highest levels of government. Those who have an interest in the national security of the United States."

"All the people in Washington should have an interest in our national security," replied Taus. "If it effects their business interests, they will," responded Lawson, as Sanchez sensed some consternation in the group. "Anything the matter?" he asked. Taus answered, "I am concerned about using the armaments. Are you familiar with the Cadwell system?"

"I'm not an expert on it," replied Sanchez. "I was advised it was necessary by higher authority." Again Sanchez left a question only half answered.

Continuing, Taus asked, "If it's going to be employed, where's the ammunition for it?"

"We will fly into Corpus Christi Army Depot in Texas, tomorrow.

There is a large government depot there."

"Mr. Sanchez, how can we fly into any one of these Central American countries armed to the teeth with an aircraft carrying bombs?"

"Of course, we can't. They will be stored internally in the baggage areas. And if our mission calls for their use, I will ask the host country's presidente for permission to arm our aircraft." Actually all questions Taus had raised were previously covered in the several briefings. In a way, he wanted to hear something different. "I still don't quite understand what one aircraft can do. These governments have their own air forces. Why use us?"

"To avoid being accused by their people or, for that matter, foreign governments and the press. Suppose there is a crash? An unidentified aircraft can be denied by government sources. It simply is not part of their operations. And, as we do them a favor, they will do us a favor."

"Frankly," Taus came to his point, "I am not interested in killing people. This is an undeclared war and it lacks any sanction."

"It is sanctioned," Sanchez said in anger, "The president of the United States has authorized it. And the communists have declared war by contravening the Monroe Doctrine. The people you are afraid of hurting are the enemies of the United States."

Slowly cooling down, Sanchez said, "We are not mercenaries. We work for the United States. We want to show these governments that the present Nixon Administration will assist them in any way it can. Many of the best political and military minds in Washington have advocated this method. Had we wanted to do more, we could have launched a B-52 strike. It is mainly defensive in nature." Taus responded, "I know 'peace through strength.'"

By noon of the following day they had arrived at the large Corpus Christi complex, landing on a remote airfield, where they were met by security personnel dressed in civilian outfits. Sanchez produced identification papers.

### **Loading the Plane with Military Weapons**

From a van parked alongside the aircraft a 30-caliber machine gun was taken to the plane, along with ten small bombs and a crate of ammunition. One of the civilians mounted the gun in the Navajo's nose, along with the metal canister of ammunition. The tool kit he used had an emblem pasted on the side, "Cadwell Service Rep."

Each bomb weighed 40 pounds and was placed in the mid-section storage area. Another civilian told Lawson how to arm the bombs after placing them on the wing mounts. Lawson had been through this drill before, as he gave the instruction before the service rep mentioned it.

Long-range wing tanks that had a dual use were added. They were filled with aviation fuel to extend the range of the aircraft, and they could be used as an explosive device. The tanks could be released from the aircraft by a handle in the cockpit, and inside each tank was a detonating device, causing them to explode upon impact with the ground.

Another civilian gave Lawson five 6-foot vinyl rolls with adhesive backings. They were the national insignias of El Salvador's Air Force. They could easily be applied to the outside of the aircraft. It all seemed incredible to Taus. He thought this mission was a mistake, just as Vietnam was a mistake.

#### **Flashback to Vietnam**

The smell of jet exhaust fumes from across the airport from several Army helicopters undergoing test flights triggered a momentary flashback to Vietnam. Taus thought about the drug-carrying Air America aircraft that had a forced landing that was also part of the complex secret government.

After the military arsenal was loaded onto the Navajo, they took off, heading in a southeasterly direction over the Gulf of Mexico for the long flight to Guatemala City, the first leg of the journey.

## CHAPTER SIX

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### Second Central American Trip (1973)

Taus unfolded the aeronautical chart and said to Sanchez, “Let me orient you to our present position.” Pointing to a blank spot between numerous intersecting blue lines and symbols on the navigation chart, Taus said, “Here we are,” and then slide his finger to where it stated Guatemala City. “It’s a long distance, Mr. Sanchez. I’m glad we have the extra fuel tanks.”

His remark reminded Lawson that it was time for a demonstration of the quick release mechanism and the Cadwell Armament system control panel. As he pointed to a safety-wired yellow lever he said, “This wire will snap if you exert a little force on the lever. The tanks will fall away. They contain a detonating device and will explode on impact.” Then Lawson pointed to a toggle switch on the black control panel. Pushing it to the “Arm” position, panel lights came on with a large red light in the center. Illuminated black letters read, “No-Go.”

Lawson explained, “This means the bombs are not on the hard mounts, or there is another system malfunction. If the bombs are there, we get a green “Go” light; then we can drop our munitions.” Pressing another switch, brought on another light. “This is for the nose gun. It’s a green light because Corpus Christi ordnance has it ready to go, so be very careful with your control wheel button. If it malfunctions or runs out of ammunition, a red light appears.” Lawson left the panel “armed.”

With the area in front of the aircraft clear of any ships, Lawson placed the aircraft into a dive. “The shrimp boat traffic is behind us now, let’s try the machine gun. Push your button and fire off a few rounds.”

The loud noise of the machine gun was heard, along with the vibrations. The Navajo was not designed for any weapons system, requiring the airframe, fuselage and wings to be modified by the Corpus Christi maintenance unit. Red tracer rounds sailed several hundred feet in front of the aircraft. Sanchez looked surprise and asked where the aiming sights were. “You’re looking at them,” replied Lawson. Every fourth bullet was a tracer round which easily marked the trajectory and impact areas. A sighting device only complicated matters. “That’s enough,” Lawson said, “You wouldn’t mind

cleaning the barrel after we land.”

“Sure, I’d love too,” Taus mused as he looked back at Sanchez whose dark brown eyes were larger than ever. “Can we fly by the Yucatan Channel near Cuba too? I’m sure they will launch a Soviet MIG at us for a border violation. We can use the nose gun to fire at it.”

“Por favor, Ricardo!” Sanchez implored. “We are not playing games. Cuba is very touchy about its territorial space. Let’s not create an international incident.”

“Don’t worry, Mr. Sanchez. You took me too seriously. Frankly I would be happier to have left the firepower back home.” A long silence followed as Taus studied the chart and then announced “Mr. Sanchez, we are crossing the Tropic of Cancer at this moment.”

Staring out of his passenger window, Sanchez searched for confirmation of the imaginary line on the ocean below. Returning his view to the cockpit, he reached into his briefcase and pulled out a small notebook. “Let’s cover some details before we arrive.” He thumbed through a folder before settling on a page. “President Nixon has replaced the Alliance for Progress with military equipment in support of Guatemala’s counterinsurgency operations.

Unfortunately the Guatemalan government overreacted; and in 1971, a bloody suppression occurred. “We feel whichever way Guatemala goes, the other nearby countries will follow their lead.”

Continuing his checklist, Sanchez reminded them that the Nixon Doctrine of 1969 was still in effect. The United States will not act as a world policeman. The U.S. would provide support to its strong allies to accomplish any police role, if needed.

“Governor Nelson Rockefeller felt the Soviet Union was operating through the small local communist parties, all of which were inconsequential at the present time. That is one matter for us to check on since Rockefeller’s last assessment in this region. Cuba is actively pursuing revolutions that Moscow is less inclined to support. The Soviet Union does not want additional economic strains placed upon it as the Cuban situation has shown.”

“But Cuba is fermenting turbulence,” Taus added, “especially in Guatemala and Nicaragua. In both these countries, the local communist parties have broken with Moscow and are following Castro’s urgings. How are we going to handle Presidente Arana? Isn’t he the butcher there?”

“Butcher of Zacapa,” Sanchez said. “He is still very brutal. After our first visit, he was selected by the Army to win the election. In 1970, Arana conducted a brutal raid on the National University and assassinated three law professors and many other innocent people. We know he has killed the guerrilla leader, Yon Sosa, and expects things to be quieter now. We must have him address the issue of human rights more carefully.”

“On a more positive note, your friend Jose Duarte, was rescued by forces from CONDECA, the Central American Defense group. It was a joint effort by Nicaragua and Guatemala. In fact, a Guatemalan airplane flew Duarte to safety after the El Salvadoran elections were rigged by the Army. The Salvadoran Army installed Colonel Arturo Molina, who had Duarte

physically roughed-up and asked the Guatemalan Military to execute him.

Presidente Arana did not and allowed Duarte to travel to Venezuela.”

Interrupting the conversation, Lawson said they were flying over the Gulf of Campeche and would cross a small portion of Mexico before flying over Guatemala. Lawson increased power and applied slight backpressure on the control wheel to climb above the approaching mountains. Soon the gray stepped pyramids of Tikal appeared, rising out of the jungles in the northern Peten region of Guatemala. This was only one of the archeological sites where the Maya Indian civilization once flourished. Now military regimes ruled the country. Since 1945, only two presidents have completed their terms. Arana was determined to be the third.

The aircraft circled over the city of 750,000 people before landing at the Guatemala City airport near the southern edge of the town. Following Sanchez’ instructions, Lawson radioed the tower while taxiing, “Please notify your commandante that the ‘Washington Friendship Flight’ has arrived.” They were directed to taxi to a distant parking ramp as two Army Jeeps met the aircraft. A last comment from Sanchez, “Remember Arana extended his hand in friendship. He also rescued Duarte and has been working hard on his public image.”

The Army officer who arrived in the first Jeep warmly greeted Sanchez, had taken care of all arrangements, and drove them to the hotel along Sexta Avenida, the main commercial thoroughfare in Guatemala City. The next day they would meet Presidente Arana. The drive into the crowded city passed by numerous storefronts lining the streets where new buildings and old slums co-existed. After settling into their rooms, they met in the lobby for dinner. For four quetzals (\$4 US), an excellent steak dinner was served with all the trimmings. A cup of Guatemalan coffee, its main export crop, topped off the meal.

They left the hotel at 9:30 a.m. for the 10 a.m. appointment at the National Palace. A receptionist directed them to the presidente’s office. An Army general left the inner office as the trio waited nearby. Sanchez whispered to Lawson, “That is General Eugenio Laugerud Garcia.”

“How do you know him?” asked Taus.

“We met back in 1963 when diplomatic relations were broken between the Guatemalan and British Honduran governments. We tried to patch things up. Guatemala claimed ownership of the British colony. Laugerud was very active campaigning for its reunion with Guatemala. We worked together then.”

The secretary spoke perfect English as she announced, “Presidente Carlos Arana Osorio will see you, gentleman.” Arana met them at his office door and smiled broadly behind silver-rimmed glasses. Sanchez noticed Arana’s hair had thinned and grayed with a receding hairline. Arana sported a large mustache streaked with white hairs. “Welcome, my friends.” He shook hands with each man showing a friendlier attitude than during the 1969 trip.

“You have changed, your Excellency,” acknowledged Sanchez. “Yes, I have. Too many battles, too much death, and too many untrue stories about

my attempts to rid my country of its communists. Your newspapers make me look like a murderer.”

“My apologies Senor Presidente,” Sanchez explained, “I meant you look more fit since the last time we met.”

“Yes, that too. I am more careful these days.” Arana invited them to sit down.

A young Army officer standing behind Arana introduced him, “This is Major Pedro Alvarado, one of my aides. Nestor, have you heard of the first Pedro de Alvarado?”

Sanchez had written extensively about Latin America and was an expert on its history. “Yes your Excellency. Conquistador Pedro de Alvarado was one of Hernando Cortes’ Lieutenants. In 1524, his Spaniards arrived from Mexico and fought the former Indian inhabitants of this area, creating a command post here.”

“Bravo Nestor! Your information is correct.” Arana believed in history too. Like so many great commanders, he followed historic lessons. He then returned to the distortions he perceived in the U.S. media.

“Many of my soldiers were being killed by the communist guerrillas. They could ambush our government patrols at will. They were particularly dangerous in their stronghold at Zacapa. We took many bold steps to stop them. We worked with the people in civic action programs until the people knew that we cared about them. They had been neglected for so long that they unwittingly sided with the evil guerrilla forces.”

Arana had defended himself so quickly that Sanchez had to back track and include the official greetings from Washington. “I see, Presidente. May I first extend to you the warmest of greetings from President Richard Nixon and Governor Nelson Rockefeller. They both would like to thank you again for your splendid support in the past and your generous cooperation. They asked me to mention your most courageous efforts in uniting CONDECA members and promoting world peace with the Southern Army Command. Also, President Nixon wanted me to acknowledge your outstanding rescue of Presidente Jose Napoleon Duarte last year.”

“Didn’t you know, Nestor, that the Pope in Rome asked me to assist Duarte? It was when the Archbishop of our city’s cathedral walked into my office last year, carrying a telegram from His Holiness, the Pope. In it, the Pope asked for my intervention with Salvadoran authorities to secure safe passage for Duarte. A Salvadoran Army officer asked us to execute him, which we said would be done. Instead I did as the Pope and your President had asked. What else could I do?”

“Muchisimas gracias, Senor Presidente! And about the guerrilla forces?” Arana replied, “One day we arranged to meet with several guerrillas who knew that we would treat them fairly. They surrendered and provided us with information on the camps and arms caches in the area. We set up our own ambushes and captured many of the enemy. But I must tell you, I am very proud of my Army’s record. They have built school and hospitals, roads and bridges. They educate my people.”

“Very good, Presidente.” Sanchez was being very careful not to offend



Arana as he made his next statement. "The jobs that your Army does, takes employment away from your civilian sector. If you use your military for these projects it will deplete your military resources and not encourage the civilians to take on these responsibilities." Arana's acceptance of Sanchez' advice could affect funding from Washington, so Arana listened with intensely.

"The International Press," Sanchez avoided saying the U.S. Press, "complains of state terrorism because of the many human rights violations and abuses." Arana argued while still trying to hold onto a smile: "There are no human rights violations. Our civic action program proves that."

"Only in part, Senor Presidente. The problem is the disappearance of so many of your political foes, not just the communists. You need to show the press that your country abides with the world's standards concerning human rights." Major Alvarado leaned forward and whispered into Arana's ear, bringing a smile to the Presidente's face. Arana said, "We are preparing our own version of what the Guatemalan government is doing for their people. Major Alvarado informs me that we have a new tourist book which we shall distribute worldwide." Arana pushed a desk phone button, "Senorita Maria por favor, bring in the new booklet on Guatemala."

The secretary entered the office and placed a large loose-leaf binder containing a draft copy of the booklet described by Arana and placed it in Sanchez' lap. He scanned through it, before nodding his head; he had seen this sort of propaganda before in publications funded by the CIA.

After paging through the booklet, Sanchez commented, "Very good. But it is actions, not just words that matter. The press and world opinion are concerned about the people who are missing. They see your government campaigning against every opposition leader, who all seem to disappear."

Sitting motionless, Arana appeared to be absorbing the remarks. Then he said, "It seems both of us are speaking of things we need to say. Now, let us get on with the practicalities of our situation." Enough had been said, Sanchez agreed. Lawson had nervously raised his fingers to his mouth, but refrained from biting his nails. Taus recognized Lawson's gesture during the Pan American training course whenever a written examination was given.

Lawson was uneasy about something.

"Gentlemen, please come with me to my briefing room." Arana rose as the major rushed to open the office door for the presidente. Like a mother duck with her ducklings in trail, they headed down the ornately designed hallways to the briefing room. Along the way, Sanchez spoke to Lawson, saying the Guatemalan tourist booklet was a CIA idea. Sanchez felt Arana had met with CIA agents from the U.S. Embassy. Since Sanchez was not briefed by the CIA station chief in Guatemala, he and Lawson felt Arana was playing both ends against the middle.

Gilded gold trimmed white walls, which were beautifully paneled and scrolled with carvings, decorated the interior briefing room. Large makeshift wooden easels and benches, covered with maps and charts, were on three sides of a long mahogany conference table. General Laugerud stood before one chart with a chrome pointer in one hand, which he whipped to his side

as Arana entered the room. Several high-ranking people stood around the table. With the doors to the room closed, Arana sat down as he invited others to be seated.

Arana eyed Laugerud. "Carlos, kindly begin the presentation."

"Buenos dias, Presidente y senors."

"Carlos en Ingles, por favor," requested Arana.

"Si Presidente! Senors, I will give you a briefing on the guerrilla forces we are facing." With Arana's help, Laugerud began by introducing his staff. Then he mentioned the assassination of John Gordon Mein, the U.S. Ambassador to Guatemala in 1968. It was said to emphasize Arana's point that any opposition to the present regime poses a danger to everyone, including the United States. Arana nodded his head and looked over at Sanchez who did not miss the point.

In fact, that event and others done by the guerrilla forces encouraged Washington's interest in their destruction. After Duarte's rescue, in part by Guatemala, the U.S. owed Arana a favor. Laugerud detailed the numerous guerrilla activities and the counter-measures employed by government units. The general compared their actions to those of the United States in Vietnam.

"President Nixon ordered U.S. troops into Cambodian in 1970 and later into Laos to stop the flow of insurgent arms and equipment into South Vietnam. Now we must do the same." A steady shaking head from Sanchez showed his approval of the general's remarks.

Laugerud's crushed cigarette was still lit in the ashtray. It produced a thin stream of smoke that drifted towards Arana's nose as he continually waved his hand by his face. Finally Arana poured a glass of water into the ashtray, forever drowning the butt. With Laugerud pointing to dotted lines on the Guatemala map that led into Honduras, Arana interrupted his briefing. He told Sanchez, "There is the problem. They seek safe haven in Honduras. My men can only go so far into that country before we hear complaints."

"Some preliminary arrangements have been made with Honduras. Their Presidente, Lopez Arellano, will cooperate with our operation into his country. As you know, Lopez is supported by the FENAGH, the elite landowners and ranchers who are quite upset over the infringements made by the Salvadoran peasants moving into their countryside. FENAGH wants the ouster of any such alien groups from Honduras especially armed ones such as these guerrilla forces."

"Because of past repressions by the ruling class and the military government in Honduras, they are concerned about taking too active a role in eliminating these groups. Naturally they are also afraid the groups may target them if they conduct operations against them. Another cause of concern for the Honduran government rests with the daily reports from the international news media, which exaggerates any violations of human rights. The liberal media is labeling this a 'People's War' and openly criticizing the legitimate government."

Arana spoke about the lack of cooperation between his country and Honduras; "Presidente Lopez has withdrawn Honduras from the Central

American Common Market a few years ago. They have a problem with the guerrilla forces occupying their lands. What has Lopez agreed too?" Hesitating because a clear-cut response had not been fully elicited from Lopez, Sanchez could only say he was scheduled to fly into Honduras the next day and seek Lopez' approval for the operation.

General Silva raised his hand, which was recognized by a nod from Arana. He asked the question troubling the group, "What is the nature of this operation?" Silva's intelligence, and not simply his wealthy family background, had advanced him to his position as the Commandante of Operations for the Guatemalan Military Forces. Silva provided a partial answer, "Any operation on the part of our military forces, even with permission from Honduras, could have many ill effects for us."

"True, General Silva," responded Arana. "That is why Senor Sanchez is here with the CIA Air Force."

"We are not CIA, Presidente," Sanchez quickly replied. "We are friends of the Guatemalan government. President Nixon has instructed us to assist you. We must exercise extreme caution in this matter to protect all the governments involved." It was apparent Nixon did not trust the CIA. Sanchez wanted to keep the news media in the dark, avoiding any critical press coverage which Nixon so distained. Silva's question remained unanswered.

"And about the operation, Senor Sanchez?" Silva would not be denied an answer. Sanchez glanced towards Arana, who said, "Seguir adelante, por favor, Nestor."

"We are prepared to conduct a raid on the guerrilla bases you have identified," said Sanchez as General Laugerud placed his pointer at two locations on the Honduras map. Silva asked for specifics, "By what means will this be conducted?" Confirming everyone's thoughts, Sanchez said, "Our aircraft is capable of conducting a small bombing raid on the two positions. We will have an operative in the guerrilla's ranks to take pictures of the raid, dispelling any accusations that it was made by a Guatemalan or Honduran aircraft."

"Who will they say conducted the raids?" Silva asked.

"El Salvador will be blamed. President Nixon is very upset over the rigged elections there in 1972, and Salvador's attempt to assassinate Jose Duarte. The press will be told El Salvador thought the guerrilla bases were operating against them, invading their country."

Presidente Arana and General Laugerud smiled at each other like two mischievous adolescent gang members planning a criminal caper against a rival gang. Taus was relieved to hear confirmation that the armament would be used against a brutal dictator.

"Very well. If you do, we shall be happy to welcome you again. Please extend my appreciation to President Nixon and Governor Rockefeller." Major Alvarado was dutifully waiting by a door that he opened for Arana's departure.

After returning to the hotel, Taus expressed some misgivings about the future plan. Sanchez wondered if Taus had changed his mind. Lawson noted that Gary Smith confirmed that Taus would undertake such an operation.

Taus replied, "I never mentioned anything like that to Smith."

"You most certainly did, or I would not have met you at the Pan American training program! Do you recall a luncheon discussion you had with Gary Smith a month before our Pan Am meeting?" It jogged Taus' memory.

"Remember, you spoke to Gary about the turbulence created by these people's revolutions? You suggested that the present regimes could be educated and that the insurrections disrupted normalcy and hurt innocent people. Gary said you compared these dictators to the wealth of the Roman Catholic Church which was not spending it on the impoverished people."

"Yes, I did. But what I meant was some tapestries of wealth must exist to stir the common man's perception of a great and glorious God. Otherwise, I think the Church ought to sell its artworks and support the poor. It was a religious argument which Gary initiated."

"No," said Lawson, "It was an ideological argument, and you said you could support the church or these dictators if peace could be brought to this region." Peace was the key. Taus had seen and experienced the horrors of warfare, the loss of innocence lives, the wounded and maimed both physically and mentally, the devastation inflicted and the lack of progress in other human pursuit when man's spirit turns to destruction. Taus knew the Vietnamese people gained nothing from the war. Would the same be true for Latin Americans? A people's insurrection in Cuba brought about the fall of the right wing U.S. supported dictator Fulgencio Batista, but it did not improve conditions for the people.

### **Heading for Guerilla Bases in Honduras**

By 10:00 a.m. they were airborne, headed for the two guerrilla base locations in Honduras. The camps appeared as small rust-colored open areas among the dense jungle foliage and several campfires provided trails of smoke to guide them to the precise target areas. Carefully cross-checking the map, Taus confirmed the coordinates. The confirmation as guerilla bases came in the form of tracer bullets.

After the aerial reconnaissance, the Navajo headed toward Tegucigalpa. Sanchez said he would meet with Honduran Presidente Lopez to obtain his support for the operation and to inform him of the details. Then the attack would commence. "Then what," asked Taus? "Where do we go after the attack?"

"It depends upon the situation," Sanchez replied. "You could fly to Panama and meet me there. We have urgent business there and it's important for us to leave this area. If there is some problem, your alternative is to land in Managua where Presidente Somoza will take care of you."

"Does Somoza know about our mission," Taus asked?

"Yes, he was informed by our Embassy. In fact, Somoza even prodded Nixon on the idea of a raid some time ago." Sanchez had revealed something, causing Taus to ask, "If the U.S. Embassy in Managua knew about this mission, then the CIA knows. Just why are we conducting it instead of CIA resources? If Nixon doesn't trust the CIA, why inform them?"

### **Expendable Pawns**

The response from Sanchez was the classical statement of "plausible

deniability.” Sanchez’ face flushed red as he tried to explain further. It was not because of trust that this mission was given to Lawson and Taus; it was because they were expendable, and the CIA could deny any knowledge of it.

### **Tegucigalpa, Honduras**

Before landing at Tegucigalpa, Lawson radioed Honduras Air Traffic Control, “This is the Washington Friendship Flight, control; are we cleared for an approach to land?” Honduras ATC replied and handed the flight over to Tegucigalpa Tower for landing clearance. Several minutes passed, so Lawson placed the aircraft in a holding pattern until the tower finally gave them the clearance. Upon landing, Tegucigalpa ground control instructed Lawson to taxi to the Honduran Air Force sector beyond the main civilian terminal area.

Sanchez said, “They are parking you there because of the ordnance load you will receive before the mission.” Again, parts of the story were left out by Sanchez. Special bombs had been shipped to Honduras for this mission. In addition, the Honduran Air Force hangar would be used to place Salvadoran Air Force insignia on the Navajo. If the Honduras government received the armaments, it was a certainty that the U.S. Embassy in Honduras was aware of the mission; and its CIA staffing.

Three Honduran Army sedans and an entourage of Army officers greeted them. The senior officer notified Sanchez that Presidente Lopez would meet with him immediately upon their arrival. One Army sedan took their luggage to a hotel, while the other two drove them to the Presidential Palace. They waited nearly two hours before Lopez arrived.

They stood up when Lopez strutted into the waiting room with his black leather boot-heels tapping on the terrazzo floor. “Greetings Senor Sanchez! I’m glad you made it today.” Lopez shook everyone’s hand and continued speaking, “The ranchers are very concerned about the encroachment of the guerrillas in our western frontier. First we have the problem with the squatters from El Salvador; now we are hosting these parasites from Guatemala!”

“Yes, your Excellency,” said Sanchez, a reply that Taus heard so often he could predict what Sanchez would say. Sanchez nodded his head in approval on every point made by Lopez. “My meeting with the ranchers yesterday and the plantation owners this morning requires me to take some actions against the guerrilla forces before they take over our lands. Is President Nixon ready to assist us as you mentioned?”

“Yes Senor Presidente. We are ready to destroy two camps with your permission.” Sanchez asked Lawson to open his attaché case and show the maps of the precise locations to Lopez, which was followed by Lopez escorting them into his office where Lawson spread the maps across his desk.

Lopez instructed his military aide to notify his senior staff and told Lawson to wait until they arrived. In the meanwhile, Sanchez and Lopez discussed U.S. economic aid and social reforms that had all been heard before by Lawson and Taus. In a few minutes, several generals and two civilian ministers arrived in the office.

### **Making El Salvador the Villain**

“Let’s begin. Tell us what you intend to do.” Lopez sat forward in his

chair to scan the map. His desk had become a plotting table that everyone surrounded for the briefing. Both Sanchez and Lawson explained the plans. "Who will be blamed for this mission?" Lopez smiled. He knew the answer. Sanchez looked around the room before seeing a nod from Lopez. "These are my most trusted servants, Mr. Sanchez. They will be delighted to hear your answer. The government of El Salvador will be held accountable, Presidente." Several generals laughed and a few others also clapped their hands, realizing the deviousness of the whole affair. In a way, they felt vindication as the United States was involved in a sinister covert action.

It was early afternoon and though they could use a day's rest, the security of the mission required it be accomplished without delay. Every extra hour could place it in jeopardy. The longer their aircraft sat in the Honduran hangar, the greater was the chance prying eyes might make a connection to the future mission. Lawson also added that the weather was perfect for the attack. Three sedans sped them back to the airport from the Presidential Palace.

Inside the hangar, Lawson and Taus insured that ten light bombs were secured under the wings. Adhesive backings facilitated the placement of the phony Salvadoran aircraft national markings. Two were placed on opposite wings and two placed on both sides of the fuselage. Within an hour, the aircraft was fueled, serviced, and ready for departure.

### **Sanchez Bailing Out**

"Well men, good luck," Sanchez bid his farewell. "If you have any problems, go to Managua. If everything is successful, I will meet you tomorrow in the U.S. Canal Zone officers' quarters in Panama. Presidente Lopez has made arrangements for my flight to Panama."

The aircraft taxied along the adjacent military runway and immediately took off, heading away from the main terminal area. Taus opened the maps and provided directions as Lawson checked his instrumentation and armament systems. They reviewed a checklist they prepared for the attack.

### **The Pact Attack**

The plan called for one bombing run on each of the two guerrilla base camps. Taus would fire the nose-mounted machine gun to suppress anti-aircraft firing from the ground. Lawson would release four to six bombs on each pass. There would be no preliminary fly-over before striking the target.

This bombing was intended to hit near the camps, serving as a warning.

The two target camps were a quarter mile from the small western Honduran town of El Paraiso, each a quarter-mile apart. From 3000 feet above the jungle, the aircraft started a shallow dive for its attack.

As the plane neared the target area, Lawson placed the aircraft into a steeper dive to avoid overshooting the target zone. Within the rust-colored area, several thatched huts and olive drab canvas tents could be seen. At Lawson's command, Taus opened fire and within a few seconds Lawson pressed the bomb release that should have released four of the bombs.

The Cadwell control panel lights were all green before the bomb release, and they turned from all green to all red. Apparently all 10 bombs were re-

leased, instead of the intended four, impacting harmlessly into the jungle beyond the first camp, as intended.

“Dammit,” yelled Lawson, realizing that the system had malfunctioned. He pulled the nose of the aircraft up as he added power to climb away from the target. We’ll have to use our wing tanks to hit the other camp,”

Lawson turned the aircraft towards a westerly heading and leveled off at 2000 feet, and then aimed for the second base. “Disconnect the safety wire fast, and pull up on the lever to release the wing-tanks at my signal.” Though Lawson claimed he was never in the military, he gave orders like a professional soldier.

As the Navajo dove toward the second camp Lawson told Taus to open fire with the nose machine gun. “Pull the lever,” Lawson ordered. The extra fuel tanks fell away as Lawson pulled the aircraft out of its dive. Taus looked back towards the camp. He saw two large orange and red bursts rising from the jungle floor, rapidly changing to black smoke. The tanks had exploded beyond their targets, as desired.

The napalm drops in Vietnam happened the same way when Taus flew in combat. During one such mission back in 1970, the Army command pilot had Taus release a pallet of napalm upon a suspected enemy position. When Taus saw Vietnamese peasants on the ground, he hesitated for a moment. It was enough time for the load to miss the Viet Cong village and land beyond it in the jungle.

The delay had actually increased the effectiveness of the attack. As it turned out, the VC soldiers always ran from the village seeking cover and refuge in the jungle, exactly where the napalm tanks landed. On *this* mission, the wing-tanks hit the jungle where no one would be harmed.

Lawson complained, “So much for advanced technology. The Cadwell system is totally undependable.” As he hit the control panel with his hand, in disgust, one of the red lights turned green and was flashing intermittently.

“I think we may have a bomb still hanging on its wing mount,” Lawson observed. He wiggled the aircraft from side to side in an attempt to dislodge any loose ordnance, but the light kept flashing. “Nothing we can do. Maybe it’s just a defective circuit?”

“We’ll have to land in Managua. I don’t think we have enough fuel to make Panama now.” Taus agreed and opened another flight chart to pick up a bearing to the Nicaraguan capital.

### **Nicaraguan Earthquake**

“Managua Tower, this is the Washington Friendship Flight requesting permission to land, over.” Lawson’s radio transmission was acknowledged by Managua, which granted permission to land.

“I don’t think they know who we are,” Lawson said as he radioed the tower again, asking to speak to the Airport Commandante. “Our aircraft has the Salvadoran Air Force insignias. I want to be certain they take some precautions. We don’t want to bring any unneeded attention to ourselves. We cannot land too close to the main terminal.”

Taus suggested, “Plan the landing for the first one-third of the runway. That way, we can taxi off before too many people notice our aircraft.” “Yes,

I will,” answered Lawson as he lowered the landing gear. A loud thud was heard after the gear fully deployed. The intermittently flashing green light on the Cadwell panel was now red. Then an explosion was heard and a slight concussion felt. “I think we dropped our last bomb!” shouted Taus.

Lawson was too busy to reply as the aircraft set down on the runway.

Managua Tower instructed them to taxi over towards the main terminal. Lawson declined and again asked for assistance from the airport commandante. The tower directed them to hold their position on an inactive taxiway. A few moments later, clearance was given to taxi across the airfield to the military ramp. Several Army Jeeps and scout vehicles waited their arrival.

Armed soldiers surrounded the Navajo as Lawson shutdown its twin engines.

One Army officer held a pistol in his hand as the two deplaned. Lawson identified himself and the officer placed his pistol back into its holster. Another hour passed with everyone waiting by the aircraft. The soldiers casually paced around the Salvadoran marked Navajo, no longer expecting any confrontation. Soon, a Mercedes-Benz arrived with an Army general inside.

The general wanted to know why the Salvadoran aircraft bombed the outlying runway threshold before landing. Lawson provided a long explanation and asked to see the minister of defense for assistance. Lawson then demonstrated to the general that the markings were temporary by peeling them off the fuselage. Evidently, Lawson’s story was now understood by the General as he laughed. The Nicaraguan Army had its problems with El Salvador.

The two-way radio in the Mercedes crackled with a transmission to bring the two pilots to the National Palace. “We’re not going to leave here tonight,” Lawson told Taus. “Let’s take our baggage with us for the night.”

The devastating effects of the 1972 earthquake could be seen while driving through Managua. Occurring a few days before Christmas, the quake killed 10,000 people and destroyed 250 city blocks in the capital. Recovery was a slow process. The general spoke of the terrible earthquake and the increase in guerrilla activities as the rebels tried to capitalize on the government’s preoccupation with the natural tragedy.

The general was still not impressed by the incomplete tale told by Lawson. He pried for more information about their mission. Meanwhile, the Mercedes neared the National Palace, which stood amid the debris left over from the earthquake. Scaffolding surrounded the white stone building as repairs were underway.

Fortunately, Somoza was waiting for them and knew about the mission. Inside his office, two other senior military men were present. “Welcome back to Managua, Senors. The horrible quake has cost us many problems.

My Army commander tells me that you even bombed my airport.”

“Senor Presidente,” Lawson stated, “That was an entirely accidental thing. One of our bomb releases malfunctioned. The bomb was not fully secured when I lowered the landing gear on final approach. I am sure my government will pay for any damages. Please accept our sincere apologies.”



My airport commandante reports that no damage was done by the bomb. President Nixon has already sent us \$32 million in aid. We are rebuilding the city and its outskirts. What I would like to know about is the damage your other bombs inflicted.”

Sanchez had earlier told Lawson the attack was suggested originally by Somoza, making Lawson more at ease explaining the details to Somoza and his astonished Army aides. A few minutes later, Turner B. Shelton, the U.S. Ambassador to Nicaragua, arrived at Somoza’s office. He only vaguely knew about the mission because Somoza mentioned it to him earlier.

After greeting everyone, Shelton told Lawson and Taus that President Nixon had not fully informed him about the Honduran bombing raid. He spoke of things he knew about to shore up his shaken credibility with Somoza.

“President Nixon had generously provided much financial aid and assistance to Nicaragua in light of the earthquake. As you may know, President Nixon terminated the Bryan-Chamorro Treaty of 1916, which had given the U.S. exclusive rights to build an isthmian canal here. I personally asked the President to send troops to assist. About 600 U.S. soldiers arrived from the Canal Zone to help out.”

Without Sanchez, Lawson and Taus were at a lost for words. Lawson asked for quarters for the night, saying they would depart the next morning for Panama. The impromptu meeting concluded with Somoza thanking Shelton for the U.S. government heeding his advice on the bombing raid.

Due to the massive destruction within the city, Lawson and Taus were provided rooms at a small hotel near the airport. They needed a night’s rest, but would be happy to depart Nicaragua since minor aftershocks could still be felt during the night.

The next morning, a preflight aircraft inspection revealed several hair-line fractures in the nose compartment where the machine gun was mounted. The vibrations caused by its firing created excessive mental stresses on the airframe. Nonetheless, Lawson decided to fly the aircraft without further repairs. They would simply cruise at a reduced airspeed, reaching Panama later than anticipated.

### **The Panama Canal Zone: 1973**

It was late afternoon when the Piper Navajo landed at Howard Air Force Base in the U.S. Canal Zone. The deputy base commander met Lawson and Taus as the aircraft was placed inside a hangar where a maintenance crew removed the Cadwell system and the nose machine gun. The deputy commander told them that Nestor Sanchez was notified on their arrival.

Within a half hour, Sanchez arrived at the hangar. Seeing the two pilots, he said, “Thank God, you both are safe. I was so concerned when you did not arrive yesterday.” Lawson explained about the malfunctioning system and the use of the fuel tanks that necessitated their shorter trip to Managua.

Late last night, Sanchez had spoken to Presidente Somoza by phone, describing the details of the raid. Sanchez added that the international news media had reported the bombing of two guerrilla base camps by the El Salvadoran Air Force, stating it was in retaliation for guerrilla border incur-

sions.

“What is much more stunning,” added Sanchez, “was a radio news story I just listened too. Presidente Arturo Molina of El Salvador announced that future border incursions into his country would be dealt with in a similar matter. He was practically admitting that he ordered the raid!”

“Molina would say anything to upset the Honduran government. Ever since the 1969 ‘‘Soccer War,’’ they have been at odd with each other. Indeed Molina was the hand picked successor in 1972 for the former Presidente Sanchez-Hernandez who openly threatened to invade Honduras. Neither Guatemala nor Honduras were mentioned by the press,’’ said Sanchez, who further said the press wrote nothing about U.S. involvement.

‘‘I’d like to know if there were any casualties reported,’’ asked Taus.

There was no mention of any casualties, but Sanchez had no accurate information. Knowing any figures would have an adverse effect upon the two pilots, Sanchez commented, ‘‘There were very few injuries, if any. The raid served as a warning message to the guerrillas.’’

Changing the subject, Sanchez said they have a meeting scheduled with the head of the Panamanian government, General Omar Torrijos Herrera. The purpose was to discuss Panama’s seemingly wayward future under Torrijos’ leadership.

The trio left the hangar and headed to the Officer Club at the airbase, where Sanchez discussed the present philosophy of the Panamanian leader who was in power since 1968. ‘‘Torrijos calls the Panama Canal a ‘Scar of Colonialism’ on his country. He has recognized Cuba and is opening some trade avenues with Castro. We are quite concerned with his conduct.’’ The evening at the airbase was like a trip back home. Everything was from the states. For a change, they met Sanchez for breakfast, where he prepared them for the afternoon meeting with Torrijos.

The capital, Panama City, was located nearby on the eastern side of the Canal Zone. Unlike other Central American cities, Panama City was modern and wealthy. As the taxi drove them over to Presidente Torrijos’ Executive office, Sanchez talked about the economy, ‘‘There is much wealth here. Panama’s government has more stringent bank secrecy laws than Switzerland. The U.S. is afraid such a system is highly corruptible, both the banking and government systems. Panama may soon become the banking capital of Latin America. Our people in Washington suspect some drug monies are laundered here.’’

The oblique reference Sanchez paid to the drug problem, underscored both the deceptiveness and compartmentalization of U.S. covert activities. In the 1980s, Manuel Noriega would rise to power, mainly due to him being a lackey for U.S. drug interests in Latin America. Tons of cocaine would arrive in Panama from Columbia drug-processing laboratories. Panama City would then send the shipments to the United States.

Dismissing other questions about drug trafficking, Sanchez called their attention to the poor. ‘‘You see in this city, there are still slums and most rural citizens are poor. Torrijos has channeled human services and equipment to the countryside. He has improved the standard of living for these people.

But it has come at a higher cost of living as prices and taxes have increased. There is much political turmoil here.”

“Doesn’t our treaty agreements with Panama and our military presence factor into a more stable government?” asked Taus. “You look for an easy solution, which just is not there, Ricardo. The United States does not want to use its military forces here. It’s too costly. The population would revolt against such an imperialistic move. Think of the effects it would have on the international press and public opinion. Our bases have been here since 1903, but they were meant to repel any foreign powers. In this day of nuclear threats and global air travel, the importance of the Canal has diminished, but not the importance of Panama to Latin America.”

The group arrived at Torrijos’ office. This country was different than the other Central American nations. It was not another “Banana Republic.” It was more cosmopolitan, more sophisticated. It would require all of Sanchez’ diplomatic skills. And it would be a training exercise for Taus.

Different from the other flamboyant dictators, Torrijos was wearing an olive drab military fatigue uniform as he sat in an austere government office. He was a man-of-the-people. Smoking a large cigar, his hand also carried a gold Rolex wristwatch and a wedding band. Torrijos was unlike the prancing peacock potentates of the other nations. His demeanor was calming. But he was a man to be reckoned with in terms of political abilities.

Cordially and sincerely, Torrijos welcomed President Nixon’s special emissaries. “How can I be of assistance to President Nixon and my friend, Nelson Rockefeller?” Again the Rockefeller name trailed the more powerful; however, the Rockefeller were rulers in their own right. Since John D. Rockefeller’s days, the family owned major plantations, banks, companies and oil resources throughout Latin America. Right to the point, Sanchez stated, “President Nixon is troubled since your government recognized Cuba.”

Torrijos was quick to clarify Sanchez’ statement, “We established contacts with the Cubans. If he is troubled by this relationship, then ask him about his friend Charles “Bebe” Rebozo, who has the Costa Rican coffee deal with the Soviet Union.”

“Yes, General Torrijos. You are very perceptive and knowledgeable. That is my next stop. Regrettably Costa Rica established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union in 1971, which Venezuela did back in 1970.”

“Senor Sanchez, we have no diplomatic relationship with the Soviets, nor does Guatemala, Honduras or Nicaragua. Sanchez nodded and said, “The Soviet Union is suggesting that places such as Puerto Rico and Panama are U.S. colonies to encourage other Latin American countries to adopt a more neutral foreign policy towards the United States. President Nixon will not tolerate any violations of the Monroe Doctrine.”

“I understand President Nixon’s concerns, but we must do what we consider beneficial for the citizens of Panama. We are a democratic society and our people enjoy close ties with the United States.” Neither Lawson nor Taus said anything. It was futile, accomplishing little if anything concerning Soviet relations in the Western Hemisphere. Soon the meeting ended with

the usual social pleasantries exchanged. As the trio returned to the airbase, Lawson said, "That was a waste of time. The General will do what he pleases."

Correcting him, Sanchez said, "The meeting was not a waste of time. Torrijos has been warned not to take advantage of our generosity. He knows we have established limits for him. Our Armed Forces are in Panama to protect U.S. interests, not Panamanian interests. He tries to present himself as the people's hero. We don't see any human rights abuses, so we can support him as long as he support U.S. interests too."

Lawson asked, "You mentioned going to Costa Rica next. What is the itinerary?"

"Costa Rica and then El Salvador," replied Sanchez.

"I would think that we would stay away from El Salvador," suggested Taus.

"If we did, it may look even worse for us," Sanchez said. Considering the unknown aircraft that bombed the rebel camps. By openly going into El Salvador, we are acting innocent. Again we need to establish limits; otherwise these rulers will affect our national interests. Since we support these dictatorships, we deserve a voice in their affairs."

"We ought to withdraw some support." Taus questioned its value in light of the continuing problems. "You said the Soviets would not fill the void.

Cuba has already stretched Russian resources to its limits."

"Very true. Moscow carefully reacted to the communist government controlling Chile last year. We understand the Soviets are advising Salvador Allende, the elected President of Chile, to move more cautiously with the nationalization of Chile's industries. His enthusiasm to convert Chile has upset the Chilean People and is ruining their economy. Allende has described the Soviet Union as "Hermano Mayor," big brother to Chile, especially since Russia was the principal source of financial assistance to his Popular Unity government."

### **Items Out of Order**

As their car returned to the airbase, a sharp salute from the Air Force security police at the entrance gate reminded Taus of his original desire to stay in the Army. Sanchez exchanged a casual wave. They returned to the BOQ. Upon entering the room, Taus found Lawson's suitcase on his bed. Lawson telephoned maintenance and found the aircraft ready. He then tried to phone Sanchez but received a busy signal. He told Taus, "I'm going to walk over to Sanchez' room and tell him the Navajo is ready; his line is busy."

Knocking on the Sanchez' door produced no answer. From down the corridor, Sanchez walked towards him. Lawson stated, "Your phone had a busy signal. I've been trying to call you for the past twenty minutes."

Sanchez said he had not returned to his room since the visit to Torrijos. The receiver on the room phone was off its cradle. As Sanchez went to adjust the receiver, Lawson said, "Wait! Don't touch anything!"

"What's the matter, Greg? I probably forgot to place the phone back, or maybe the maid knocked it off." Lawson asked, "Did you trip over the phone chord as you left?"

“No, not that I would have remembered.

“Well the chord is stretched across the room as if someone tripped on it, jarring the receiver off.”

Sanchez speculated, “Perhaps it was the cleaning maid when she made up the room?” Lawson replied, “The cleaning maid would have adjusted the line after she tripped over it. That’s part of her job. Please check very carefully. See if anything is missing.”

There was not anything of value left in the room when Sanchez last departed. He carried all his paperwork with him. No personal items were missing. For the time being, the incident would remain unsolved. Lawson stated

“I wanted to tell you the aircraft is ready.”

“Fine,” said Sanchez, “arrangements have been made for a meeting tomorrow with Presidente Daniel Oduber, the hand-picked successor chosen by Jose Figueres.”

“Don Pepe?” asked Lawson. “Don Pepe!” Sanchez nodded, “Our little dictator who has decided to do business with the Soviet Union. Presidente Oduber may be worse.” A knock on Sanchez’s door made them look at each other. Sanchez said, “It’s probably Taus or the KGB.”

“You mean Taus or the CIA,” as Lawson carefully opened the door.

“Are we going for dinner tonight?” Taus asked as he stood in the corridor. “Yes, come in first.” Lawson explained about Sanchez’ phone and suspicion that someone had entered his room. “It could have been the maid,” Sanchez suggested again though Lawson had thoroughly dismissed that possibility. “Sure it was the maid,” agreed Taus. “She put Greg’s suitcase on my bed.”

“That’s unusual,” remarked Lawson. “There are luggage racks in the room for that purpose.” He pointed to a folding table near the window. “The maids know better than to place a suitcase on a freshly made bed.” That logic distressed Sanchez who told them to check their belongings. Returning to their room, Lawson and Taus found nothing missing. Lawson sorted through his aeronautical charts and asked Taus to be more careful the next time he used them. “You folded this map the wrong way, lengthwise.” Lawson was fastidious with his pilot’s equipment. “Which map?” asked Taus.

“This one of South America.”

“I never opened the South American map. Only the one of Central America.” Sanchez came up to their room ten minutes later and asked if they had anything missing. Lawson said, “Someone is curious about what we are doing. Do you think it’s our own intelligence people?”

“Officially, no.” Sanchez added, “We can get their assistance anytime we need it. President Nixon would prefer we remain away from any intelligence agency. Why should you suspect an intelligence agency instead of some petty thieves?”

“Because we are on an intelligence mission and petty thieves take things. Nothing is missing.” Then Taus interjected, “The CIA works for the same man we do. Why suspect them?”

“Because Mr. Kissinger was appointed as the overseer for all intelligence agencies,” Sanchez replied, creating concern for both pilots. “Remember Nixon put Kissinger in charge of these ‘cowboys’ because he does

not trust the bureaucracies. Otherwise we would not be here today.” Sanchez and Lawson were quiet as they pondered the possibilities. “Lasagna, meatballs and spaghetti,” Taus broke the silence with the announcement, “It’s Italian night at the officers club. That’s what the menu downstairs said.”

“Let’s go hombres.” Sanchez was hungry too. “We can think about this problem at dinner. We must not leave behind any important papers in the future.” Preparations for the trip to Costa Rica began early the following morning. Two CIA agents met them at the airbase hangar. “Nestor Sanchez?” asked one tall CIA agent, while the other, shorter one, looked over the trio’s luggage. The tall agent handed Sanchez a white piece of paper. “This is your receipt for the Cadwell Armament system and the Browning machine gun that was removed from the aircraft.” Handwritten on the receipt was the removal of an “aviation programming computer and components.”

Lawson noticed the wing mounts, cockpit panel and nose gun were gone. He carefully eyeballed the repairs to the airframe. The shorter agent asked if everything was all right. Lawson said everything was fine and the repairs were satisfactory. The short agent asked how the crack occurred. Lawson said due to vibrations from the gun firing. “Vibrations from firing the gun at what?” asked the CIA agent. Lawson knew the CIA agents were unaware of their exact targets. He was not going to volunteer that information. Meanwhile, the tall agent was questioning Sanchez, trying to find the purpose for the equipment.

“It was just for show,” answered Sanchez. “The gun was fired, Mr. Sanchez,” stated the tall agent. Taus entered the exchange, knowing the CIA wanted information, said, “That’s right. We had a firing show for some interested people.” Sanchez did not need to play with these interlopers. “Gentlemen, thank you for your assistance. We must continue. Please thank your agency chief for us?”

The two CIA agents turned towards one another, looking for the other to reply. Before they could, “And gentlemen, would you mind placing our luggage on board the aircraft. We are running behind schedule; otherwise Nixon will blame your station-chief.” The two agents started to leave, but Lawson, wanting to get in his two-cents, said, “Please give us a hand pushing this bird out of the hangar.” They complied and then walked over to their car and sped away.

Seated in the aircraft, preparing for departure, Taus remarked, “Mutt and Jeff really wanted more information on our mission.”

“That’s right,” answered Lawson, stopping his preflight checks, “CIA is prying and I’ll bet they searched our rooms.” Sanchez said: “I’ll report everything to Mr. Kissinger.”

### **Rio Pact**

After the aircraft took off, Sanchez said, “We are headed for a country whose leaders are moving closer and closer to the Soviet Union. The problem in Costa Rica is lack of any military forces. That, Don Pepe eliminated when he came to power first in 1948. Don Pepe relied upon the Rio Pact for protection.”

“I’m not familiar with the Rio Pact,” Taus said. “The Rio Pact was signed in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil back in late 1947. It was a military alliance initiated by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington providing that the U.S. arm and protect Latin American countries. This was the first treaty signed since the United Nations Charter was adopted. In that charter, Articles 51 to 53 provided for the establishment of regional forces to act in an emergency until the United Nations could intervene. But that was not the intent. The Rio Pact would exclude any UN actions.”

### **Organization of American States**

“Our friend, Governor Nelson Rockefeller was responsible for the articles to insure the United Nations and its charter did not interfere with U.S. policies in the Western Hemisphere. Later in 1948, the U.S. created the Organization of American States at a conference of Latin American nations held in Bogotá, Colombia. The OAS charter was created under the same UN articles introduced by Rockefeller.”

“So the Rio Pact provides protection for Costa Rica?” asked Taus.

“For all countries in Latin American,” responded Sanchez, “An attack upon one of the pact signers is considered an attack on all the signatories.”

“Liberal Presidente Figueres is making more drastic changes in their economy. Legislative and tax reforms have been introduced by him effecting foreign investors, even U.S. pensioners whose income was formerly exempted from their taxes. We feel our investments in Costa Rica will not be as lucrative as they had been.”

Taus remarked, “Mr. Sanchez, this is the first time that we are making a trip to a country where no mention of human rights violations have occurred. You are talking about saving U.S. business interests.”

“Again, remember Costa Rica is moving towards the Soviet sphere with their trade agreements last year. We are concerned where this may lead them. U.S. business interests are national security interests.”

The two interests did not equate with national security matters, which should involve protecting the country from an armed enemy. Sanchez was trying to convince Taus that an economic crisis in a Latin American country could also be a security concern for the United States. Taus felt that risking his life for business interests, which at the same time exploited the people, was not what he wanted to do.

“I know how you feel about the common people, Ricardo. Let me tell you that Costa Rica has serious expenses. Their welfare system has increased their national debt and it is ruining the economy. This is a terrible situation for both businessmen and the common man.”

### **Heading to San Jose**

The aircraft path crossed the Isthmus of Panama to Golfo de los Mosquitos, northwestward over the shores of Panama and to Costa Rica. Coming into view was the Costa Rican town of Puerto Limon, where Lawson turned the Navajo to a west heading for San Jose.

After their arrival at the San Jose Hotel of the Americas, Sanchez called President Figueres and found his afternoon appointments had been rescheduled for the following day. Sanchez informed Lawson and Taus of the

change, enabling them to relax and take in the city sights for the rest of the day.

### **Costa Rica, 1973**

Taus enjoyed third world cultures and felt at ease in a crowd of peasants, talking with the native Indians. The more advanced societies seemed to be preoccupied with their own concerns and pursuits, urban residents could easily neglect the plight of others less fortunate. The sharp contrast between life in Vietnam and in the United States created a sense of responsibility and guilt in him. He wanted to do something to alleviate the sufferings of people in third world countries.

In Vietnam, there were dramatic differences between the elite living in major cities and their impoverished kinsmen from urban slums or the destitute peasant farmers. In contested battlefields, these Vietnamese farmers still tried to raise their meager crops. The gap between classes was shocking to both men's Judeo-Christian values.

Lawson and Taus spent the afternoon strolling through downtown San Jose. Lawson enjoyed himself, paying little attention to the underlying social inequities and the brewing unrest. Lawson led them to the Mercado Central, a city block of food markets.

Fruits, vegetables, animals and food stands blanketed the overcrowded bustling marketplace. People haggled and bargained for the best prices on bright green peppers, ripe oranges, yellow mangos, white ducks, red-roasted pork, deep-blue grapes and a host of other colorful foods. Smoke and aromas of many Latin foods filled the air. The market smells and activities stimulated an appetite.

Lawson relished the atmosphere, practicing his Spanish on the young women who sold their goods. The teenage girls giggled as he mispronounced words. Instead of embarrassment, Lawson laughed as he corrected himself and teased the girls.

After a few hours, they headed back to the more modern section of San Jose where Pizza-hut, McDonald's, Burger-King and other U.S. fast-food chains were located. Instead of foreign delicacies, they found themselves eating at a Kentucky Fried Chicken franchise. Their gastro-intestinal experience in 1969 made them less adventurous in their cuisine; so much for savoring the local culture.

The evening, for Taus, began with a call home to his family on Long Island. His nine-year old son asked him to adopt another child so he would have a playmate. Later that evening, Lawson and Taus took in the night scene at several nightclubs that catered to the trendy upper class of Costa Rican society. Lawson was really an introvert with this group, sitting at a table by himself, refusing to join Taus who was surrounded by several unattached señoritas around the dance floor.

"Come here, Greg. There are two sweet young ladies I want to introduce you too," as Taus pointed toward a group of single girls who worked for the management. "You're not going to marry them, just dance with them."

"Señorita Beatriz meet Greg and Ricardo, my business associates." Sanchez obviously had more than one rum and coke. Beatriz was twenty years



younger than Sanchez, and introduced herself, saying she worked for a large U.S. firm in San Jose. She was very inquisitive. With the trip ahead, Lawson and Taus called it a night at 1:00 a.m. Before leaving, Lawson whispered something into Sanchez' ear.

In their room, Lawson told Taus that Beatriz was asking too many questions. Taus replied, "You are probably just jealous of Sanchez' luck in finding such a nice date." Lawson added:

*Seriously, I have an uneasy feeling about her. There were plenty of other American businessmen at the bar. Sanchez isn't a bad looking fellow, but he's no spring chicken, and she was dynamite. A woman like her would have been corralled earlier. Before we left, I told Sanchez about my suspicions."*

At 8:00 a.m. their phone woke them up; it was Sanchez who wanted to see them at breakfast. Within an hour they met Sanchez in the hotel I. "How was your night, Casanova?" asked Lawson. "You were right, Greg. Beatriz asked some disturbing questions about our work. I pretended I had too much to drink. She wanted to see me today too. I told her I would be much too busy."

By 10:30 a.m. they arrived at Presidente Figueres' nearby office, where Figueres sat with his old friend, Daniel Oduber. "Don Pepe, it's so nice to see you again," Sanchez said as he approached Figueres. They embraced and exchanged greetings. Figueres said, "I asked Daniel to be here with us, since he will run for the Presidency in the upcoming elections."

"An excellent idea," Sanchez added, "I see no stuffed bears in this room."

"What bears, Nestor?" asked Figueres.

"Doesn't the Soviet Union have bears?" Sanchez was needling them on their 1972 trade agreement with Moscow.

"Bears and Costa Rican coffee, Nestor." Figueres could play the same game. "We are having some problems with our economy. Daniel has been helpful." Oduber commented, "I hope to accommodate U.S. business interests, but higher taxes will remain a fact of life here in Costa Rica."

"Not a fact willingly accepted by the North American business community. Have you noticed the large strain which your most generous social programs are placing upon the economy?" Figueres' complexion flushed as he said, "It is long overdue. We do not spend our foreign aid monies on a military to suppress our people. We use both foreign aid and our own wealth to create better living conditions for all our people."

"Most commendable, Don Pepe." Sanchez remarked, "But Costa Rica is still dependent upon foreign trade and markets. As your population grows, less land is available for farming and feeding your people. "Unafraid of the consequences, Oduber stated, "I will expropriate land from the United Brands Fruit Company's plantations here; about 40,000 acres for resettlement by our landless people."

Sanchez complimented them for their honesty. He would immediately report the bad news to Washington with the view of upsetting the elections in favor of a candidate more protective of U.S. business interests. Perhaps a warning would be helpful at this point. Sanchez knew the two leaders were

unwilling to compromise on social reform issues, so he pursued other problems with the same objective in mind, protecting U.S. capital investments.

“President Nixon is very concerned over the trade agreement reached with the Soviet Union. It brings them into this hemisphere. With rising oil costs and your very rapid population increases, many U.S. investors are exercising extreme caution with any future endeavors in Costa Rica.”

The words fell on deaf ears. Unlike the dictators of Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, the democratically elected officials of Costa Rica were not worried about any loss of U.S. aid, especially military hardware that they did not want. Costa Rica’s refusal to cooperate with U.S. military planners greatly upset the Pentagon. In the future, Costa Rica’s tacit acceptance and aid for the Nicaraguan contras would bring more problems for them.

“Let the United States know what Presidente Nixon can do for us,” asked Figueres without offering any particulars. “I shall be happy to supply your future plans for progress in Costa Rica to President Nixon,” Sanchez replied. With the ball placed in his court, Figueres continued talking about social reform programs, which were of little concern to Sanchez. After a few hours, the meeting was concluded and Sanchez was concerned that nothing had been accomplished.

All three had different thoughts as they cramped into a compact San Jose taxi that sped them back to the hotel. Its driver thought he was a matador as he darted in and out of traffic. Sanchez knew his report to Nixon would create additional problems for Costa Rica since the country had offended the U.S. by its contacts with Moscow.

Taus thought the reforms stated by Figueres were constructive and beneficial. Lawson’s thoughts were on flying. “Do you think we can get replacement wing fuel tanks on the Navajo, Nestor? Could you contact Corpus Christi to install them before I return to New Jersey?”

Oblivious to Lawson’s questions, Sanchez noted there would be another visit to El Salvador. The rest of the day and evening was spent much the same for Sanchez and Lawson. Sanchez made his phone calls, confirming the tentative meeting for the next day in San Salvador, issuing instructions to his staff in Washington. Lawson headed to the Mercado Central to kibitz with the young peasant women. Rather than following Lawson, Taus decided to visit the local orphanage

Don Bosco was a Roman Catholic orphanage and school run by an order of brothers who wore traditional black robes. The brothers were friendly and introduced Taus to the headmaster, Brother Juan Xavier. He was polite and gave Taus a tour of the facility. The regimented system provided the children with an adequate, but meager, living standard.

Brother Juan pointed out that there were other orphanages, farther out in the countryside where the older youngsters worked on farms. With the few hours left in the day, Taus was invited to play a baseball game with the team. As darkness fell, he left, sweaty and soiled from the athletic event.

Returning to the hotel, Taus found Sanchez and Lawson having dinner in the hotel restaurant. When Lawson noticed his disheveled appearance, he

asked, "Where the hell were you? What happened to you?"

Taus looked exhausted, his clothes were soiled, and he had bruises where he was tackled during the game. Seizing the opportunity to manufacture some melodrama, Taus explained, "These two masked gunmen, one tall and one short, grabbed me earlier and wanted to take my wallet." A telltale smile betrayed his story. So he admitted playing in a ballgame at the Don Bosco Orphanage.

"Next time invite me," Sanchez said, adding, "By the way, today I arranged our schedule. Tomorrow we will depart and head for San Salvador to meet Presidente Molina. Expect to spend a few days in San Salvador.

Molina may not be available right away. You fellows can take in the sights. I'll be renewing some old acquaintances myself."

"Who is she?" asked Lawson. From across the dining room, Beatriz approached them. "Well Nestor," she said, "I thought you said you were leaving this morning?"

"How nice to see you again, Beatriz. Our plans were suddenly changed." Regardless of her intentions, Sanchez was delighted to see her again. She greeted everyone and was surprised by Taus' appearance. "You must have had a difficult day, Ricardo." Taus nodded, as Sanchez explored her curiosity by saying, "He was grabbed by two salteadors." His remark stirred Beatriz' interest. "What happened? Did you find out who they are?"

Playing along Taus said, "I think they were with a secret group here."

Beatriz' face turned pale as she asked, "What group do you mean?" She seemed to forget about Sanchez who had more amorous thoughts in mind. At 1:00 a.m., Lawson and Taus retired to their room, while Sanchez entertained the inquisitive Beatriz. Back in the room, Taus asked Lawson, "Just what do you make of Beatriz, she asked too many questions."

"I don't know. But Nestor is on to her. He'll find out soon enough." The usual morning call from Sanchez came at 8 a.m. and again he invited them to breakfast at nine. While having breakfast, Sanchez said he took down Beatriz' phone number and address, but had not made up his mind on her real intentions. "Women can be very mysterious. That does not mean they are all *Mati Haries*."

### **San Salvador, El Salvador, 1973**

The Navajo was airborne by 11 a.m., headed along the Pacific Coast to El Salvador, where they landed at Ilopango Airport near San Salvador and checked into the Intercontinental Hotel, the same one they stayed at during the 1969 trip. It was another evening of entertainment by a Hispanic band playing different songs, ranging from Carmen Cannela to the Beatles' I Want To Hold Your Hand. Taus met a young lady on the dance floor and Sanchez found someone's hand to hold. Only Lawson stayed unattached. By midnight, Taus' date had departed with her girlfriend who was upset since Lawson acted so aloof.

There was no wake-up call the following day. Lawson and Taus rose at nine and were free for the rest of the day. They went their separate ways. They had agreed to contact the hotel every two hours, staying in touch with each other in case there were any changes to their schedule.

When asked by Taus, the hotel manager provided him with a list of local orphanages. Taus decided to visit the Hospicio de Huerfanos, which was operated by a Catholic religious order. The orphanage director was a man in his late thirties. He was pleased to meet Taus and encouraged him to adopt a child. It was apparent the orphanage was overcrowded. He informed his assistant, a nun in her fifties who was the Mother Superior, to bring one child into the office.

He must have been a favorite of the orphanage. At eight-years old, Luis Rodriquez had lost both his parents in a government ambush. The Salvadoran Army had killed several innocent civilians during a raid to capture suspected guerrillas a year ago. Luis had no relatives, resulting in him being placed into the orphanage.

Mother Superior claimed he was a very good boy, intelligent and adoring, but mostly quiet as he heard the director and Mother Superior discuss his possible adoption. Taus suggested that Luis and he needed time to get acquainted. Taus really was not certain himself if he wanted to adopt another child. That was the purpose of the trip to the orphanage. Besides, he might not have the time needed for the adoption.

Taus had made the mistake of showing everyone the wallet picture of his adopted Vietnamese son, causing the director and Mother Superior to think Taus could adopt Luis.

### **Considering Adopting Another Orphan**

Mother Superior prodded Luis to sit near Taus. The child was shy until Taus lifted him onto his lap and reached for a paper and pencil. Taus drew a sketch of a chicken. There were many chickens and ducks walking about the orphanage. One stood in the office doorway, unknowingly posing for the portrait. The boy was captivated by the drawing and the attention. There were no messages for Taus when he telephoned the hotel from the orphanage. By late afternoon, Taus decided to try for an adoption and return to the orphanage on the following day.

### **Boozing With Beatriz**

Back at the hotel, Taus found Sanchez and Lawson at the bar with a familiar lady-friend: Beatriz. She said her own business brought her to San Salvador and it was a tremendous coincidence that she decided to stay at the same hotel. It was obvious that Sanchez had accepted her story.

When Taus explained his visit to the orphanage, Beatriz asked him if he was going to adopt another child. It was an unusual remark since Taus never told her he had previously adopted a child. He asked her how she knew about the first adoption. She was at a loss for words. Neither Sanchez or Lawson had mentioned any personal matters to her, except for cover stories which did not include the adoption.

### **Discovering CIA Spy**

Finally she responded, "You appear to have adopted before, so I only concluded so." Now Sanchez became suspicious. By 10 a.m. he told Beatriz they had to prepare for an important business meeting. The trio excused themselves, retreating to Sanchez' room, where, once inside, Sanchez said, "I believe she is CIA. They must have taken an interest in our trip after the

bombing raid in Honduras.”

Sanchez instructed Lawson to file phony flight plans for their next departure. It really did not matter. Flight plans from small business trips were often ignored in Central American countries. “We will proceed with plans to meet Presidents Molina in two days.” Sanchez added, “Stick to your story, especially if you encounter Beatriz. Remain friendly with her.”

Turning to the next part of the trip, Sanchez said, “Presidente Molina is reconsidering his rash announcement. After the international press probed him about the attacks on the guerrilla bases in Honduras, Molina feared the press would inflame the situation further. The Salvadoran economy cannot handle an all-out war. I guess he’s making up another story to tell the press and us about his involvement in the attack.”

“Taking this to a logical conclusion,” Lawson added, “Molina feels we may be here to ask him about his belligerent attitude towards Honduras and the bombing attacks.”

“That may be,” replied Sanchez. “My greater fear is he may very well be planning a full-scale invasion of Honduras.” Such an invasion would create turmoil in the earthquake-ravaged region. The conflict between El Salvador and Honduras could easily spill over into other countries.

Another day passed before meeting with Molina. Sanchez hoped Molina would not complicate affairs by making another outlandish announcement.

#### **Further Adoption Actions**

It was not until mid-morning that Taus arrived at the orphanage from shopping. The director informed him that an attorney had been contacted to handle the adoption and a meeting arranged for the following day. Handing out the newly purchased gifts, Taus asked the director to reschedule the meeting for that evening. “I will only be here until tomorrow. Does Luis understand it may not be possible for me to adopt him right away?”

Mother Superior said she would explain things. In the meantime, they would get to know each other better. The director said San Salvador had a nice city park with rides and amusements. It is like your Disneyland Park in California, but not that lavished. Luis would enjoy himself there.” Mother Superior had Luis dressed for the outing. He stood very proudly in his faded but pressed cotton shirt and oversized blue pants which used safety pins in place of a belt.

The city park was a far cry from Disneyland, but not to Little Luis who delighted in the few rusty rides and swings. The park was not crowded; it was the middle of the week. There were no asphalt walkways, just the trodden paths and little grass or shrubbery in this children’s paradise. Taus decided to have a late lunch back at the hotel.

The opulence of the Intercontinental Hotel amazed the child. Carpets on the floors, velvet covered sofas and air conditioning were luxuries unknown to Luis. They entered the dining room, finding Lawson was also having a late lunch.

“Well by god, you were serious!” remarked Lawson as he saw Taus with Luis. After lunch, Lawson suggested they head for the airport. He needed to check the Navajo. After the airport trip, they shopped downtown for some

clothes, candy and toys for Luis. It was an overwhelming day for Luis as they returned to the orphanage. Lawson came along for the ride. At 7:00 PM, Taus headed for the attorney's appointment.

Dr. Cristobal Ignacio Benito lived on Buenos Aires Avenue in San Salvador. He was a member of Salvador's upper middle-class, trying to practice law, seeking justice in an inequitable system. He was a volunteer attorney for the Catholic Church in Central America. Though he charged Taus a nominal fee, his work for the Church and its orphanages were free.

The evening appointment with Dr. Benito lasted for three hours, two of which were spent discussing the morass in Central America. Benito was surprised to learn of Taus' earlier acquaintance with Jose Napoleon Duarte. The legal paperwork for the adoption would take a few months to process through the courts. Benito drove Taus back to his hotel and before departing promised to assist Taus in every way with the adoption.

Inside the hotel bar, Taus met Sanchez and Lawson seated at a table with two *senoritas*. One had her arms wrapped around Sanchez, the other sat next to Lawson. Sanchez knew both from other trips. Interspersed with the social chatter, Sanchez obliquely referred to the scheduled meeting with Molina.

Neither Lawson nor Taus wanted to answer the ringing telephone the next morning. "How the hell does Sanchez wake up before us?" Taus exclaimed. "He's older, he stays up later, yet there he is every morning, ready to go." Taus answered. Tossing a pillow at Lawson who was still asleep, Taus said that Sanchez wanted them downstairs for a briefing. In the dining area, Taus found Sanchez already enjoying his second cup of coffee. "Before you begin, let me ask you one question Nestor?" How do you manage to wake up earlier and appear so bright-eyed and busy-tailed?"

"I take care of myself, Ricardo."

"That's not true. We see you carrying on with the *senoritas*, drinking enough booze and inhaling those Cuban cigars," admonished Taus. "Incorrecto *Senor Ricardo*." Sanchez lit up another cigar. "These are Nicaraguan cigars from our friend, *Presidente Somoza*." When a frown appeared on Taus' face, Sanchez explained, "Alright, I will tell you my secret. When in Rome, do as the Romans do. I take a midday siesta. Both of you should be doing that instead of carousing around town in the hot sun." Realizing the truth in what Sanchez had said, Lawson added, "Our cultural lesson for the day."

"And I have more, *hombres*," noted Sanchez. "Molina may be very difficult to handle. He's like his predecessor, Sanchez Hernandez. As you know, the 1972 elections were rigged. We have information Molina ordered the execution of your friend, Duarte. *Presidente Arana* of Guatemala gave us that report." Continuing, "Molina is fighting the growing guerrilla forces here in El Salvador. He is another butcher. An organization known as *Orden* headed by Army General Medrano is conducting terrorist activities against all who oppose the government. We believe they have killed many innocent people including teachers, priests and nuns, other business and government employees while pursuing their objectives using a counterinsurgency force." Reminding the two, Sanchez said, "We must be careful not to discuss any-

thing about the events of the past week. We will act as if the only thing we heard of the bombing raid was from the news media.”

Now Ricardo, you have gone to this Catholic orphanage. Care must be taken in speaking about the church’s activities here. The Catholic Church and its priest claim human right abuses by the government against the native Indians, campesinos, and other citizens. The oligarchs in most Central American countries are turning against the church because it supports the people who, in turn, are supported by communists. The Archbishop here has been seen speaking with communist rebel forces. In January 1972, a Catholic priest was murdered for ministering to the local peasants.

Lawson remarked, “Rich and I have no intention of saying anything while you are with Molina. Do we serve any purpose by going to the meeting today?” Lawson wanted to check out the aircraft instead. “Certainly, body guards,” Sanchez responded, “and witnesses to the discussion.”

“Bodyguards?” Taus asked. “We aren’t armed.”

“That does not matter,” Sanchez insisted. “You both are like the Vatican’s Swiss Guards. They are unarmed too, but they protect the Pope. It’s more symbolically.”

The Salvadoran government was under siege. As the trio arrived at the nearby government executive offices, they found the building surrounded by Army soldiers and policemen. It was clear the government feared a guerrilla attack at any time. Inside the building, they were directed by an Army officer to Molina’s receptionist who was also an Army sergeant. He loudly announced their presence to Molina. Appearing from his office, Molina welcomed the entourage, “Senor Sanchez, enter por favor. Sargento ask General Medrano and Colonel Romero to join us now.”

“Molina’s dark smiling eyes could not hide his sinister personality. While waiting for the two Army officers, Sanchez spoke about military and economic aid in exchange for protection of U.S. business interests and the regime’s overall support for U.S. policies.

General Medrano and Colonel Romero entered the office; both were attired in camouflage fatigue uniforms. “Tell us about the guerrilla insurrection General Medrano,” Molina commanded. Medrano walked over to a wall map of El Salvador and spoke of numerous communist activities. Any disturbances or violence were attributable to the communist guerrillas.

Interrupting, Sanchez mention that by identifying every group as communist, the government was over-reacting and the international press and world opinion would cast them as paranoid. “Care must be exercised, Presidente. Your government will be viewed as too repressive, denying its people of basic human rights.”

Firing back, Molina said, “We do not want another Vietnam War over here such as your country is fighting. We will use maximum force to eliminate the communist menace.” Molina was adamant as both General Medrano and Colonel Romero applauded him.

Sanchez was not ready to quit, “The Catholic Church is very upset with several incidences involving members of its clergy. President Nixon finds it very hard to see the connection between the communists and the church. He

feels the press may not be sympathetic to your government if these situations persist.”

“We have always cooperated with the United States and Presidente Nixon,” Molina remarked. “If we do not persist in suppressing these rebellions, our government will be overthrown.” Adding some thunder, no doubt based upon the recent bombing raid; Molina said he would not tolerate any armed rebels escaping across his borders into hostile countries for safe haven. “The legitimate government of El Salvador is fighting for its very survival against the communist insurrectionists.

Thus far, Sanchez believed he had accomplished his main objectives. Molina gave some verbal guarantees that U.S. business interests would be protected; and, he gave no indications that the U.S. was involved in the Honduran bombing raid. But a third objective, which was more cosmetic to the Nixon Administration, was not accomplished, that of human rights violations. As far as Molina and his henchmen were concerned, the only problem with human rights abuses was the press reporting them.

There would be additional aid for El Salvador, Sanchez inferred, after the visits of several “friendly” congressmen and a U.S. military assessment team. They would be arriving soon and had been provided guidance from the Nixon Administration to use in their final report. However, Molina was warned about any further human rights abuses. “If there are any unusual incidences, human rights violation or abuses, occurring during their visit, Nixon’s final report will be negative. He will not approve aid when the world press is condemning your government.”

The meeting concluded, the trio waited outside the government building for a taxi. Sanchez asked, “We can return to the United States tomorrow, unless you want to leave earlier. Sanchez was hinting he preferred taking a siesta in the afternoon and seeing his girlfriend in the evening.

Wanting to return to the orphanage, Taus asked if there would be any problem leaving the next day. Sanchez could see no reason to say no, considering Taus wanted to pursue the adoption. Sanchez agreed.

By mid-afternoon, Taus and Lawson arrived at the hospico. Mother Superior informed them that Father Castillo, the director, was in town meeting with Archbishop Luis Chavez y Gonzalez. “He is very active in establishing ‘comunidades de base’ for the common people.”

Hearing the director’s name, Taus connected it to the activist priest whose name was often in the press. “I didn’t know the director was a priest.

He never wears a collar.” Mother Superior noted, “It is too hot for the priestly collar and with the ninos, it would be very uncomfortable. Father prefers not to advertise himself, as you know the government is not happy with his political views.”

“What is the ‘community bases’ you mentioned. Sister?”

“The Church is working with the poor trying to secure land reforms and education for the people.” In a way, it was a reminder to Taus who asked, “Do you or the children have any particular needs that I can shop for today?” The nun listed twenty items from towels and bandages to a hammer and nails. Little Luis would also go along with them for a rare outing. He



was very happy that day.

Back at the hotel later that evening, it was apparent Sanchez had his siesta. He was on the dance floor with another senorita. Lawson asked if he knew one of the younger teenagers at the orphanage, "You may know this boy, he strongly resembles you. Perhaps you knew his mother?" Neither Sanchez nor Taus smiled at Lawson's sarcastic remark. Plans were made for an early departure on the following morning.

The Navajo was bound for Mexico City the next day. At 9:00 AM, the trio was flying over the western coast towards Mexico. Sanchez told Lawson he would take a commercial jet from Mexico City to Washington, DC.

Lawson would fly to Corpus Christi for additional repairs to the aircraft. While enroute, Lawson asked Sanchez, "Do you also have a girlfriend in Mexico City?"

"I have girlfriends around the world, my friend," Sanchez turned the conversation to business. "I will be meeting with our delegation that flew down to South America."

"Feodor Miranda, a noted authority on South American affairs and U.S. Navy Admiral Lucius Clissold are envoys sent by Dr. Kissinger to assess the situation in Chile. Of particular concern to President Nixon is the regime of Salvador Allende, as I told you. Its strong communist ties may influence the other governments in the region. Miranda and Clissold went there to determine the nature of any future military aid." Taus asked, "How can they provide more military aid to a country that is in the communist sphere?"

"The aid will be placed in the 'right' hands, not Allende. There is a very strong military faction opposed to his regime. CIA has been working with them in an attempt to overthrow the government. Chilean Naval Intelligence is cooperating with the U.S. Navy and reporting on Soviet assistance and forces in Chile. That's why ADM Clissold is there. At the same time, Miranda will encourage opposition to Allende in the news media by accusing him of human rights violations."

"Both of them will meet me in Mexico City so that we may consolidate information and prepare a report for Dr. Kissinger. As you know. President Nixon is occupied with other global concerns, the East-West I, the opening of relations with Red China, and the problems in the Middle East. Nixon is reviewing all aspects of our Latin American policies."

"I hope you note the lack of attention that the Central American dictators pay to human rights," added Taus, "except for Costa Rica."

"That is of concern too. But of primary importance is the protection of U.S. business interests. The issue of human rights violations clouds our involvement with these regimes." Emphasizing his point, Taus said, "American citizens are against these dictators and the press is shaping world opinion. Everyone who reads a paper has heard of the many killings and torturing of innocent people."

"Yes Ricardo, but our trips to Central America are funded by U.S. business interests and their protection is our main consideration. The sentiments of the American Public have been addressed by us. We have cautioned the dictators on their human rights abuses."

“True, but they haven’t listened to you,” remarked Taus. “It’s enough they insure U.S. capital investments will be protected. It is in their best interests and ours to protect American investments.”

“What will be your recommendations, Mr. Sanchez?”

“You are asking me to provide solutions. That is Mr. Kissinger’s job. I make the preliminary evaluations and let the administration decide upon its courses of action.” Realizing Taus was dissatisfied with his answer, Sanchez expanded, “We shall continue to supply military aid and use it as a lever in achieving our other aims, influencing human rights issues and protecting our investments. Unfortunately, these dictators will use our military aid against all opposition, not just the communists, to stay in power.”

“Why can’t we limit our military aid? In cases of communist guerrilla activities, we could send in U.S. troops or conduct a larger scale operation such as the bombing raid on the Honduran camps.”

“Now Ricardo, you are talking about starting another Vietnam War here in Latin America. The Nixon Administration is doing everything it can to disengage from the war in Southeast Asia without then having to commit forces over here. Nixon’s aim is not to have the United States act as a world policeman. At least, not quite so soon. He wants the present pro-US regimes to handle their own internal affairs. That is why he will continue to send them military and economic aid.”

“These countries will gravitate towards whatever political sphere offers them the best considerations. They refuse to be dominated by the United States or for that matter any foreign power. We are not too concerned about this region politically. The Soviet Union does not need another Cuba to support.

However, U.S. business interests are worried about losing their investments, which did occur in Cuba when Fidel Castro came to power. Foreign corporations and industries were nationalized. The same is happening in Chile.”

“To prevent these business losses, the administration will support these dictators who, in turn, will provide the stability needed for American enterprises.”

“Mr. Sanchez, it is obvious with that concern that the issue of human rights will not be addressed. Even now the Catholic Church is opposing these repressive military dictatorships.”

“I agree the church is diametrically opposed to our support of the regimes, but we must first consider the business community. You lead with your heart not your head, Ricardo.” Sanchez continued, “Look what happened in Vietnam. The United States entered the war based upon its treaty commitments to help the people. The U.S. felt if one country fell to communism, then others would following, the ‘Domino Theory.’”

Taus argued, “We were not altruistic in Vietnam. There were substantial U.S. business interests involved there. Little known to the American Public was the huge ore quarry in the Long Binh area of South Vietnam. It was operated by U.S. corporations, using PA&E (Pacific Architects & Engineers) to supervise the extraction of chromium and manganese ores. It is one of the

few regions in the world where these metals can be found in abundance. These metals were vital to the production of steel in America. And according to geologists, under Vietnam's offshore waters, there may exist millions of gallon of oil. The geophysical structure is similar to Indonesia where large oil reserves were discovered."

"Well, I'll be darned," said Lawson, "I knew we had a better reason for sending troops to Vietnam. It's just like in World War II where American bombing raids avoided several industrial targets in Europe because of U.S. business interests."

"Nonsense, Greg," rebuked Sanchez, "Where did you hear that?"

As Lawson played with the altimeter and navigational instruments, he slowly answered, "I recall someone saying something along that line. I believe we never bombed any Ford factories or Coca-Cola plants in Europe."

"Greg, a soda company can hardly be considered a strategic target. Your information about the Ford Company is also incomplete." Hoping to assist

Lawson, Taus chimed-in, "My information about the mineral quarries in Vietnam is correct. I saw the operation and there were Caucasian civilians supervising it." Changing the subject, Sanchez said, "You mentioned an adoption. How is the process going? I heard both you and Greg had lunch with the child at the Intercontinental Hotel."

"Yes we did. I don't recall telling you that."

"My breakfast waitress mentioned it," replied Sanchez.

Taus asked Sanchez if he knew Dr. Benito, the adoption attorney from San Salvador. Sanchez heard of him. Benito's name had appeared when he assisted several accused communist sympathizers.

The glistening Lake Texcoco provided a benchmark for the Navajo to use as it headed into the Valley of Mexico where the second largest city in North America spread out. Over 9 million inhabitants lived in the federal district in Mexico City.

### **Mexico City. 1973**

After landing at Tenochtitlan Airport, Lawson decided to stay for a day before continuing to the States. Sanchez arranged for hotel rooms in downtown Mexico City on the Paseo de la Reforma. At the hotel, Sanchez met with Mr. Miranda and Admiral Clissold and introduce them to Lawson and Taus. Sanchez told the Admiral that the two flyers were in the Air Force. Keeping this seemingly trivial information confidential, even to the other delegation, reflected the instructions from Washington that all matters should be compartmentalized unless otherwise necessary. The issues discussed by Sanchez and Miranda were far more devastating, since they included a CIA plot to overthrow the Chilean government.

The group proceeded to a small conference room at the hotel for a lengthy discussion. In the room, a third member belonging to Miranda's party told the Admiral that the room was inspected for any electronic bugs and was found secure. The Admiral then whispered something to Sanchez, which prompted him to ask Lawson and Taus to wait outside. Before exiting, Miranda told Lawson that two other men were supposed to attend the meeting and to let Miranda or Clissold know when they arrived.

Sitting outside the room in lobby chairs, Taus told Lawson, "We're just cogs-in-the-wheel. They are the real powerbrokers."

"Not at their level," replied Lawson. "They simply make recommendations to the National Security Council. Then, Nixon and Kissinger make the decisions."

Two individuals approached them in the hotel corridor. They appeared to be Europeans. The shorter older man spoke with a heavy German accent as he asked Lawson for a Mr. Miranda. Lawson knocked on the door and the two Europeans were welcomed inside.

Lawson and Taus waited outside for the next two hours. When the meeting concluded, Sanchez asked Lawson and Taus to join them for dinner. The restaurant within the hotel offered an excellent cuisine. The evening would be quietly spent since the usual cabaret entertainment was not scheduled. They found a table in a secluded section of the dining room and Taus asked how the meeting had gone.

"It's always something," Sanchez said. "One minute we find ourselves supplying arms to one side and in the next minute, we find they are our enemy." Hoping Sanchez would be more specific, Taus pressed him; "The two Europeans were from Germany?"

"No, though perhaps originally. General Menachem Hod and Major Motti Elishiwale are from Israel. They represent the Israeli government, which has been asked by President Nixon to assist our Latin American allies with arms and equipment."

"How can they afford to do so?" asked Taus, "Facing all the hostile Arab nations, how can they become involved in these western affairs?"

"It is because they face such a hostile world where they live that they are willing to become involved in our request. Aid funding comes from the United States, not Israel. We are Israel's strongest supporters. We can also do favors for one another. Remember President Nixon's policy was to have the U.S. become less of a world policeman. Governments that the U.S. supports will handle their own internal affairs. Israel manufactures arms and equipment. They can supply Latin America and relieve some of the press' attention to our role in these activities. This operation is being conducted by Admiral Clissold."

At that moment, the two Israeli officers entered the dining area and walked over to them. Introductions were made as the General and the Major sat down at their table. Despite the closed-door meeting, neither Sanchez nor Hod were overly concerned about discussing any sensitive issues in front of Lawson and Taus.

Informing the General, Sanchez said they were discussing aspects of the meeting. In his heavy German accent Hod said, "Nestor, as long as your friends are not from the world press corps or the Arab World, we can enjoy our dinners."

The meat of the conversation came before the main course, as Taus was anxious to hear the Israeli's viewpoint. "Don't you find it difficult to consider any other global crisis in light of Israel's own defense posture?" General Hod responded, "It is because we do consider all these matters that we

are here.” Hod’s gravel voice matched the dark furrows on his weathered face. “I mean Israel is opposed on every side by belligerent nations who only want to destroy you. I’m sure your country will be protected by the United States. You have many friends in our Jewish community.”

Looking at Sanchez, Hod commented, “The United States became our friend when President Truman discovered politicians were elected and funded by the large Jewish block of voters in America. The Arab community in the U.S. has no such organization that can encourage your Congress. Our close friendship begun at that time. It’s been a very symbiotic relationship,” confirmed Sanchez. “Yes, we have used each other,” added Hod, “and what’s your specialty, Mr. Taus.”

Both Taus and Lawson informed the Israelis they were pilots. The General probed further, “Do either of you have military or intelligence backgrounds?” Lawson grinned. Lawson and Taus looked toward Sanchez before answering. He replied for them, “Their real names are John Angleton and Israel Beer.” Both the General and the Major laughed aloud. The joke was not understood by Lawson or Taus.

Explaining the significance, Sanchez said, “They are men of opposite extremes for Israel. As you both know, Angleton is our CIA’s head of Counter-intelligence. He’s been a great friend to Israel.” Hod smiled and nodded his head at Sanchez’ remarks, “and Israel Beer was a KGB mole who was a close friend and aide to Israeli Premier David Ben-Gurion. Beer was involved with Israeli military and intelligence operations until he was caught transferring secret documents to a KGB agent.”

“For the first time. Major Elishiwale spoke, “He died in our prison system during 1968.”

“Are you General Hod’s pilot?” asked Lawson.

“No, he’s not,” replied Hod. “He’s my aide on military matters and occasionally on intelligence items.” Hod was being truthful. “He is an expert on all facets of military weaponry and training. With your Admiral Clissold, Major Elishiwale’s mission was to review the strengths and weaknesses of the South American countries we visited. That would provide your country with a better idea on the types and kinds of military supplies Israel could provide them.”

Sanchez said, “The same assessment will have to be redone for Central America, boys. That means another trip very soon. But first, Miranda and I must report our present findings to the administration. The situation in Chile has more attention than we thought.”

“We are ready to assist you, Mr. Sanchez, as soon as possible,” replied Hod, evidently eager for more weapons sales.

“Good,” answered Sanchez, “I feel trouble is brewing again in the Middle East which may distract you.”

“What is the nature of this trouble?” the General wanted to know.

Being more blunt than usual, Sanchez said, “Dr. Kissinger is walking a tightrope, balancing Israel and the Arab World so that neither side defeats the other.”

“What is Kissinger’s great concern about the Arabs. Unfortunately, since

Israel emerged as a nation, there have been antagonism between both parties.” There is the huge oil interests of the Arab World which the West depends upon for much of its industrial energy.” Sanchez was quite concerned. “We are afraid of a complete oil embargo and the instability such a situation could create.”

Informing the General, Sanchez spoke, “Israeli Intelligence efforts are relied upon by the CIA. My friends have told me your efforts have been interrupted since the massacre of the Israeli athletes during last year’s Olympics in West Germany.” Hod agreed, “Distracted by our interest in revenge. Our intelligence organization, Mossad, has diverted much of its intelligence efforts to tracking down the Palestinian terrorists.”

“Exactly,” responded Sanchez. “Many of your intelligence agents and section heads are retiring. Your replacement agents do not have the extensive backgrounds of these spymasters. I have been informed by a friend that a large buildup of Arab troops and equipment is planned for summer maneuvers. It may be the forerunner of an invasion into Israel. That is why I suggested that our next trip to Central America may be delayed.”

“You speak like Nostradamus, Nestor. I think our intelligence should know the actual threat.” Hod had every confidence in Israeli Military Intelligence since his close friend. Major General Eliyahu Zeira, was its Director.

It was not Sanchez’ intention to work for any foreign powers, but he viewed a weakness in the Israeli Intelligence community and warned them through General Hod. The social conversation was not merely idle chatter.

Dr. Kissinger had told Sanchez earlier to inform Hod separately about a military threat over the summer.

The General had heard about it from other U.S. Intelligence sources.

“We are aware of the possible Arab attack. However, your President had forbidden us from engaging them with a pre-emptive air strike.”

“World public opinion. General. Israel will have to suffer some initial losses before it retaliates,” remarked Sanchez. “The West cannot afford an oil crisis attributed to any rash Israeli actions.”

That evening Lawson and Taus bid farewell to Sanchez. A good night’s rest prepared them for another early morning departure. This time back to the States.

By noon, the Navajo was approaching Corpus Christi, Texas for landing at the Army airfield. The Navajo was parked near the same hangar that had outfitted them less than two-weeks ago. Coordination was made with the maintenance crew. However, Lawson was denied the addition of new wing-tanks. Intelligence authorities felt that such an option on the Navajo may attract attention that could link it to the Honduran raid. A few days would pass before the completion of other structural modifications. The flight continued back to New Jersey.

Taus could not reconcile himself between his country’s missions and his feelings for the people whose oppression was attributed to his country’s support of dictatorships. The missions were initiated and approved by the National Security Council and supported, in part, by the National Security Agency. NSA’s involvement became traditional and used in covert opera-

tions that the U.S. government wished to distance itself from using the notion of “plausible deniability.”

The bombings in Honduras would haunt him for many years. Had he done the right thing? Had his country done the right thing? How many innocent people are being killed in the interests of national security? And are those interests truly of national security concerns? There were flashbacks to the war in Vietnam. Even Lawson admitted his ambivalent feelings concerning these operations.

The two Aviators parted company after landing in New Jersey. Taus’ family was excited to hear the news of the adoption of Luis Rodriguez. The hardest part for Taus was returning to his civilian position at First National City Bank (later renamed “Citibank”). Immediately upon his return he was summoned to see General Sturm at Citibank’s Headquarters.

At Sturm’s plush office on the top floor, Taus was handed payment “for services rendered.” Sturm added his compliments, “You fellows did an outstanding job, I understand.” Sturm failed to comment on anything about the Honduran raid, prompting Taus to ask him if he knew exactly what had happened. “Of course, I do.” Sturm announced, “It’s better to put these things behind you. Rich.”

“You might say my conscience is bothering me, General. I feel we may have gone too far this time.”

“First of all,” Sturm eased Taus’ mind, “There were no casualties there. If we wanted dead people, we would have used conventional bombers, not a ‘rag-tag’ civilian airplane. We just wanted to scare them and drum-up world opinion against the Salvadorans. And second, to save our way of life is an imperative. How did you feel in Vietnam when you did the same things?”

“I felt that was different at that time. Perhaps, being younger then, but I also have bad feelings about Vietnam now.” Sturm leaned back in his leather armchair and offered Taus a cigar. He began a sermon. “We are the vanguard that protects America, and American Society. Don’t let anyone tell you otherwise. The President is disengaging American forces in Vietnam.

He will not be a party to another guerrilla insurgency. American interests must be protected worldwide, son. That is why you are here. You must view it in that light. This work, you are doing for our nation. Forget about the distasteful parts and relish in your accomplishments. Don’t fret over tragic events, if you are doing something to save our America way of life. Take pride in being a part of the force that will preserve our country.”

The parlance sounded dogmatic to Taus, offering little comfort. It could have been a speech given to Japanese kamikaze pilots in World War II, before his first and final mission. The fact that a cash payment was made instead of any bank transfer added to the apparent dishonesty. Sturm mentioned future missions, referring to another trip to Central America with Israeli Military Intelligence to assess the strength of each country independent of other U.S. agencies’ reports.

It was still very early. The Vietnam War was claiming men’s lives. Within the Vietnam Veterans’ Corps, men were suffering both physically and mentally from their war experiences. Often the mental wounds lay deeply

buried and surfaced only after extreme tension and stress later in life. Veterans' psyches were fractured and could crumble with the least amount of added burden or stress. It was only a matter of time for each moral man.

Medical authorities started to study these veterans and the similarities.

They identified a condition known as "Post Traumatic Stress Disorder" (PTSD). To fit into this syndrome, one's moral values had to conflict dramatically with the events he experienced in combat or, for that matter, in any dramatic event beyond the normal course of human experiences.

### **Tragedy In El Salvador**

Dr. Benito sent a thick envelope to Taus within a week of their meeting. It contained all the necessary paperwork for Taus' adoption. Several long distance telephone calls were made to clarify and expedite the process. One call was made to the orphanage where Taus spoke to the Director, Alfredo Castillo. He seemed troubled by recent political events, but was hopeful the adoption could be accomplished soon. Mother Superior spoke with Taus insuring him that Little Luis was in good health and happy.

The stories of atrocities echoed on the front pages of newspapers. The liberal press started pointing fingers at the military dictatorship and the lack of regard for human rights. Less such transgressions, if any, were the guerrillas compared to the current right-wing forces of the government.

Then in June 1973, Taus received a long letter from Dr. Benito. He apologized for not speaking to Taus by telephone. Taus had been away for two weeks of active duty as an Army National Guard Aviator. The letter read:

*It is with deepest personal regrets and sympathy that I must inform you of a terrible tragedy which has occurred at the Hospicio de Huerfanos this past week. A terrorist group entered the orphanage and removed Director Alfredo Castillo. He had been actively campaigning against the government's policies towards the campesinos and the Catholic Church. Along with him were Sister Maria de los Dolores and Mother Superior. They resisted and were shot, along with several children who tried to protect them. One was Luis Roriguez. They died instantly.*

*I have personally checked with the government authorities and the mortuary where I saw the dead bodies. I am most sorry. I have asked the authorities how such a thing could happen. They accused communist guerrillas of the killings and have provided no assistance or further investigation in this matter.*

*I have enclosed a clipping from our newspaper, 'La Prensa.' It does not provide any further information and tends to cloud the facts known about this horrible tragedy. Please let me know how I can assist you."* Taus immediately telephoned Benito to confirm what he did not want to believe. Trying to understand, Taus asked naively how people could be so brutal. Dr. Benito replied, "The government uses criminals to commit these atrocities. At least, they should be considered criminals. They are men employed in the government forces who can easily be corrupted. Both the killers and the government are motivated by greed and the low value they place



on human life.”

Taus was inconsolable. Dr. Benito tried to strengthen him, “The Lord has adopted little Luis. Find some comfort in knowing that no one can ever hurt him again. In heaven, I know Padre Alfredo and Sister Maria are with him and will take care of him. May you find peace, Ricardo.”

Nearly 20-years would pass before Taus informed his family about the tragic death of Luis. Whenever the subject came up about the adoption, Taus would make excuses or simply avoid it, saying legal complications arose. “Luis is in the care of his real parents now.” Taus never mentioned that his parents were killed by the right-wing Salvadoran death squads before Luis was taken into the orphanage.

Citibank had scheduled another three-month long banking course for him at their Long Island City school center. He could not concentrate on accounting principles. The dull and boring academic training and banking work offered no distraction from his bitter memories. He asked to discuss the situation with General Sturm.

More than ever, the twisted steel sculpture in front of Citibank’s Headquarters reflected his own inner struggle. In Sturm’s office, Taus explained his difficulties and the tragedy in San Salvador. “I can’t seem to concentrate in another school course or this job for that matter. Little Luis’ death is on my mind.

Despite his sole allegiance to the political party, Sturm did understand the problem confronting Taus. “I suppose that we haven’t allowed you any time to readjust to a civilian lifestyle. It’s something I’ve heard about from our medical people. Gary Smith is having the same difficulty, only worse.”

“The returning Vietnam Veteran may only have a day or more out of a combat situation when they returned stateside. No debriefings, no time to readjust and the men returned, for the most part, individually. At the end of World War II, soldiers and sailors returned home with their fighting units aboard troop transports. There was camaraderie, shared feelings. But from Vietnam, soldiers returned home alone on fast commercial jetliners. They had no time to readjust.”

“What now makes matters worse for you, Rich, is the role you are playing as a ‘secret warrior.’ And it’s not just Smith and you; I’ve noticed Lawson is compensating too. He’s caught up in flying constantly. I’m not a psychologist, but I believe he is escaping by flying away from whatever has hurt him in the past.”

“Before the scars have formed on your own emotional war wounds, they have been reopened by a fresh traumatic event. I know how you feel. My last war was Korea. Many combat vets experience those same stresses.

“I have found a way to control it. When I was still on active duty, I worked hard, achieving early promotions. Here, I keep myself busy. That’s why I enjoy this job. It’s a dual role. On the surface, I am a Senior VP for a large bank and, if you like, an administrator or facilitator for the Steering Committee. My leisure time activities are organized and scheduled too.”

“I’m a member of several health clubs, two golf clubs, many military organizations and fraternal groups. See those military figurines on the

shelves,” Sturm pointed to the large china closet in his office containing numerous miniature lead soldiers. “I collect them. You have got to keep yourself busy, Rich.”

There were no elixirs to relieve the pain. Taus would try to follow Sturm’s advice. “I need some time off from my Citibank job,” Taus said.

“I understand.” Sturm reasoned that when a person falls off a motorcycle, the best thing to do is to get right back on it. “Why not take a few months off. I can arrange for you to take some Army Training if you like. It will be interesting assignments, keep you busy, allowing things to settle down for you.”

“Yes sir,” Taus agreed, Sturm’s solution seemed appropriate. Taus did not want to be idle. Sturm also did not want to lose a team player. There were other operations coming up. Sturm explained, “Right now, we’re trying to keep a lid on things.”

Sturm outline the problems facing the Nixon Administration. “Congress is conducting hearings on the 1972 Watergate break-in. The American Public is upset over the massive bombing raids in Southeast Asia and Congress had ordered a halt. Congress is also attempting to regain its powers to make war by introducing resolutions calling for a War Powers Act. President Nixon’s popularity is at an all time low. We’ll have to curtail some operations and not institute some others until the political climate changes.”

“Events in Chile don’t seem to indicate any easing of covert operations,” noted Taus. Surprised to hear Taus mention an otherwise secret operation, Sturm asked what he knew about the Chilean situation.

“It was discussed during the trip by Sanchez. He said the Chilean President, Salvador Allende, wanted to escape from the yoke of U.S. imperialism created by our corporations in his country. He was nationalizing their properties. I understand the CIA is attempting to overthrow the regime.”

“Well,” Sturm said, “Nixon and Kissinger are concerned over having another pro-communist government in Latin America. They feel Kennedy should have done something about Cuba long ago. A second Soviet satellite in the Western Hemisphere could create havoc in the region. What else do you know?”

“This past week, I spoke to Lawson about the tragedy. I suppose he tried to help me by changing the subject. He told me of a CIA agent in New York who reported that an attempt would be made to overthrow Allende by a Chilean Army coup. I suppose Sanchez is already aware that Kissinger will undermine Allende by cooperating and encouraging the Chilean Army.”

“The CIA agent must be Craig Anders,” said Sturm. “He’s another contact of ours from CIA, here in New York.” However, Sturm provided no further details. It appeared that Taus would be involved in Army training. There was no reason to provide any other sensitive information until his return.

“I’ll talk with the State Adjutant General today, Rich. General Castellano will arrange some additional training duties for you. I’ll also notify personnel here at Citibank that you will be taking a sabbatical for a little while.

This way you will receive an additional paycheck.”

A close friend of Sturm was Major General Vito Castellano, the State

Adjutant General for the National Guard. Appointment by the Governor of New York, Castellano served in many important New York State positions, including as the Commissioner for the Department of Commerce. His office was in Albany.

Sturm had decided upon his own form of therapy. Akin to throwing a child into a pool, forcing him to swim. Taus was being reunited with the Army again. Not that he would be fighting in combat, but exposure to the uniform system, the combat gear and the helicopter flights could easily rekindle the traumatic fires smothering within him.

During the weekend, Taus was called into his Army National Guard unit in Freeport, the 42<sup>nd</sup> Aviation Battalion. Captain Howard Hurst, the full-time personnel officer, wanted to speak with him about future assignments. "I received a call from Albany placing you on active duty as a recruiter for a month. Also, orders are being cut on you for attendance at Fort Rucker, Alabama. There, you will be taking an Instructor Pilot's course. You are interested, aren't you?" Taus knew that Sturm had made the arrangements and agreed.

Captain Hurst was a decent officer with a full load of curiosity. "You got some special treatment with these orders. Are you related to General Castellano?"

"In a way," Taus had to leave it at that. Hurst was not in the "secret order" of things.



### Israeli War and South American Politics

**B**y mid-August 1973, General Sturm had asked Taus if he would take another mission to Central America. Taus was dubious about accepting, but Sturm promised it would be an easy diplomatic mission, introducing the Israelis to the Presidents of several Central American countries. With preparations under way, Lawson contacted Taus and was quite excited. "Wait till you see the new aircraft that Sturm authorized. It's another Piper Navajo with all the trimmings. We'll have a longer range and a larger carrying capacity." Lawson was like a kid with a new toy.

The weekend was used to check out Taus in the new Navajo at Linden Airport in New Jersey. Lawson briefed him on the forthcoming mission while they both performed a pre-flight inspection of the aircraft. "We will be flying to Mexico City again. There, we will meet Sanchez who will be accompanied by an agent from the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). The Israeli weapons experts will meet us there. It will probably be General Hod and his aide." This was the first time Taus had heard about the DIA's involvement. "I thought the CIA was the intelligence agency handling these affairs."

#### **Defense Intelligence Agency Involvement**

Lawson was examining the engine oil levels. He held a dipstick in one hand as he answered Taus. "Concerning DIA involvement, you had better ask Sanchez. I have no idea." Taus, noticing that the oil from the dipstick was dropping onto Lawson's shoes said, "You had better watch what you're doing."

"That's Sanchez' job," remarked Lawson. "He deals with the intelligence people." Pointing to Lawson's stained shoes, Taus said, "I mean watch what you are doing here." Bending over, Lawson tried to wipe off the drops with an oily rag. It only made the stains spread more. Lawson looked disgusted, but he continued with the briefing, "Before Sanchez leaves for Mexico City, he has an appointment with General Sturm in New York City. We'll be included at that meeting. Most likely the weapons financing from the Israelis to the Central American countries will be discussed."

On the following Monday, Sturm notified Taus that a Wednesday conference would be held at the Park Plaza Hotel on 57<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan and for him to be there. A private conference room had been reserved. Taus thought it unusual to hold the meeting there instead of Citibank Headquarters. When Taus arrived, he found Sturm and Sanchez in the reserved room.

Sturm welcomed him saying, "Don't worry, you're not late. I needed to cover some details first. The Israeli delegation will be here shortly." At that moment Lawson entered.

"Well boys," said Sanchez, "Are there any questions I can answer before our friends arrive?" Seizing the moment, Taus asked, "Greg said DIA would be involved this time. I thought the CIA was responsible for these activities?" Sturm interrupted, "We do not take directions from any agency, especially the CIA. There has been an internal war raging between Department of Defense and CIA. Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird has the greater power base in the intelligence operations. The Pentagon controls over 80% of the entire budget for intelligence operations. The Director of the CIA, Richard Helms, has little interest in the technical aspects of intelligence gathering." It was plain to see that the retired General's loyalties remained with the military.

With a momentary pause, Sanchez added, "The CIA is not loved by either President Nixon or Mr. Kissinger. DCI Helms has no political power base whereas Secretary Laird was a former congressman and has a strong following. Right now, Mr. Kissinger is extremely interested in the technical aspects of the intelligence operations, particularly in light of the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty signed last year. The expensive costs of signal intelligence, spy aircraft and surveillance satellites accounts for the greatest portion of the intelligence budget being placed into DIA hands."

"Frankly speaking," Sturm said, "The CIA isn't doing their real function, to gather information. Instead they are conducting covert operations which lack decisive decision-making intelligence, so they often engage in criminal conduct, cutting the missing corners or places where they should have gathered real intelligence."

"We will use our own man at DIA. It will be his assessments and those of our military attaches in those countries that will determine how much military equipment the Israelis will be provided. This meeting today is intended to cover the financial and political facets of the aid packet. After we agree upon that, we will guide our DIA representative accordingly."

General Hod and his aide Major Elishiwale arrived within a half hour. The details of an early September trip were planned. Israel would make a profit from the sales of its arms and equipment and the United States would increase its foreign aid to the Central American regimes to assist them in financing their Israeli purchases. However, the Israeli General was not wholly satisfied with the negotiations. Hod noted his concern, "As we supply these countries, we will be stripping our own arms resources. Will President Nixon increase his military aid to Israel?"

Both Sturm and Sanchez were receptive to Hod's request, but they knew Kissinger had decided to do a balancing act. Kissinger feared an oil embargo

and a confrontation with the Soviet Union. Eventually, Sturm managed to establish some terms and guidelines for the financial package and a date for the trip was set. It would start the following week.

The earlier pre-conference between Sturm and Sanchez covered more than the financial details. A reliable Egyptian informant had provided Sanchez with some very sensitive information. Sturm and Sanchez decided to share it with General Hod. Sanchez stated, "When we were in Mexico City General, I mentioned to you that I have some rather confidential information. We believe Israel will be attacked by Arab nations in the very near future."

"Are you referring to the summer military exercises being staged by the Egyptians and the Syrians? They will not attack our overwhelming military superiority. Before they could conduct a ground assault, they would have to eliminate our Air Force." Further, the new peace talks in the Middle East will start in early 1974. They will wait until they can achieve something at the negotiation table. Egyptian President Sadat is only rattling his saber. Sadat's threat of war was meant to improve the Arab's position at the bargaining table."

Like most generals, Hod had his own opinion. This time they were faulty, based upon an over-reliance on the technical intelligence services from both the U.S. and Israeli Defense agencies. Sanchez trusted his old friend who had supplied him with the sensitive information. There was a second source that confirmed the invasion plans. It would be necessary to explain the matter more fully to Hod since he seemed lulled into complacency.

"I have another very trusted friend who does business with the Eastern Europeans. He has been informed by an Eastern Bloc general about the Arab military exercises. That general also noted that Warsaw Pact countries have been moving equipment by rail from Eastern Europe to Odessa for some time now." Sanchez' warnings would be disregarded by Hod.

With his low authoritative voice, Hod said, "Tell me Nestor, did your intelligence people listen to this information from your friends?" Sadly, Sanchez had to agree. Neither CIA nor DIA had, preferring to operate on their own assessments. Yet DIA's technical sources revealed the Soviet military buildup of supplies.

"Then how can you expect the Israeli government to believe your friends?" Hod did not want to embarrass Sanchez, especially in front of the others in the room. So he added his own bit of confidential information. "Nestor, you are talking about Operation Badr. It's supposed to be the entire operational plan for the Arab attack. One of our Mossad agents picked up that information from an operative who is asking our government to pay him a rather large sum of money for the plan. However, we feel that the plan is an elaborate deception."

"I hope you are correct General. I am informing you that a head of state from one of the Eastern Bloc nations has decided to interfere in the delicate balance of powers in the Middle East to improve his own prestige throughout the world. My friend is convinced that hostilities will begin in the early

fall, possibly in October.”

Creating some interest, Hod wanted this new bit of intelligence. “Israel does not have many friends, especially in the Soviet Bloc. Which country is creating a problem?” Sanchez explained, “We have an asset in Romanian who is highly connected in the Romanian government. The asset has reported to us that Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu is negotiating with the Libyan ruler Colonel Muammar al-Gadhafi (Qaddafi). Ceausescu has always admired Gadhafi since they both rose to power at a rather young age. They began their political careers in their country’s armies and both shared dreams of establishing themselves as world leaders. Each has something the other one wants.”

“Ceausescu needs financial resources to establish himself as a leader for the Third World countries. He wants to be a world leader. He needs Gadhafi’s oil money to afford his egocentric trip. Gadhafi sees himself rising to lead the Islamic-Arab World. To do this, he will be in command of terrorist organizations worldwide by supporting their activities. Gadhafi wants to modernize Libya and needs new technology to do so. Covertly, Romania can supply counterfeit documents, such as passports, to further Libya’s terrorist missions.”

“Both men have been soliciting each other. Romania has been helping Gadhafi achieve his “Green Revolution.” It is the Libyan ruler’s plan to make his nomadic Arab Bedouins into settlers as farmers. Thus far, Romania has supplied the agricultural technology necessary to create farms throughout Libya. They have also built hospitals and opened their Romanian schools and universities to the Libyans. In turn, Gadhafi has poured his oil money into the Romanian economy.”

“Ceausescu wants to establish himself as the peacemaker for the Middle East. He feels Gadhafi can gain him the favor of the Arab world. From the Israelis’ side, Ceausescu has been courting President Nixon. Mr. Kissinger has informed me that Nixon was most impressed with Ceausescu’s cordiality and has returned the favor. These maneuvers on Ceausescu’s part are designed to set himself up as a mediator between the Arabs and Israel.”

“As you may know, our CIA has some very close ties with the Libyan government. Our assets in Libya have confirmed this relationship.” Hod was reassured by Sanchez’ openness and noted, “In all this, we have not mentioned Mr. Angleton.” James Jesus Angleton was the CIA’s Chief of Counter-intelligence. Angleton developed early friendships with future Israeli intelligence officers back during his work with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in World War II. Sanchez nodded his head and smiled, confirming the true identity of his CIA asset.

“Yes,” replied Hod. “I knew Angleton from the OSS. In 1957, we established a liaison unit between the Mossad and your CIA with Mr. Angleton’s assistance.”

“You are aging yourself,” remarked Sturm, who had been listening to the discourse. Sturm’s position was neither that of a diplomatic liaison nor that of an intelligence officer. At best, Sturm shaped some policies for the Steering Committee as a high level administrator.



“True, General Sturm, but Angleton has helped us with understanding what Gadhafi plans to do. His main goal, aside from becoming the Islamic World leader, is the destruction of the State of Israel and the liberation of the Palestinians. Actually, Gadhafi is helping us by trying to assume this leadership. He is keeping the Arabs divided, for many see him as a radical and even consider him mentally unbalanced. Egyptian President Anwar Sadat has made that clear.”

“As I have said,” Hod commented, “Israel has had some indications that an Arab attack may come as early as October. Despite our poor relations with France, we have been told by our source within SDECE (Service de Documentation Exterieur et du Centre-espionage), the French CIA, that an attack is being planned. But, this is the French government. Should Israel listen to the same people that sold 100 French Mirage fighter-bomber aircraft to Libya in 1970?” The conference concluded on the ominous note of a future war. Each of the secret warriors returned to their overt civilian positions as the time approached for the next trip to Latin America.

The trip kept on being postponed. The Israeli government was delaying the operation based upon the rumors of another Arab-Israeli conflict. Hod heeded Sanchez’ strong advice. Aware of the delay, Sturm asked General Castellano to place Taus on some additional duties. The New York Army National Guard scheduled Taus for another series of training courses. The first would begin in mid-September 1973 at Fort Rucker, Alabama. It would last 30 days, qualifying Taus as an Army Instructor Pilot.

#### **Events Triggering Central & South America Trips**

There were two events that triggered “low-profile diplomatic flights” into Central and South America in 1973. The U.S. government was warning certain Latin American countries to stay away from any economic or military alliance with the Soviet Union and Cuba. In Central America Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Honduras were warned; while in South America: Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia and Chile also were admonished. In Chile, the CIA would back up its warning with a presidential assassination. There was also the War Powers Act being considered by the U.S. Congress.

The catastrophic effects of the early 1970s earthquakes made some Latin America countries seek assistance from the Soviet Union. Two of the most seriously devastated countries were Peru in 1970 and Nicaragua in 1972. The U.S. government’s resources were thinly stretched across the globe with its involvement in the Vietnam War in Southeast Asia, the NATO alliance in Central Europe, the CIA inspired insurrections in Africa and worldwide social programs such as the United Nations relief agencies that were mainly funded by America. As a result, developing countries in the Western Hemisphere felt neglected and wanted help in whatever form was available. Though suffering economically, Cuba had sugar cane fields and needed trading partners. Costa Rica was one of the first countries to initiate trade with Havana.

The second reason for these “liaison flights” was the proposal of the War Powers Resolution by the U.S. Congress. President Nixon wanted to

operate unfettered. Eventually in 1973, Nixon vetoed the resolution.

A third reason gradually crept into the objectives, funding. To support and sustain intelligence operations on a global basis, congressional appropriations were needed. Neither Congress nor the American Public was in the mood for any tax increases. Funding, especially for unauthorized covert operations, had to be generated in some fashion. Drug trafficking was always a viable and lucrative option. In a remote sense, Americans would be “taxed”

to achieve the ends wanted by the Power Elite as it struggled for a new world order. The new tax would be much more comprehensive, effecting all Americans. Government sanctioned drug trafficking brought ruin and desolation to many families, not just to drug users and addicts. The cost became immeasurable, given the criminal penalties faced by the pushers and sufferings and indirect cost faced by relatives and friends of those involved. Indeed, all Americans paid for the new drug trade.

There were discussions of drug production and trafficking during these trips. However, Taus was not privy to those meetings. He had undertaken the trips thinking about his duty to country. Taus knew a wide range of issues were discussed by Nestor Sanchez, who represented President Nixon and the National Security Council.

The war in Vietnam opened U.S. and world markets to opium. South American cocaine became another source of much needed money. Drug-trafficking from Southeast Asia’s Golden Triangle generated moneys directly to the CIA, which was slowly developing, and trying to control, the other profitable producing areas in the Golden Crescent region.

The United States never fully achieved domination of the Golden Crescent region until the outbreak of the CIA instigated Afghanistan War. The Southeast Asia’s Golden Triangle trade was somewhat curtailed by the end of U.S. involvement in Vietnam in 1975. New producers were needed and by the late 1970s and early 1980s it was found in two areas: The Golden Crescent in the Middle East and in South America.

As long as Americans and Europeans wanted to buy drugs, and were also addicted, the United States could exercise control over drug trafficking. America became the demand side of the demand and supply curve. The U.S. government’s covert intelligence agency would take control of the supply side, but it had to show some detachment. The CIA therefore worked and controlled other criminal organizations to produce and refine drugs for delivery to the States and Europe. For half a century, the CIA found funding for its operations could be self-generated instead of relying upon Congress. There were two ways to generate cash: drug-trafficking and financial fraud. Another method was through covert weapons sales, which most Third World countries could ill afford.

Latin America was viewed as the most profitable area given its proximity to the United States. Large portions of Central America were unsuited to drug cultivation due to the mountainous terrain. True, there were suitable farming and plantation areas, but these were already owned and operated by American industry, such as United Fruits and the ruling oligarchs. There was no way that the CIA could supplant their interest without arousing attention

to their drug-trafficking plans.

Nicaraguan Presidente Anastasio Somoza and his cronies had vested interests in banana, tobacco, cotton and rubber crops. Though Somoza also siphoned off U.S. aid, he would hardly replace his countries' crops for coca leaves, even after the terrible 1972 earthquake.

The situation was different in South America. Though possessing similarly rugged terrain, there were farming areas throughout the lesser-developed South American countries. The truly devastating 1970 earthquakes, especially in Peru made it difficult to restart their agrarian production. Extensive mudslides interrupted the normal farming life. Here was the opportunity the CIA had been waiting for, to find an area it could control, that was also remote for drug crops. It was easy enough to convince the rulers and farmers in other areas of South America, such as Bolivia and Ecuador especially since coca was a more profitable crop. Political unrest also contributed to the CIA's involvement in Latin America. The timing and conditions were ripe or a new expanded industry, cocaine.

Military juntas in Latin America resulted in bad economics and social unrest. There were extensive unemployment, student protests, labor strikes and guerrilla activities.

In late 1973, Taus, Lawson, and Sanchez made another trip to Latin America, this time to Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia and Colombia. Instead of using a small aircraft, the flights were aboard regularly scheduled commercial airlines. The first leg took Taus from New York's JFK International Airport to Miami.

The duty checks received by Taus and Lawson only read "US Treasury." It soon became evident that neither pilots, nor Sanchez, were working for the CIA or DIA. Sanchez was with the National Security Council and a close political ally of Nixon. He clearly showed animosity towards CIA agents on the trip to South America. The reason commercial airlines were used, Sanchez explained, was that they were faster and less dangerous considering the high mountains in the Andes. The Central American trips may have convinced Sanchez of that fact. It left open the question of why Taus and Lawson were needed at all. However, both might be used for a variety of reasons. Lawson was fixed-wing rated, while Taus was dual-rated, both rotary (helicopters) and fixed wings.

Another reason why Sanchez insisted upon commercial flights may have rested with a tragedy in 1969. Sanchez knew the head of the Bolivian government, Lieutenant General Rene Barrientos Ortuño. He was a military junta head who died in a mysterious helicopter accident. Bolivia then went through a series of new rulers, each being overthrown in turn until Colonel Hugo Banzer Suarez came to power in the mid-1970s. If Sanchez could avoid flying, he would.

Lawson and Taus would be used for any possible short trips that developed while in South America. Though fearful of meeting the same fate as Barrientos in 1969, Sanchez still felt safer with Lawson and Taus.

The trip to South America seem to cover all countries bordering on the West Coast: Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia and Chile, although Bolivia

does not have any coastline. The trio never did go to Chile. It was not necessary. The CIA took care of things there with the assassination of Presidente Salvador Allende in late 1973.

### **Bolivia**

During 1973, the Bolivian junta was unstable. Sanchez dealt directly with Banzer Suarez. At a meeting in La Paz, Sanchez was introduced to a relative of Suarez, Roberta Suarez Gomez, who had a large amount of property. Also present was General Luis Arce Gomez who headed the Bolivian Intelligence Service. Arce Gomez employed his military forces to assist Roberta Suarez with drug trafficking. USA-built two and a half ton trucks were used to take coca leaves and crude cocaine production to the airport.

By 1974, land use in Bolivia for coca production had greatly increased.

The first display of Sanchez' CIA hostility came at this meeting. While Sanchez met privately with Banzer Suarez, a U.S. Embassy Officer sat with Taus and Lawson. The Embassy employee was plainly a CIA agent, admitting his capacity to Taus after some conversation. Taus noted his familiarity with CIA personnel in Vietnam, especially Agent Jefferies in the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, who was involved in the 1968 Tet Offensive. Taus mentioned how his unit recovered classified materials from a besieged Embassy. It was enough to have the CIA agent in La Paz inform him about the sensitive nature of the drug trade.

Sanchez briefed Lawson and Taus as they left the Presidential offices in La Paz. Sanchez had a great distrust for Suarez and his Bolivian government officials. He referred to them and the Argentines and Paraguayans as Nazis. Indeed, former Nazi Klaus Barbie spearheaded the training of the Bolivian Intelligence and Security Forces.

In an early 1980 FBI investigation, the death of a famous Canadian emigrant from Serbia was attributed to an individual from Paraguay. Recovered at the murder scene was a 9-millimeter Luger pistol, which bore the Nazi Swastika along with a Paraguayan crest. A few years earlier, in 1979, the U.S. Attorney's office in the Southern District of New York (SDNY) had send one of its Assistant U.S. Attorneys to Washington to join a new prosecutorial task force in the Attorney-General's office, aimed at nabbing former World War II Nazis. Taus covered the New York leads in this murder case, receiving his first introduction to the problems in Yugoslavia. Long-term hostilities existed between the Croatians who sided with Adolph Hitler and the Serbs, along with other ethnic clashes.

Throughout this trip, Sanchez was visible distressed. Whatever U.S. embassy officials they encountered were also with the CIA. Sanchez said that there was another group working the eastern coast of South America. The CIA agent in La Paz mentioned the same fact to Taus when he spoke about future problems in trafficking drugs. Taus wanted to think that the CIA was going to eliminate drug trafficking but his experiences in Vietnam taught him differently.

During one conversation, Sanchez told Taus that President Nixon would never approve of CIA actions but appeared covered by the Agency. It was a known fact then that FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover blackmailed Nixon and

Congress. In 1972, the impressive FBI Academy was built in Quantico, Virginia and in the FBI Academy's main building was a plaque that read: "Built in 1972. Dedicated by President Richard M. Nixon, etc." Hoover got Nixon's stamp of approval and congressional appropriations to build the sprawling FBI Academy complex.

Initially, back in 1969, the purpose of these trips appeared to be one of diplomacy or pre-diplomacy before the U.S. Ambassadors engaged the foreign countries' officials. Of course, the proverbial carrot-on-a-stick was used, who would get the greater share of U.S. aid depended upon who would cooperate the most and who was needed the most. When Nixon drew down U.S. forces in Vietnam, starting in 1970, the CIA turned to other areas for their profiteering operations, especially drug trafficking. One area was always Latin America. With most of the developing world countries, natural disaster and political unrest would play the critical roles in executing a new U.S. policy.

The second Central American trip occurred just prior to the only South American trip Taus took in late 1973. Taus had seen the ruins in Managua, Nicaragua from the earthquake. Anastasio Somoza and his military forces, soon to be overthrown, were willing to assist the United States in any way desired. Nixon and Somoza were close friends. Another close friend of Nixon was Bebe Rebozo who fled to friendly Costa Rica for sanctuary from investigators probing illegal campaign contributions to Nixon. It was in Costa Rica that John Hull's ranch was located and which was used by the CIA and drug and arms traffickers.

Somoza's Nicaraguan government was originally intended to be the conduit for the trans-shipments of drugs from South America, but the devastation from the 1972 earthquake diverted drug-traffic to Panama. Somoza and his country desperately needed U.S. help, but he was in no position to help the CIA.

Certain South American countries would come under the control of the CIA and its new drug-producing program. These countries would have little or no U.S. business interests that could stymie drug production. In fact, many U.S. businesses fled from them due to the earthquakes, political unrest and economic instability. Peru and Bolivia were prime targets.

#### **Assassination in Chile**

Two problems were presented to the CIA's plans for drug production.

First, Nixon was extremely upset with the nationalization of U.S. businesses. Those firms, in turn, pressed for Allende's overthrow after he followed his Marxist precepts. Allende presented such a great problem. According to Sanchez, Nixon turned the project for Allende's removal over to the CIA. The second problem with Chile was the lack of any close crop producing areas. The United States could not permit Allende to nationalize U.S. business interests, which led to the CIA and White House involvement in assassinating the Chilean president. An example had to be set. That example ought to "encourage" other countries' leaders to cooperate with CIA objectives. The governments in Colombia, Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador were more attuned to Washington's directions.

There just was no way that Washington would tolerate Latin American countries dealing with the Soviets or Cuba and, for that matter, any other communist regimes. Uncle Sam wanted to forever keep these nations as stepchildren. It was easy enough, considering that two major U.S. banks, Chase and Citibank, controlled Latin American financial matters.

### **Peru**

The earthquake created greater economic problems than Peru was experiencing with its inept leadership. Without substantial aid, Peruvian farmers could not get crops cultivated due to the many mudslides. The National Security Council, of all organizations, claimed credit for getting Peru nearly \$500 million in credit from the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank after the military junta of General Juan Velasco Alvarado became more cooperative with the United States government.

A special meeting was scheduled in Peru's capital of Lima. Again a U.S. Embassy official told Taus that General Velasco Alvarado was persuaded to cooperate with the promise of American banks financing their resurrection. The General knew that Peru's reform in 1970 alone could not save the economy. The earthquake sealed Peru's fate. Bolivia and Peru would grow coca leaves and Colombia would process the leaves into cocaine for transshipments to Panama.

When problems erupted in Panama, the United States invaded and seized its President, Manuel Noriega, in December 1989. Noriega was installed by the CIA, but presented them with serious problems in the CIA-Contra-Cocaine connections. With his removal, the CIA sought other Central American countries to handle the transshipments. As early as 1985, Mexico was handling drug trafficking and would also grow its own crop for exportation. The 1986 overthrow of the Duvalier regime in Haiti initiated that country's participation as a major transshipment point for drugs,

### **Colombia**

Guerrilla activities, student protests, labor strikes, and high unemployment all plagued the Colombian government. In its capital, Bogotá, Sanchez and his crew met with Misael Pastrana Borrero, the head of the National Front Coalition. Also at the meeting were U.S. Embassy officials whom Taus assumed included CIA agents.

The eastern portions of Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia had more level forest and jungle areas that could cultivate crops as opposed to the rugged mountains in Chile. Ecuador had substantially less territory for farming. After the trip to Quito, Ecuador was placed on the back burner.

Taus had brought along his Army National Guard flight gear, which included his helmet, nomex suit, gloves, and clipboard, along with photographic maps from Sanchez for each of the five South American countries. His only flight would take place in Bogotá, Colombia in an unmarked Bell UH-1D Iroquois. Sanchez made the flight arrangements that involved an orientation flight over Colombia's countryside. In the meanwhile, Sanchez was attending to other meetings with Colombian and U.S. Embassy officials. In retrospect, the groundwork was being laid down for new cocaine routes. Peru and Bolivia would produce the coca leaves that were then

transported to Colombia for refining.

From Bogotá airport, Colombian Air Force Lockheed C-130 Hercules cargo aircraft flew the majority of the refined cocaine into Panama City and then from there it entered the United States. Taus was aware of two U.S. landing sites, the unused stage fields at his former Army flight school in Fort Wolters, Texas and at Mena, Arkansas, near Little Rock.

With the CIA Director as Chairman of the National Security Council, CIA got the assistance it needed with its new drug-trafficking operations. Perhaps to Nestor Sanchez' credit, he foresaw these things occurring and tried to stop them. Taus was never certain about Sanchez' role. However, the CIA was fermenting political instability and encouraged narcotics production as a lucrative way of financing whatever illegal and unlawful operations it needed to fund. For most CIA agents so involved, it became a source of personal enrichment. As CIA agent Fernando Frednanez told Taus in Bogotá, "It's all part of capitalism and the American way of life."

After the 1973 Central America trip, Sanchez conferred with Nixon while Nixon was occupied in other world problems areas. Watergate had materialized in late December 1974. In 1975, Sanchez would say that the CIA had framed Nixon because he was so conservative and straight-laced that he would not go along with CIA drug trafficking.

Sanchez' remarks occurred while Taus was at Fort Banning, Georgia in 1975. Defending Nixon, Sanchez insisted that Watergate was deliberately contrived by the CIA to oust Nixon. To fortify this position, Sanchez looked at history where President Kennedy was assassinated when he refused to cooperate with CIA aims and objectives in South Vietnam. The same CIA that installed and deposed the Vietnam government was doing the same in Latin America in 1973.

The same fate that befell Vietnam's President Ngo Dinh Diem occurred to Chile's Salvador Allende.

Both Sanchez and Taus agreed that Nixon and other members of his National Security Council opposed any drug trafficking. It made sense that Nixon was betrayed or duped by the CIA. Aside from Sanchez' opinion of the Watergate trap, Nixon could not have been stupid enough to employ bungling bagmen for what turned out to be an unimportant break-in. At the time, Nixon was far ahead of his Democratic rival in the polls. He did not need to risk anything. Recalling the CIA Station Chief in Freeport, Dan Priscu was a former World War II correspondent and OSS member. CIA not only influenced the media, it controlled the major news outlets. As a consequence, the normal story about a burglary at the Watergate Hotel was blown out of portion by a complicit news media.

From 1974 onward, Latin American governments underwent new leadership and an enormous increase in cocaine production. CIA was replacing and/or supplementing its Golden Triangle and Golden Crescent drug-trafficking operations. The American public was not paying much attention to it; after all, they were reading and watching what the CIA wanted them to read and see.

### The Yom Kippur War

The Middle East would explode on October 6, 1973, with the Yom Kippur War. Taus was halfway through his aviation course at Fort Rucker when General Sturm instructed him to join a meeting with an Israeli General at Fort Benning, Georgia. Sturm stated that Nestor Sanchez would be there. Arrangements had been made for Taus to take one of the routine Army flight from Fort Rucker to Fort Benning. The only thing unusual was the sudden interruption in Taus' training agenda. But the raging conflict in the Middle East upset standard Army schedules as the U.S. tried to react to the attack upon Israel.

It was twilight on October 9 when Taus arrived at Fort Benning. A messenger at the Army Airfield notified him to proceed directly to the Officers' Club to meet the contingent. Once at the club, Taus met Sanchez, who was seated at a dining area table with Israeli General Hod and Major Elishiwale and two other people. After the introductions, Taus found that the two other people were Craig Anders and Earle Watkins, supposedly high-ranking Department of the Army civilian employees. However, Taus recalled General Sturm mentioning their names, saying they were with the CIA.

The discussion centered on the Yom Kippur War and an influx at Fort Benning of Israeli college students who had been mobilized by the Israeli government after the outbreak of hostilities on October 6<sup>th</sup>. The students were at Fort Benning to complete a shortened course in the use of new Army weapons systems that were not formerly authorized for foreign use. In light of a possible Arab victory the restricted systems were supplied to the Israeli war machine. The new equipment consisted of an anti-tank missile, the TOW, and some other anti-aircraft laser guided missiles.

By the time these college student reservists were trained and ready to go back to Israel with the new weapons technologies, a cease fire had been put into effect only a few weeks later. However from war accounts, there was evidence showing the Israeli Army successfully used the TOW missiles weeks before their own stateside college reservists were trained in their use.

Anders and Watkins retired early that night, leaving the Israelis with Sanchez and Taus. It was probably the drinks that evening and camaraderie they shared from previous meetings that loosened up the conversation. General Hod begun the loose chatter. "Watkins may be a civilian employee of your government, Nestor, but we know he works for the Defense Intelligence Agency." It was somewhat of a surprise statement by Hod, indicating a need for greater trust by both sides.

Sanchez was willing to reciprocate. He was a diplomatic liaison, not an Intelligence Officer. His mission was to encourage confidence and trust in the United States. "Yes General, they are both from our intelligence services." Sanchez did not go so far as to identify Anders as an agent. The partial disclosure satisfied Hod. Directing his next comment at Taus, Hod asked, "Where is your co-pilot friend?" Taus looked over to Sanchez for an answer.

"Well," Sanchez began, "Rich happened to be conveniently nearby at Fort Rucker. Lawson is still in New York and will be used on our next trip. I



asked Rich to come here to take you to Fort Rucker where you will meet the Army Aviation Commanding General Cushing. Both Anders and Watkins will also join us there. Since I have another urgent matter to handle, Mr. Kissinger suggested that one of our own people, who you already know, should accompany you and handle anything that may distress you.”

Taus wondered, did Henry Kissinger have that much confidence in me, did he even know my name? Whether Kissinger knew any of the lower echelon operatives was immaterial; the administration felt that establishing another friendship could prove useful.

Hoping that Taus would handle the situation, Sanchez looked at him for an acknowledgement. Taus nodded saying, “I’ll try to be of whatever assistance I can, General.”

“He’s not a CIA agent. General. We both work for Mr. Kissinger,” Sanchez added, as if to further gain the general’s trust. Hod grinned and asked his aide, Major Elishiwale to order another round of drinks.

Raising his right arm and snapping his fingers, Elishiwale got the attention of the waiter and ordered another round. The major then spoke to the group for the first time that night, asking Taus if he could secure some Army technical manuals on certain weapons systems. Taus said he would try to assist the next day unless the general needed him for another mission. Hod replied, “No, not at this time. Please take care of his request first. Major Elishiwale does not work for the Mossad, our version of your CIA,” laughed Hod. “He comes from our Defense Forces Intelligence Branch, AMAN.”

“Sounds like our Defense Intelligence Agency,” noted Taus. Hod added, “Similar to the DIA, I suppose. Are you familiar with the Israeli Intelligence structure, Rich?”

“No, not fully.” Taus knew he was not fully familiar with all of the U.S. Intelligence agencies.

Hod commenced an informative talk, “We are organized in much the same way as your U.S. system. Our Va’adat Rashei Hasherutim, known as the Committee of the Heads of Services, is like your National Security Council. It coordinates both our national and international intelligence services. The director of Mossad is the chairman of this body, the Va’adat, and is directly responsible to our prime minister.”

Sanchez mentioned, “This comparison between the CIA and Mossad has its roots going back to 1951 when your Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion reorganized your intelligence services.” Hod’s knowledge was more profound as he amplified, “A man by the name of Ruben Shiloach was the coordinator of our secret service then. After a visit to the United States where he observed your new CIA, he reported it to Ben-Gurion who established the Mossad Letafkidim Meouchadim, known as the Central Institute for Intelligence and Special Duties. Now it is simply called the Mossad. At that time, the Mossad approved military intelligence operations.”

“If it’s not too sensitive. General, just what are Mossad’s functions.”

Taus’ interest did not disturb Hod, though Sanchez’s looks questioned whether that subject should have been raised. The General’s answer provided a fairly accurate laundry list of responsibilities. “Counter terrorism,

covert operations, collection of human intelligence, political liaison and propaganda activities, arms and equipment distribution to various friendly group and kidnappings.”

“The last few items that you mentioned General, would make you appear to be a Mossad agent.” Taus was curious and direct, it did not matter to him. The remark caused Major Elishiwale to quickly guzzle down his drink. Before the General could reply, Taus added, “What do you mean by kidnapping?”

The General answered, “World War II Nazi criminal Adolph Eichman was kidnapped by the Mossad in 1960 from the Argentines. That was Mossad’s most famous operation. Of course, if that distresses you, then I should not speak about any assassination plots.” Hod was enjoying the apparent consternation he was causing with Sanchez and Elishiwale as he responded to Taus’ blunt inquiries, often adding spicier tales.

Taus sensed the mood and said, “I don’t think we want to hear about assassination plots. Do we?” as he looked towards Sanchez. The general had decided to spin some yarns so it did not matter what anyone else wanted to hear. “An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,” quoted Hod. “Retribution would be the appropriate term. Do you remember the Lod Airport Massacre in Tel Aviv on 30 May 1972? The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Black September movement had four members of the Japanese Red Army murder 27 innocent people. Sixteen of those killed were Roman Catholic pilgrims. We responded and booby-trapped Ghassan Kanafani’s car. He was a member of the Central Committee of the PFLP and had planned the Lod Massacre.”

“In August of 1972, the Black September organization kidnapped and massacred 10 Israeli athletes at the world Olympics in Munich. Again we responded by setting up a special unit within the Mossad, known as the ‘wrath of God.’ Its first target was Wael Abu Zwaiter, the head of the Black September organization in Rome. During the middle of October 1972, he was assassinated.” Hod paused, taking a drink, and then noting, “Yes, I suppose you can say Mossad had conducted assassination operations. And justifiably so!”

“Mossad appears to be a very effective agency. General,” Taus wondered aloud, “but this sudden attack upon Israel was not anticipated by Mossad.”

“I have not finished answering your question. Captain Taus.” Hod was conducting a verbal assault of his own. “The Mossad is only one of several organizations within the Israeli Intelligence network. It cannot be blamed alone for the lack of information concerning the Yom Kippur War. There is AMAN, the Agaf Modiin, known as the Military Intelligence Branch of the General Staff, which was established in 1953. It has misinterpreted military information and failed to provide adequate warning of the Arab attack.”

“AMAN is the Israeli Defense Forces Intelligence Branch and is responsible for military intelligence. Of course, we also have separate Air Force and Naval Intelligence units. They all failed Israel in this current intelligence fiasco.”

“I know that the Mossad is claiming one of its agents had warned AMAN of the attack, but that Eil Zeira, the Director of AMAN, was not convinced. We simply felt that the Arabs were not prepared for another war with us.” By virtue of Hod’s military rank and background, he was sympathetic to AMAN rather than the Mossad.

The impression Taus had was that neither Hod nor Elishiwale were with the Mossad, but rather in AMAN. Taus commented, “AMAN, the Mossad and your other intelligence units do not appear to be in a position to provide any information from other diplomatic sources.”

“I still have not finished,” rebuked Hod. “There are two other units in Israel’s intelligence and security operations. One is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which has a research division and the other is Shin Both, our General Security Service.”

“The Research Division is much like your U.S. Department of State with its Bureau of Intelligence and Research. They both use raw Intelligence and prepare analysis for their government’s policy-makers.”

“You mentioned the Shin Both organization?” Taus never heard of it.

“SHABAK,” stated Hod, or Shin Both is our internal security and counter-espionage service unit. It gathers data on hostile and friendly intelligence organizations and provides reports to our proper government agencies. Now you have a clear picture of our intelligence organizations, I hope.”

The evening was growing old and Sanchez wanted to be sure that the next day’s arrangements were accomplished. He said to Taus, “After Major Elishiwale and you pick up the Army technical manuals in the morning, meet General Hod and me here for lunch at twelve noon. The general is scheduled for an evening appointment at Fort Rucker with the Commanding General and several of his aviation weapons experts. Anders and Watkins will meet the General at Rucker’s VIP Reception Center at 6:00 P.M.” To insure things were agreeable, Sanchez asked Hod, “Is that all right with you, General?”

“Fine,” Hod said, “The Major and myself have had a very busy day. I think we will retire for the night. Let’s meet here at 0700 hours for breakfast.” After Hod and Elishiwale departed, Taus spoke to Sanchez, “He didn’t hold back much on the Israeli Intelligence community. He seems to trust us very much.”

Now Sanchez’s experience showed. “General Hod did not mention LEKEM, the Leshkat Keshet Madao, which is their Bureau of Scientific Relations. Its mission is to collect technical and scientific intelligence. They are a super-sensitive agency within the central body of the Israeli Intelligence services. I don’t doubt that both the General and the Major work for AMAN, but I think they may also work for LEKEM. Perhaps even more so since the General did not mention the unit to you.”

Defending his initial assessment of Hod, Taus replied, “Maybe it slipped his mind. The Israeli forgot about their enemies too who are now waging war.”

“No, I don’t think so. LEKEM has offices at several Israeli consulates including their offices in New York, Los Angeles and Boston. While I was in

Tegucigalpa Honduras, and later in Haiti, I met the Mossad station chiefs under diplomatic cover at the Israeli consulate offices in those countries. I think the General answers to several of their Intelligence services.”

“But why does that matter to you, Mr. Sanchez. Our two countries are friends, we are allies.”

“Even allies have secrets from one another. Remember that Mr. Kissinger is trying to maintain a balance of powers in Middle East between the Israelis and Arab World.”

“That balance may be seriously upset by this Yom Kippur War,” noted Taus.

“Yes and we must carefully reset the equilibrium for the future. Israel will take everything it can. The United States has been aware of Israel’s attempts to develop nuclear weapons. Both the United States and the Soviet Union are trying to limit nuclear proliferation among their allies. The Middle East is the tinderbox that may ignite the next great war. Any nation possessing nuclear devices can easily trigger that confrontation.”

“You see Rich, Israel is a country of three million people in a conventional arms race with the Arab World. The Arabs have tremendous financial resources, numerous political contacts for weapons and a vast manpower pool for their armies. If Israel has its back against the wall, it needs the nuclear option to defeat it’s Arab enemies. In a few days we may know whether or not Israel has nuclear weapons if more Arab successes are realized.”

Some further administrative instructions were provided by Sanchez. They included Taus’ preparation of an after-action report on his activities with the Israelis. This report was to be hand-carried to Sturm upon Taus’ return to New York.

Weather the next day was rainy and cold. It dampened everyone’s spirit. Things proceeded on the schedule worked out by Sanchez. CIA agents Anders and Watkins met them for breakfast and continued with Hod and Sanchez engaged in meetings and conferences with the weapons and equipment experts at Fort Benning. Taus and Elishiwale went to the publication distribution section to secure the needed technical manuals. By noon, everyone was back at the officer’s club.

“We’ll meet you at Fort Rucker this evening,” Anders noted to General Hod and Taus. Sanchez would be returning to Washington to confer with the National Security Agency. The flight back to Rucker tested Taus’ aviation skills. Mixed in with the inclement weather were thunderstorms whose turbulence seemed to echo nature’s distress for the wars east and west, in Vietnam and in the Middle East.

The storm prompted Major Elishiwale’s remark, “It won’t be an Arab’s bomb or a Viet Cong rocket that kill us,” as the gale force winds buffeted the Army helicopter. When Taus suggested returning to Fort Benning until the storm passed. Hod became adamant that the trip should proceed if at all possible, “Israel is depending upon us.”

“Hearing that, Taus was equally anxious to continue the mission and asked Hod, “Are there other people of yours engaged in such missions else-

where, General?" From his passenger back-seat position Hod responded, "Certainly, both our Air Force and Navy are dealing with Pentagon officials today. Our own civilian airline, EL-AL, is transporting equipment and supplies from the United States to Israel."

"Cairns Control, this is Army 52778, code three, request radar vectors to final approach, over. Taus' radio call to the Army airfield control, alerted them when he said "code three" that a high-ranking official was on board."

"Roger Army 52778. Turn left to 2-6-5. You are now in radar contact. Continue your left turn to a new heading of 2-6-0. Conditions at Cairns are I-F-R (Instrument Flight Rules) at this time. Overcast, less than 1-0, with visibility less than one-quarter mile. Barometer is two-niner-eight-seven. Winds are variable from 2-7-0 at 20 knots, gushing to 3-0. Understand you have a code three, we have a VIP vehicle waiting for your arrival, over." Fort Rucker had been previously informed and was expecting the General's arrival.

The rain swept the arrival area, drenching everyone. By 6 p.m. the storm had abated and the contingent from Benning had changed their wet clothes and arrived at the VIP Center located adjacent to Rucker's Headquarters building.

Hod was attired in his military outfit, consisting of a wet khaki trouser and an equally damp beige shirt with its sleeves folded up over his elbows. Epaulettes on both sides of Hod's shoulders indicated his rank. A small cord from his right shoulder dangled down to his thick waist belt where it was harmlessly attached to an empty catch. The absent holster would have held a 9-millimeter automatic pistol that would have been secured by the loop hooked to a metal ring. Major Elishiwale was similarly attired.

Major General Cushing, the Fort Commander, introduced the other parties in the room. The most prominent was Lieutenant General Norman Knopf who had made a special trip from the Pentagon to meet General Hod. Anders and Watkins were in the room. They had driven the distance between the two forts, in their GSA sedan. They looked out-of-place in their vested civilian suits.

"I have some good news to report to you General Hod," said Knopf. "I was informed this morning by the Joint Chief of Staff that the President has approved emergency transportation of war materials to your country. Our Air Force will use its C-130 Hercules transports to fly into Tel Aviv. Any public announcements will be delayed for several days on this airlift."

The discussion centered on the latest armaments systems in Army aircraft. Of particular interest to Hod was a wired guided TOW missile launched from a helicopter. Each missile cost \$1500 and the entire system was purchased from the French government. Knopf noted that the U.S. Army had only purchased a few systems and that Israel could best deal separately with France. Hod mentioned Israel had done so, but before the French were afraid of upsetting relations with the Arab World. They had been reluctant to negotiate any significant deals. Costs seemed to be a problem too. If Hod could get the system from the U.S. for free or as part of a military hardware package, then why pay France for it.

U.S. Army material resources were being retired from the war in Vietnam. But the supply and logistic operation was not geared for a rapid transfer of equipment. Hod's main concern was for the anti-tank weaponry, which was being used by U.S. North Atlantic Treaty Organization forces in Europe. Hod asked Knopf for more M-60 tanks. "The best anti-tank weapon is another tank. A superior tank to turn the tide of battle! If Israel is to survive, we need at least 150 M-60 tanks immediately."

With fierce desert battles engulfing the Middle East and draining the Israeli war-making resources, replacement equipment was desperately needed. Tanks took months to produce, even after an automotive assembly line was established for their manufacture. To re-equip Israel's devastated tank battalions the United States would have to transfer equipment already in the Army's inventory. First to be tapped and stripped of their equipment were the U.S. Reserve Component Forces.

A worldwide game of musical chairs began with U.S. tanks representing the chairs and U.S. troops the participants in the contest. Reserve stocks of equipment and some frontline items were withdrawn from U.S. NATO defense forces and shipped to Israel. Many U.S. troops in Europe found themselves empty-handed, without any equipment to repel a Soviet force. Tanks from the stateside Reserve Component Forces, which included the older model M-48s, arrived in Europe to take the place of the M-60s. Now stateside soldiers were without equipment.

During the conferences, Taus heard Knopf mention General Castellano's name concerning the delivery of M-48A3 tanks from the New York Army National Guard units, which had their tanks located at Camp (now Fort) Drum in upstate New York. This was the site of the guardsmen's annual two weeks summer training. Several Army National Guard units throughout the country would be stripped of their latest model tanks that were airlifted to Israel.

At that time, the M-60 Main Battle Tanks were in short supply stateside as most had been sent to the defending NATO forces in Europe. The Joint Chiefs of Staff did not want any weakening of NATO's defense posture. NATO forces were outgunned by the tanks of the opposing Soviet Warsaw Pact forces by a conservative ratio of six-to-one. Taus could easily see how an unstable Middle East would quickly upset the balance of power throughout the rest of the world.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff felt the Soviet Union would see a grand opportunity to precipitate a conventional attack in Europe if any further weaknesses were demonstrated. If such an attack occurred, how could NATO stop the Soviet advance? They could not do so with conventional arms. Nuclear weapons would have to be employed. The prevailing official U.S. policy was not to utilize nuclear weapons on a "first strike basis." At least that was the policy professed to everyone including the field grade officers in the U.S. Armed Forces.

The conference was adjourned for dinner. The Israeli General was giving Taus his orders. That was based upon Sanchez' instructions and Hod's profound desire not to waste precious time while his country was at war.

General Hod was in control of the situation and politely dismissed Taus after providing a base phone number in case of any unexpected problems that evening.

According to the U.S. General Accounting Office, a classified report was released two years later detailing the \$8.5 billion of military equipment delivered to Israel during the 1972-74 periods. It included 369 M-60 Main Battle Tanks, 400 surface-to-air missiles, 500 armored personnel carriers and a host of related military hardware. Many of these items came from the so-called NATO European reserve stocks. At the close of the 1974 fiscal year, the U.S. Army had a shortage of 4,943 tanks and 1,822 armored personnel carriers. These facts had to be known at the highest levels of the U.S. government. If the Soviet Union had decided to cross the Fulder Gap into Western Europe, the United States was prepared to initiate a nuclear war or lose all of Europe.

Late the following day Taus found two phone messages for him at the front desk of the billeting office. One was from General Hod. It expressed Hod's gratitude for the assistance rendered to him and his aide. Hod wrote that he would travel to Washington for further discussions. The other message was from Nestor Sanchez, who asked him to return the call.

The only thing Sanchez requested was an after-action report to be delivered to General Sturm upon Taus' return to New York. The phone conversation, as always, was cryptic, Sanchez felt the Middle East situation was extremely critical and its resolution would overshadow any other political considerations. There would be no Central American trip for a while. Taus' only task was to report back to Sturm and then return to Rucker and finish the aviation course.

### **Report to Sturm, November**

When the Arabs heard of the United States shipments of arms and equipment to Israel through Western Europe NATO bases, they retaliate against the Free World in October 1973 by imposing an oil embargo and raising oil prices through the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), which had a majority of Arab members.

Henry Kissinger had been the de facto U.S. Secretary of State until he was officially appointed to that position on September 22, 1973, at which time he started his many diplomatic trips among the warring Middle Eastern powers. Fearing greater Soviet intervention, Kissinger traveled to Russia. Based upon the daily CIA Summary of October 10, 1973, President Nixon was aware of the Soviet airlift of military equipment to Cairo and Damascus. The Nixon Administration had an enormous task to accomplish as it sought to keep the Soviet Union from further destabilizing the fragile balance of power while the U.S. sought support from Arab countries and tried to protect Israel.

Finally on October 24, a cease-fire was negotiated in the Middle East. Also on that day, Taus returned to New York from Fort Rucker, having completed the aviation instructor pilot's course. On the 25<sup>th</sup>, Taus was in Sturm's office at Citicorp Headquarters delivering his report.

Highly agitated by everything from the Watergate scandal to the Arab oil

embargo, Sturm paced his office floor, occasionally looking at his antique lead toy soldier collection that lined several office shelves. When Taus entered he noticed Sturm was staring at a figurine of General George Patton. Sturm spoke first, "If you want to return to the 40<sup>th</sup> Street branch that fine's with me. I do have another civilian position which I need you to fill. It's one of our subsidiaries. Information Sciences Incorporated (ISI). It is a computer software firm. You'll be managing several corporate accounts at ISI, making frequent trips to New York City from ISI's location in Rockland County, New York."

The offer was accepted. Rarely does anyone reject Sturm's suggestions, which were flavored with patriotic rhetoric. At Sturm's direction, Taus would first return to the 40<sup>th</sup> Street bank branch. It would be appropriate to give them notice especially after his training sojourn. Not that it mattered to the corporate leaders, but not every employee was involved with the secret cabal. It made sense for Taus to depart in everyone's good graces in case he had to return for another assignment.

### **Major Gary Smith**

After Sturm's session on Friday, Taus called Lawson to discuss the General's future intentions. Lawson suggested they meet at a local coffee shop Monday morning. Harry's coffee shop was located midway between Citicorp's 40<sup>th</sup> Street branch and the old FBI's New York Field Office at 69<sup>th</sup> Street.

By 10:00 A.M., Taus and Lawson met each other at Harry's and started talking about the past few months. "Friday I saw General Sturm. He indicated he has another operation in mind. Just what made your friend, Gary Smith, decide not to fly anymore?"

A dark picture began to emerge concerning Smith's past. Lawson said that they had flown together on several missions during Taus' second tour of duty in Vietnam. Not quite able to identify Smith's problem, Lawson referred to him as having a split personality. "He's a lovely guy sometimes and at other times he very contrary, a real wise guy, sarcastic as hell. Gary can pilot any aircraft without a problem. But his heart's not in it anymore. He may have some psychological problems from the war. How is he with Citicorp, Rich?" Both Taus and Smith were employed by Citicorp, working in the Corporate Division, and Taus occasionally saw Smith.

"I suppose that pretty much describes him, except he never talks about the war. He said that he left the Army rather than go to Vietnam again." Lawson added, "You mean go back for a third tour of duty. Gary's had two combat tours in Vietnam. He's earned a chest full of medals I understand."

Taus wanted to speak to Smith about his experiences, but never got around to it, engaging instead in business and social chats. Mondays were Smith's unofficial days off at Citicorp and according to Smith's Vice-President at the bank, the days off were due to Smith's serious drinking binges over the weekends. Smith had been referred by Citicorp to a rehabilitation program for alcoholics in the past. Smith received treatment for the symptoms instead of the disease. With no further insight provide by Lawson, Taus decided to approach Smith on Tuesday.



Back on the job. Smith looked paler and thinner than he had on the previous Friday. At Taus' insistence, they met for lunch at a small brownstone, known as "Beef-N-Beer" on New York's west side. Smith opted to drink his lunch. Halfway through Taus' beef sandwich and around Smith's third drink, the conversation started to flow. "You told me you were an Army aviator but you never speak about your tours in Vietnam," Taus pointed out. "Who needs to talk about those times? It's in the past, buried and forgotten," replied Smith.

"Not for me," Taus became very serious. "My adopted son's parents were killed over there. I had seen many people killed and wounded. I always felt sorry for the old folks and the children, especially the children." His remarks were deliberate, meant to stir Smith's emotions, if any were left.

Surprisingly, Smith reacted for the first time. Perhaps it was his fourth drink that prompted Smith to recite a poem:

*Gone are the games that they should be playing;  
Gone are the trinkets to childhood ear.  
Hushed are the voices that should be saying  
Words of parental cheer.  
Give them the joy that is theirs by birthright!  
Give them the smiles they are robbed of!  
Give them the love that is childhood's earth right.  
Give them the right to live!"*

Poetry for lunch, Taus had never expected such a tender subject coming from Smith. "I had no idea you wrote poems."

"I don't," Smith acknowledged. "It was written by an Army Captain whose name was Franklin Adams. It's called "The Orphans of France." Taus asked, "Did you know him?"

"I think not. Captain Adams was a veteran of World War I. The poem was published in "The Stars & Stripes" newspaper, in a 1916 edition."

"You would not have remembered a poem like that if you had not have such an experience over there, Gary. What happened?" Smith clutched his drink and delivered his story. "I had a family in Vietnam. Early on my first tour, I met a young Vietnamese lady and we had a civil marriage ceremony.

She had family and did not want to leave her parents in Vietnam. So we worked with the bureaucracy, trying to get them out too. She blessed me with two children. I loved them very much and extended my service in Vietnam as I worked on getting them all out of there."

"And what happened, Gary?"

"The war, that's what happened." Smith paused for a few moments. "My unit was the 121<sup>st</sup> Attack Helicopter Company. We had the Ace of Spades painted on the nose of each C-model Huey Gunship. Our grunts used to leave an Ace of Spades from a card deck on any VC they killed. It was a warning to others. We were death from the skies." Another sip and Smith said, "My family lived in Cholon. Do you know where that is?"

"Sure do," answered Taus, "My adopted son was born in the Chinese section of Saigon."

"Well, the Viet Cong attacked the area and we responded. We overre-

acted. We hit the VC hard with an aerial attack. I piloted one of the Gunships. I knew the area. At the time, we flew mainly in the Delta, south of Cholon. By the time we were airborne and I learned of the strike area, it was too late to warn my family. The block my family lived on was leveled either by VC rockets and explosives or friendly fires. I don't know who did the damage. Thanh, my wife, Gary Junior and little Thanh, were killed."

Smith finished his drink and had two more. Taus knew he could say few words of comfort to Smith. So he told his own experiences. "During the Tet Offensive, U.S. forces bombed Cholon, killing my adopted son's mother and nearly killing the child. His natural father was killed in action a few months before. So the child was placed in the orphanage which our unit sponsored."

Tragedies in wars have a habit of repeating themselves.

Though Smith was sympathetic, he told Taus about the anger that consumed him after the sadness. "I guess I was unable to show my grief. Not knowing what to do, I stayed behind and joined Air America, flying assorted missions in Laos and Vietnam for the CIA. I started drinking heavily then. Now, that's all I got left, the drinking." The alcohol in Smith's drinks was offset by the sobering discussion from the two secret warriors.

### **Information Sciences Incorporated**

General Sturm reasoned that if Taus did not want to undertake any long distance clandestine operations, then he would utilize him locally. There was no need to keep him at Citicorp since Gary Smith was there to handle covert activities. Sturm also felt that the attitude of Congress and the American Public required reducing covert overseas activities. Instability was shaking the administration as Nixon was threatened with impeachment proceedings by the House of Representatives.

In 1974 Information Sciences Incorporated (ISI) had numerous corporate accounts, providing software packages to clients that computerized their personnel and administrative departments. The programs could be run on the client's in-house computers or run on the three IBM 370s at ISI. Either way, ISI had access to a storehouse of corporate information on many American corporations, including many financial firms and major defense contractors.

Situated in New York's Rockland County, ISI's offices were convenient to its key customers in downtown Manhattan. ISI was taking advantage of other cost-savings measures by being outside New York City. The Rockland County location, situated in a rural office-building park with other corporations, provided a smaller profile for the company.

Taus enjoyed the easier pace and the more pleasant surroundings. Instead of the New York City rat race. ISI was in a suburb where there were excursions to clients in the tri-state area. Several major financial firms were assigned to him as accounts, along with financial firms on Wall Street, including the New York Stock Exchange.

Three former computer executives started the company when they resigned from IBM in the late sixties and offered the business community software programs that had been developed at IBM. In spite of this computer program theft, IBM did not prosecute them as the giant corporation had done to others. By 1974, ISI had a staff of 150 people and was still ex-

panding. Most of their managers were former military officers, which caused Taus to feel more comfortable.

Retired Air Force Colonel Harold "Lindy" Lindeman was the Senior Vice-President and the business world's version of a military chief of staff. His cold steel-blue eyes never betrayed his emotions as he acted the part of hatchet man for ISI. Lindy greeted Taus upon his arrival. Lindy said, "I understand that you are one of General Sturm's people. Did you serve with him?"

"Indirectly, sir," replied Taus who was unsure of in what capacity Lindy meant, the Army, Citicorp or the covert operations.

"Well, I'm sure he kept you busy," noted Lindy. Just then, Taus new supervisor, Frank Marangel, knocked on Lindy's office door. Frank Marangel was a graduate of Yale University with a doctorate degree in computer science. He was one of the few managers who had no military background. Taus may have been slotted into Marangel's staff because of it. Unassuming in appearance, Marangel was an intellectual who enjoyed dickering with computers, but he was a past master of subterfuge. His world of logic and intellect left little middle grounds for any practicalities that might deal with human emotions. Lindy introduced them and told Marangel to acquaint Taus with ISI. Marangel escorted him around the offices.

Three IBM computers and their peripheral equipment occupied the two lower floor of the wide-faced white brick building. As Taus had discovered, even the corporate world had its own ways of designating rank and grade. Just as ostentatious as the insignias and emblems of military service, were the designations of success at the different corporate levels. Junior executives and the clerical staff parked in the large rear parking lot. Nearest to the rear entrance, the mid-level managers had two rows of parking reserved for them with special numbers stencil-painted on the rectangular asphalt spaces. The space in front of the building belonged to the senior executives whose offices had thicker carpets and real mahogany furniture.

Though Lindy left the military ten years ago, he still enjoyed having the tapestries of rank surrounding him. There were military items, such as his officer's saber, inscribed and mounted over his desk and a walnut plaque with an engraved piece of scrolled sterling silver mounted upon it. It proclaimed the Colonel's military prowess and his long and distinguished service record. It bid him a fond farewell "From the officers and men of Special Intelligence Section, U.S. Air Force, The Pentagon."

Not only were there military paraphernalia that decorated his office walls, but souvenirs and gifts bestowed by corporate executives and companies who were seeking his favor in the business world.

On the fourth floor was Marangel's office. His staff of 6 managers and 12 clerical workers shared the sterile office environment with five-foot high room partitions, dividing the staff's working areas. Darkly tinted windows rimmed the four sides, but were at a height of 6 feet making it impossible to see outside and equally impossible for anyone outside to see inside. Two other supervisors and their staffs shared the floor.

"We produce software programs for large corporations," explained Ma-

rangel as he told Taus what his unit did. "There's a lot of competition in the marketplace, so we offer a unique software package which can handle any medium to large sized business. All facets of business are included: personnel, management, finance and payroll, production and inventory controls and security functions. We can access our client's computers and interface with them."

"First we will train you on our systems so that you can introduce our software packages to selected new accounts and manage your present accounts." Handing him a hard-covered portfolio containing an inch-thick report, Marangel told him his present accounts included the Arabian Petroleum Company, the New York Stock Exchange, the American Stock Exchange, Lehman Brothers, Solomon Brothers, Imperial Financial Corporation and many other large corporations with several conglomerates involved with overseas multi-national corporations. On his first day, Taus was overwhelmed.

"Don't worry, there's little for you to do with these accounts. Occasionally you will extract some data, by asking our clerical staff to run some routines. That's half your job; the other part will be on the road soliciting new accounts. We will provide you with a list of potential corporate clients. We are after certain industries and businesses. For the time being, we want the movers and shakers in the corporate world."

There were a large number of business luncheon in the first few weeks for Taus as Marangel introduced him to his accounts. Every workday centered on lunch with some at expensive New York City restaurants. The bills were always picked up by ISI. Each manager had a large expense account to incur the favor of the mid-level corporate managers. In many cases, this wasn't necessary. The senior management at these corporations was already in ISI's camp, commercially and politically.

Pamela Thompson was the only female account manager at ISI. Her desk space was adjacent to Taus. She was very attractive. Her blue eyes, blond hair and a shapely figure would have made her a model or an actress. But her natural down-to-earth mannerisms cancelled out any sophisticated pretenses. She helped teach Taus the job, noting that ISI often ran searches on its clients' data banks that were not necessary for ISI's operations or their systems.

Pamela recently was married to another employee of ISI, but seemed to be struggling with that relationship. Her husband was always in the field rather than the office. She was unhappy with her job and her marriage. As they worked together, she began to confide in him.

A local bakery was open early every morning. Taus would stop by for some donuts and a cup of coffee, which he brought to work. One day, Pamela noticed the aroma of the freshly baked donuts and said, "Something smells awfully good." Pamela never had breakfast and was constantly watching her weight.

Leaning over the office partition. Rich handed her the donut. "No, I can't. Ray will be upset with me. He wants me on a diet."

"Nonsense! You're in great shape. Ray's the one that needs to diet. I

don't mean to interfere with your marriage, but you are too good to him.

Don't let this develop into a one-sided relationship."

"I suppose it is already," lamented Pamela. "I was too anxious to get married and raise a family. Ray doesn't want any children until later, when we are more financially secure."

"The both of you are making twice the salary I am, and I have a child. Here, take the donut at least."

Gingerly she took one and thanked Rich, probably more so for his liberating remarks. "I shouldn't be saying anything about Ray, particularly to a single man. There isn't anyone else I can talk to in this office or at home."

"Well, thanks a lot," Rich said, "I don't know if that's a compliment or an insult."

"Believe me, it's meant to be a compliment. You should have started here six months ago, before my marriage date was set with Ray." She blushed with some embarrassment.

"And maybe I should not be saying this either," Rich quietly noted, "But I'm really glad you said that."

"Hey Pam! Where the hell are you!" Ray's voice bellowed down the partitioned corridor as he looked for his wife. As he rounded the corner, Ray was too intent upon talking with Pam to have any suspicions. "I need your programming book. Mine's at home." Pamela searched her desk, but remembered that she had left it at home. "I'm sorry, dear. It must be at home too."

"What the hell's it doing at home?" Ray started yelling at Pam for his own mistakes. Ray stormed away in a rage over a trivial matter. It was very quiet on the other side of Taus' partition. Pamela sat at her desk with tears in her eyes.

"You didn't touch the donut," Rich said, trying to handle her pain. He felt he had to do something; she was too distressed. Pamela said, "Please, Ray has gone out on a service call. Come with me to the "I" down the street. We can talk a little better there."

The "I" was crowded with the late breakfast patrons so they sat at the busy counter. There was little to say and much to think about, so the conversation was light-hearted. They both eyed a donut tray. A waitress came over as Rich asked Pamela, "Would you like the raisin donut or are those flies on it?"

"Oh shame on you! Pamela's first words since the incident brought a smile on her face. The surprised waitress tried waving her hand over the tray to chase the flies away, bringing some laughter as the waitress remarked, "The flies will cost you extra!" Both had found a confidant. Breakfast became a daily affair provided their work schedules permitted it. It did not take long for two lonely people to find a close friendship was developing into a love affair. By the fourth month of this clandestine relationship, Pamela made a decision. One morning in the diner, she told Rich, "I'm going to ask Ray for a divorce."

It was snowing heavily the next morning. The cold winter left the road slippery for the rush-hour traffic. Pamela would come into work everyday

with Ray. Like Ray's personality, his driving was terrible. At 11:00 AM, Marangel called a conference in his office. It was unusual to do so without any advance notice. There was barely any emotions in his voice as he announced, "I'm afraid I have some very bad news for everybody. This morning Ray and Pam Thompson were involved in a fatal automobile accident.

University Hospital called us here. Evidently they had no next of kin to identify them." A hush fell over the office staff, followed by a gasp of shock as Marangel added, "Pamela was pronounced dead upon arrival at the hospital. Ray is in very serious condition."

Taus was completely stunned by the announcement. Others in the office asked Marangel a barrage of questions, filling in the gaps concerning the accident. "It was a tractor-trailer from United Dynamics, one of our clients, that broad sided Thompson's car as he lost control on the icy road. The Police say he was driving too fast." Marangel's voice trailed off in the distance as Taus left the office. He went to the hospital to confirm the bad news.

The days and nights at ISI became much longer and lonelier for him. On occasion, Taus would receive a call from Sturm requesting certain information on the corporate clients. ISI never informed the clients that information was being passed to Citicorp. At the least, Taus felt it was an impropriety. Many of the clients held confidential information in their records from associates not connected to Citicorp.

## Purging Intelligence Agencies

**D**uring that period, the worldwide energy crisis resulted in the loss of \$97 million in the value of ISI's shares on the New York Stock Exchange. Taus was tasked with extracting numerous reports and conducting many searches on clients' records for Citicorp.

Many trips were made into Sturm's Citicorp office in the spring and early summer of 1974. Taus asked about the legal and ethical issues raised by this corporate piracy. In light of the pending impeachment charges against President Nixon, the legality of the present covert activities were questioned by Taus.

Initially, Sturm referred to a National Security Decision Memorandum (NSDM) that he claimed provided the powers to the President to conduct such operations. Sturm thumbed through a set of notes in his credenza for the written explanation. Pulling out several tabbed pages, he read from them: "In February of 1970, President Nixon issued a NSDM which stated the necessity for conducting covert action operations essential to the defense and security of the United States."

Taus felt there had to be more to the general answer provided by Sturm. "Was the President referring to domestic operations as well as overseas ones," Sturm replied, "Both, I'm sure." Sturm's answer did not sit well with Taus.

Defending the President, Sturm added, "Nixon's not attempting to commit any illegal activities. Even he recognized the need for the public to be aware of information that may control their destinies. In a speech the President made back in ..." Sturm continued thumbing through his notes and found another item that he read. "It was March 1972, when Nixon gave a speech in which he stated the issue of having the government withhold information from public access. He said the public would become distrustful of those who manage them and unable to control their own futures."

Taus responded, "The public certainly is distrustful, if you believe what you read in the newspapers. I think they would be shocked to learn about some of the covert operations that have been conducted."

Sturm insisted, "If you think President Nixon hasn't been truthful, then this whole Watergate matter would have disappeared long ago since Nixon would have controlled the situation." Taus responded to this by stating, "No sir. I'm not questioning the President's integrity. The public has been aroused over other covert operations and is greatly disturbed with Watergate."

When Nixon resigned in August 1974, Sturm maintained the same opinion of him and expressed great concern over the newly appointed President, Gerald Ford. With Nixon's resignation, the Democratic Congress smelled blood and was out for the kill. All administrative policies were being scrutinized and the CIA was next on the chopping block.

In late December 1974, following a report published by the *New York Times*, investigative reporter Seymour Hersh accused the CIA of secretly monitoring many U.S. citizens who opposed the war in Vietnam. These opponents were illegally wiretapped and surveillances were employed against them. The CIA was alleged to have conducted mail interceptions and break-ins to obtain additional incriminating information on them.

Sensing the danger upon Nixon's resignation, Sturm maintained a low profile. He asked Taus to leave ISI, at least temporarily, to avoid linking Taus' activities with the company or with Citicorp. Taus would be placed on active duty again with the Army National Guard. Taus' unit placed him on orders to Fort Rucker to undergo training as an Army instructor pilot.

The hullabaloo over Watergate did not quiet down through the winter of 1974. The news media, Congress, and the American Public were attacking the illegal activities of the intelligence agencies. President Ford took refuge by issuing a statement on January 4, 1975, that he would not tolerate any more illegal operations by the CIA or any of the other federal agencies.

To stem the tide from any forthcoming investigations. President Ford established a commission to investigate illegal activities. The new Vice-President, Nelson Rockefeller, was to be the commission's chairman, although Rockefeller helped draft the CIA's charter back in 1947. It was a case of letting the fox into the henhouse.

Democratic Senator Frank Church established and chaired the Senate's response to the Rockefeller Commission. It was known as "The Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities." Later, other congressional committees were formed to investigate abuses in government.

### **Central Intelligence Agency**

While on an Army flight training mission, General Castellano called Taus, asking him to contact General Sturm at Citicorp. The conversation over the Army flight facility phone was short and cryptic as usual. As Sturm answered the phone he said, "Captain Taus, it's good to hear from you again. We are trying to get things together down south. Would you be interested in working with the Professor for a short while?"

Taus knew Sturm was asking him to take another Central American trip. "Sir, I'd like to hear the details." If it were a simple liaison mission, then Taus felt all right about it. But if it involved more than that, Taus wanted no



part. An objective appraisal would have answered that question. A simple liaison mission could be accomplished by taking a commercial flight.

“Call General Castellano for the details,” instructed Sturm, keeping the verbal discourse to a minimum and bouncing Taus back to Castellano. Sometimes Taus wondered who was really in control. With a second call to Albany, Castellano gave Taus a Washington D.C. phone number for Nestor Sanchez, adding: “Contact Nestor. He’s coordinating a trip down to Washington for you and Greg Lawson over the next weekend.” Without agreeing to anything, somehow Taus was making a trip. It appeared that the old crew would be reassembled. It seemed the only way to find out the itinerary would be to call Lawson at the FBI New York Office.

Several months had passed since Taus last spoke to him, but Lawson was glad to hear from Taus again. Lawson told him that he was aware of the trip and that they should meet at 6:30 AM, Saturday morning at Linden Airport New Jersey, and at that time the details would be given to him.

An early winter storm had hit the Northeast Saturday and flying conditions were marginal at best. After Taus arrived at Linden, Lawson informed him that it would be better to drive to Washington. He did not want to waste time if his aircraft was diverted to another airport due to the inclement weather. The cold weather had brought the first heavy snowfall making driving conditions treacherous. Overcast skies weighed heavily upon the horizon, depressing landscape and spirits. On the way, Lawson mentioned that the mission would be either to Central or to South America, saying, “It’s depends upon whether they are looking at the drug-trafficking situation.” He seemed to be uninformed about any detail, but Taus had heard enough.

“This isn’t the first time I’ve heard about drugs with these intelligence agencies,” Taus said. “What’s Sanchez doing? Has this anything to do with CIA drug-trafficking?” Lawson gave no answers. He asked Taus to be patient until Sanchez explained the flight mission.

They met Sanchez at the downtown Holiday Inn Hotel. Sanchez said that a meeting was scheduled for Monday morning at CIA Headquarters in Langley. Lawson was disappointed. Had he known the meeting was scheduled for Monday, he would have waited, hoping for an improvement in the weather. He loved flying. Sanchez did add that the new mission concerned supplying of arms and equipment to the Guatemalan government by the Israelis. Delayed by the Yom Kippur War last year, the long canceled trip was to begin.

“Cheer up Greg,” added Sanchez, “Your old friend and my former antagonist will also be there. Assistant FBI Director William C. Sullivan.”

Lawson’s eyes lit up. “Has he been called back from retirement?”

“Not exactly, Greg. As you know, he has always been working with us. Naturally Bill and I have not agreed on every issue, but that was in the past when he had to juggle between his position with the Bureau and the Steering Committee. Lawson, who wanted to emphasize his own balancing act with the FBI, responded, “Yes, and it cost him plenty!”

In late September 1971, J. Edgar Hoover had relieved Sullivan from his post as an Assistant Director of the FBI. Sullivan was the third ranking man in the Bureau in charge of all investigative operations, including intelligence and espionage responsibilities. When Hoover effectively fired Sullivan by forcing him into retirement, the heir-apparent to Hoover's throne was gone.

Sullivan was deeply embittered.

The confrontation between the two strong personalities dealt with numerous issues. On the surface, Sullivan openly admitted the problems in his letters to Hoover. Later, Sullivan wrote the book, *The Bureau: My Thirty Years in Hoover's FBI*.

The litany of abuses that Hoover perpetrated stemmed from Sullivan's earlier placement with the Secret Elite's Steering Committee. They were equally worried over Hoover's influence and power. And reasonably so.

Hoover maintained secret files on many of them and their political colleagues. Yet there seemed to be an ironic twist.

President Nixon and Director Hoover appeared to be close friends, at least in a political sense. Each would prop-up the other when needed. Their personalities were reclusive. Both men were introverted. When push-came-to-shove, either man would expel the other to survive. Nixon knew that and so did the Committee, which carried other high-ranking officials at the Bureau.

Assistant Director Deke DeLoach was one of the committee's members. He was Sullivan's predecessor in the Bureau, Hoover's other third man. Clyde A. Tolson was Hoover's inseparable companion and many claimed that only through Hoover's homosexual relationship with him did Tolson become the Bureau's second in command.

DeLoach knew when to leave. In 1970, he exercised his option and retired, leaving behind the lower paying salary and intrigue to Sullivan. Rewarded by the secret elite for a job well done, DeLoach entered its ranks again with a position at PepsiCo.

PepsiCo had always been close to the intelligence community. PepsiCo's chairman, Donald Kendall, was an ardent conservative Republican who had financed their election campaigns since the Eisenhower Administration. During Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev's visit to the United States in the 1950s, Kendall joined then Vice-President Richard Nixon as part of the diplomatic mission, hoping to secure a trade agreement with the Soviets. Kendall appeared in a well-publicized photograph holding a Pepsi-Cola can while walking with Khrushchev and Nixon. It was a Madison Avenue ad-executive's coup, a fine endorsement of his product.

Nixon continued to receive campaign funds from Kendall. Payback time occurred again in the early 1970s when the Marxist Chilean President Allende nationalized most U.S. corporations in Chile, among them ITT and PepsiCo. Part of the business interests of the ruling class had to be protected. Nixon's earliest instructions to DCI Helms occurred in September 1970 to take action against Allende's rise to power. By 1973, Kendall had leaned heavily on Nixon to stop the nationalization of his Chilean PepsiCo Company. Nixon acted. Allende was assassinated.

The policy rift between Hoover and Sullivan with Bureau operations was only extenuated by Sullivan's own conflict of interests in working for the Steering Committee. The rigors became too much for him to handle. He voiced his opinion too early against Hoover. Within eight months. Hoover would be dead.

DCI William Casey would die before the full disclosures in the Iran-Contra arms scandal. Like Hoover, Casey would take many of the answers to his grave. But there was a difference between the two intelligence directors. It would never be established that Hoover was connected to the Steering Committee. But Hoover's greater independence created problems for the committee.

On March 13, 1973, a meeting was held in the White House to place blame for Watergate on someone. Sullivan hated Hoover and cooperated with the committee to protect Nixon. Hoover's protégés in the Bureau would never allow the former Director's name, and hence, the Bureau image to be tarnished. Consequently President Nixon's White House Counsel, John Dean, suggested that William Sullivan take the heat. However, Sullivan had left the FBI nearly nine months before the Watergate break-in.

A political pay-off was offered to Sullivan. Since one of Sullivan's grievances with Hoover and one of his lifetime desires was to create a total and singular intelligence system. Sullivan wanted to be its director, but the committee only offered him a lower position within the CIA. Sullivan's position was that he would either be director or he would not assist Dean with the scandal. He stated in his book that he rejected the offer and disavowed any knowledge of Watergate.

The heavy blizzard kept Washington quiet over the weekend under a blanket of snow. On Monday morning, Sanchez took out his late model Mercedes-Benz for a drive over to Langley. It was an eight-mile ride from the hotel to the CIA headquarters. On the way, Taus asked, "What is the CIA's involvement in this arms deal? I thought the Defense Intelligence Agency would coordinate such shipments."

Sanchez answered, "Yes, but not entirely. You see, the initial arrangements were made between the CIA and the Israeli government. A very strong bond exists with the CIA and the Mossad. We'll be meeting the CIA Chief of Counter-Intelligence, James Jesus Angleton, who has formed a close relationship with Israel. I suspect General Hod will be at this meeting." Inside the main lobby, imbedded on the marble floor, was an enormous emblem of the CIA seal, upon which was the verse from St. John's Gospel, "And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free."

Reading the inscription, Lawson noted, "I would expect to see a verse like that at a university or college. Here the truth is often hidden and operations would be unsuccessful if the truths were revealed. We don't have anything like that in the FBI."

As they approached the armed guards standing near an information desk, Sanchez replied, "Yes you do, Greg. The FBI shield is inscribed with the motto: Fidelity, Bravery and Integrity." Indignantly Lawson responded,

“Hoover selected those virtues because they were the initials of the FBI, not necessarily its values.”

“Gentlemen, what can we do for you today,” asked one of the security guards. Recognizing Sanchez, the guard added, “And how are you today, Mr. Sanchez?”

“Fine. Thank you for asking John. We have an appointment with Mr. Angleton today. Would you check on that?”

While arrangements were being made, Sanchez slowly paced the marble floor. With each step he took, his leather-heeled shoes clacked against the stone deck. He walked across the lobby to view some small stars on a wall.

They represented those CIA agents who lost their lives in service to the country. Taus watched, noticing Sanchez’ curious gait. His right leg seemed to lag when he walked.

A pert brunette walked over to the guards. She had come down from the seventh floor where the offices of the most senior level CIA officials were located. Lawson called Sanchez, whose eyes were transfixed on the stars.

There were tears in Sanchez’ eyes, but they quickly disappeared when he saw the attractive escort. “How are you Betty?” Sanchez also knew the staff. With temporary security passes, the secretary escorted them to the top floor.

The entourage was left in the hands of Angleton’s secretary, an older more savvy woman who buzzed Angleton over the intercom. Angleton acknowledged. As the secretary led the group into his office, she proceeded to pick up some open files which had red tags placed upon them. It was an extra security measure, keeping prying eyes from seeing sensitive information.

Inside Angleton’s office were three other individuals. Taus recognized the two Israeli officers, but not William Sullivan.

“Welcome Nestor! How are you? You know General Hod and Major El-ishiwale and Bill Sullivan.” Rising from his chair, Angleton stood a lean six feet tall. He placed his ever-present cigarette into an ashtray and bend over his desk to shake hands with the trio. For nearly 27-years, Angleton was the Chief of the Counter-Intelligence Section. Lawson greeted Sullivan in a manner showing they were obviously old FBI friends.

The ensuing conversation covered many areas as they reminisced about their experiences in World War II. Angleton was first to note that Sanchez had been a member of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). He had parachuted behind enemy lines in Nazi-occupied France. It was a revelation for Lawson and Taus who never suspected he was capable of such feats.

“How’s the leg, Nestor?” Angleton recalled the injury sustained by Sanchez during a jump over France. It accounted for his unusual gait. The early experiences during the Second World War established a unique nexus between the elder professionals.

As they focused on more current events, Hod brought Sanchez up-to-date on the strained cease-fire established by Kissinger following last year’s Yom Kippur War. “It wasn’t our fault. Our intelligence services worked together on the information passed to them about an expected attack. Based upon its own sources, the Mossad knew it was possible. You had warned us too, James. But AMAN had to act unconvinced since President Nixon or-

dered us not to make any pre-emptive strikes. The rest was a very near disaster for Israel.”

A huge supply of U.S. war materials was shipped to Israel in October 1973. It would be repaid by cooperation with U.S. Intelligence agencies. Despite last year’s fiasco, Israel possessed a highly talented intelligence system which supplemented U.S. sources. This view was especially shared by Angleton, who long ago had established a two-way sharing of intelligence with them. Hod was there to provide some payback.

Again Israel would become involved in arms shipments to Latin American countries. Before the Yom Kippur War, Israel supplied Chile with arms.

The conference rambled on with directions being given by Angleton, then Hod, and finally Sanchez. It was clear to Taus that none of the three were completely in charge. Bill Sullivan sat patiently, apparently grateful to be in the intelligence game once again. He had not yet published his book.

Israel was indebted to the United States. Hod was there to assist any clandestine operations agreed upon. Angleton was the staunch supporter of Israel. He should have been the overall coordinator, but yielded to Sanchez. Politically, Sanchez dealt with the Secretary of State. All other federal agencies and their leaders were malleable under the former Intelligence Czar, Henry Kissinger, and his emissary.

That point was touched upon by Angleton, “It’s not like the old days. Even Bill Colby’s a different person. The changes are detrimental to our organization. We are the people who know how to operate an intelligence organization, but these congressmen are having our heads roll, and even Nixon tumbled from office as a result. I have spoken to President Ford about this new air of openness. He agrees with us that leaks will develop that will prove very harmful to the company and the other members of the intelligence community. Schlesinger has already axed our personnel staffing.”

Directing his comments specifically to the Central American issues, Angleton noted that the CIA station in El Salvador was closed in 1973, based upon budgetary cuts. “We are on the defensive now. In spite of our successes, such as toppling Allende’s communist regime in Chile, Congress has placed us under intensive scrutiny. They blame us for not predicting the oil embargo and President Ford is distancing himself from the CIA, as if we were an independent organization.”

“Can you blame him,” replied Sanchez, “Ford is running for re-election! I mean, election. He succeeded to the Presidency. He now needs to convince the public that he is electable.”

General Hod did not enjoy the situation. Israel was a democratic country that could easily be affected by the same process. Yet, they had thus far been able to operate more secretly than any of the free world countries. Assassinations were condoned by their government with the support of the Israeli public.

Lunch was taken on the seventh floor dining area, reserved for the senior staff. The mealtime conversation shifted to other topics. Casual conversations were a part of the ever-present compartmentalization. The more intriguing subjects were covered behind closed doors. “Would you care to

have your palm read, Nestor?" Angleton asked. "General Hod would be delighted to do so or perhaps his assistant Major Elishiwale."

"That's not true, Mr. Sanchez. The Israeli government does not read palms. At least, not at this time. Perhaps in the future if it has merit in our psychic espionage program." Only Angleton showed a small grin, as Hod explained the program to Sanchez. "James is correct, not just Israel, but the Soviet Union is tremendously involved in research activities concerning psychic and paranormal phenomenon which may be applied to the intelligence collection process."

"I may be a skeptic," Angleton professed, "But I am happy to hear that Israel is keeping abreast in this field. We are conducting our own research. I hope Israel will keep us informed of any advances in this field." Being a little incredulous, Sanchez asked Hod, "You are quite serious about this area?"

Hod continued, "Israel has done extensive research in the areas of extra-sensory perception, telepathy, psychogenesis and other para-physical matters. It may be a very effective short-cut for the usual methods of collecting data."

"That's true," echoed Angleton. "The Czechs conducted psychic experiments during World War II. Many of the Eastern Bloc countries are great believers in its potential." Major Elishiwale noted, "These experiments started before the Second World War. If any substantial breakthrough is achieved in this study, the side possessing that knowledge will rule the world." Hod continued, "Unless the other side reaches the same successes. Like the nuclear arms race, the United States and the Soviet Union are confronted by stalemate."

"It will be Israel's obligation to return the favor, if any breakthroughs are accomplished," Angleton said, hinting at the fact that CIA supplied Israel in the past with information for the development of their nuclear potential.

The afternoon wore on. Specifics of the next Central American trip were outlined. Only Guatemala would be supplied with arms and equipment on this trip. However by 4:00 PM, Angleton received another phone call. Angleton told the unknown caller to cancel the mission. He later told his audience that there were some budgetary considerations. Sanchez looked confused; Lawson was disappointed, and Taus was relieved.

Later Taus asked Sanchez why Angleton's secretary had picked up the red-tagged file when they arrived, since the Israelis were present beforehand. Sanchez thought for a moment and then disclosed that another mission was also being considered to South America.

When further pressed by Taus, Sanchez said it would be to the coca producing countries. It was what Taus had feared, CIA drug operations. Lawson was smiling; the news meant he would be flying. The meeting with James Angleton had been an interesting experience for Taus. Angleton was known as the "Delphic Oracle," not only for his knowledge of intelligence operations and agencies, but for his ability to speak as an authority on most subjects.

This was the only time when Taus met the legendary intelligence chief. Angleton's slow and deliberate manner seemed to underline the fact his days were numbered at the CIA.

Evidently Sanchez had already approached Sullivan concerning Taus' desire to obtain a regular full-time federal position. Sullivan was the best person to handle such a request. He used to work for the FBI and still had many contacts. Though often employed for political reasons, by and large the rank-and-file agents engaged in legitimate investigations of federal law violations. Sanchez felt Taus would consider a position as an FBI Special Agent, a position that would also prove useful for the Steering Committee.

The problems created by the "Year of Intelligence" would sweep away many competent and faithful employees as politicians played a malevolent game seeking to absolve themselves of any blame. It cost the careers of many truly able and dedicated federal employees.

In early 1977, Taus asked Bill Sullivan to assist him with an appointment to the FBI. Sullivan paved the way, but in that year he would be mysteriously killed in what was termed a hunting accident. William C. Sullivan was an FBI agent for thirty years and highly skilled with weapons. His curious death raised many questions. He may have been too outspoken. One of his objectives was the creation of a singular intelligence system instead of the dispersed agencies and organizations that are responsible to other federal executives. No one is entirely in control, except at the National Security Council level. However day-to-day operational command, control and coordination is lacking between most intelligence and law enforcement agencies.

A feeble attempt at remedying this situation, or for that matter, applying some whitewash, was with the establishment of selected "Joint Task Forces (JTF)" in the 1980s.

On the front lines of intelligence collection and use were the various agencies, squabbling over territorial rights. By the time a problem was addressed to the National Security Council, it was usually unmanageable. Perhaps this was what the Steering Committee wanted. They could politically control the intelligence operations, especially the most critically important ones. Those who interfered would pay a high price. Sullivan insisted upon having a single agency in charge to stop any abuse. Perhaps, it led to his untimely death?

In 1979, a book written by Sullivan's book was published, in which he admonished the CIA and the FBI for their poor intelligence work and lack of cooperation. However the entire reasons for these problems were not fully disclosed.

### **Politics and the CIA**

A term was coined for the period in which congressional committees and investigative reporters tried to review all materials relating to covert intelligence operations. It was called "The Year of Intelligence," 1975. President Ford and his Secretary of State were under intense pressure from the Senate and House committees investigating covert activities. In 1974, the Hughes-Ryan Amendment to the foreign aid bill required the administration to report any significant clandestine operations to one or more of eight

congressional committees. This amendment triggered the beginning of the oversight function that Congress deemed necessary. The intention was to supplant CIA committees with congressional intelligence committees.

Now, the pull-and-tug war over intelligence reporting began between the executive and legislative branches of government. Many of these battles were won by the President. The two Democratic congressmen who sponsored the Hughes-Ryan Amendment only added a congressional imprimatur to the covert activities of the executive branch.

From a national standpoint, the congressional committees found there were insufficient legislative actions covering the subject. There was no provision for the needed statutory regulations and guidelines concerning the conduct of intelligence operations.

The handwriting was on the wall. From a political standpoint, few covert missions would be undertaken that could possibly be connected to the present administration. It was Senator Frank Church who referred to the Central Intelligence Agency as a rogue elephant, drawing the symbolism of the animal representing the Republican Party and implying the administration had misused its powers. When the committee report was concluded and published in April 1976, Church mentioned the use of "a regiment of cloak-and-dagger men" which a President had at his disposal to conduct covert operations.

The pressures imposed to suspend covert operations created by the political climate did little to halt the regimental activities of the cloak-and-dagger men. Events in Africa were to bear this out as covert and subversive activities occurred in the Portuguese colony of Angola and elsewhere.

The covert CIA operation called Operation Feature involved military intervention with the supply of arms and equipment from the United States in support of a rebel group. Interestingly, this operation was approved by the National Security Council under Henry Kissinger in July 1975 at the height of the congressional investigations and only a few months after the fall of

South Vietnam. The CIA was actually ill prepared to wage an extensive campaign. Its cloak-and-dagger men were reduced during the final days of the Saigon debacle. The Special Operating Group (SOG) from the CIA had not yet recovered from its Vietnam escapades.

#### **Political Purges at the CIA**

The Steering Committee had to be protected. It implemented clandestine operations, giving permission to its operatives to carry out the Secret Elite's objectives and policies. The matter in which those aims were to be achieved might be altered based upon new developments. Such was the case as "The Year of Intelligence, 1975" shifted the anticipated course charted by the former Nixon Administration.

Of concern was the role played by James Jesus Angleton and his liaison with the Israeli government. This relationship brought him into conflict with the newly emerged intelligence leadership, namely Colby and Schlesinger. To fully understand Angleton's role, one must consider the events that surrounded him and eventually gave rise to his resignation in late 1974.

Disagreements emerged between himself and the new leadership at the



CIA but this was not the motivating factor in his removal. The world had changed since Angleton formed his close friendships during and immediately after his days with the Office of Strategic Services. Angleton was too close to his Israeli friends, which did not play well with the Arab world holding a strong hand in the economies of the Western World. If U.S. business interests were to prosper, the United States had to change its role in dealing primarily with Israel. In effect, this was what Kissinger was doing as he tried to maintain a balance of power in the Middle East and Angleton's preference for Israeli interests threatened to upset the delicate balance.

Cooperation was always very close between the Mossad and the CIA. In the early 1950s, Angleton's friendship with members of the Mossad encouraged the unofficial support Israel received from the CIA. There was no CIA station in Tel Aviv but certain officers in the U.S. Embassy were close to the Mossad.

During the 1950s, the Eisenhower Administration realized the economic strengths possessed by the Arab World and through the State Department sought an appeasement policy towards the Arabs. This continued in the early 1960s under the Kennedy Administration.

Following the abortive Suez Canal crisis of 1956, Angleton maintained close ties with Isser Harel, the head of Mossad, and Ephraim Evon, a Mossad Liaison Officer, and later the Deputy Israeli Ambassador in Washington. Both nations feared the advances being made by the Soviet Union's influence in this sector of the world. It was Evon who provided Angleton with accurate information on the Russian spy ships' tactics in the eastern Mediterranean and the increased involvement of the Russians in Egypt.

Sworn in as the Director of the CIA (DCI) on September 4, 1973, William Egan Colby confronted professional and personal crises and changed his own philosophy, as well as his personality, in order to meet the future challenges. This was during the height of the anti-Nixon atmosphere in Washington and the revelations of CIA dirty tricks that opened the congressional investigations into that agency.

Seven months earlier in February 1973, Nixon brought the CIA under his total control by his appointment of James Schlesinger as the new director of Central Intelligence. Nixon's appointee had three primary missions as the new Director: the CIA would become a part of Nixon's team, politically; the DCI should exercise supervision over the entire intelligence field; and last, a house cleaning was in order. Schlesinger felt that the old days of relying upon human intelligence, in the form of spies and operatives, had ended and that information could be obtained from technical sources such as spy flights, computers and communication devices.

Part of Schlesinger new team at the time was Colby, who was appointed as the Deputy Director, even though Colby came from the "old school." But Colby's style was to change under Schlesinger. This could be accounted for in several ways. In order to stay in power, Colby had to agree with his new boss's directives. At the same time, Colby witnessed the failures in Vietnam.

Also, a tragic event occurred in his personal life during this time.

Colby believed in the American efforts in Vietnam and personally con-

done whatever was necessary in order to win the war. Since he joined the CIA in 1950, Colby had continually been involved in clandestine operations.

In Vietnam, he ran the infamous Phoenix Program that was designed to identify and eliminate the Viet Cong infrastructure. The result was the assassination of many people, some allegedly innocent. The hard line that Colby had adopted in Vietnam was to soften as he saw the inevitable defeat and collapse of Vietnam.

The final event in Colby's metamorphosis occurred in April 1973. Colby's eldest daughter died from anorexia nervosa complicated by an epileptic condition. Colby was a Roman Catholic and it was speculated that his religious beliefs broadened at that time. But what is factual was the sudden departure from form that characterized Colby when he took over the reigns of the CIA when Schlesinger was appointed Secretary of Defense under Nixon.

Facing his confirmation hearings and other congressional committees to which the CIA reported, Colby purged the CIA like a boy scout trying to clean up a dirty act. By his disclosures, Colby avoided blame, placing it upon the CIA's previous directors, especially Richard Helms. Under DCI Helms' leadership, there were some things that were never mentioned. Helms would never volunteer any information, and certainly never elaborate when answering an unavoidable question during congressional hearings.

Schlesinger and Colby were different.

The CIA was experiencing a new era in Congress based upon the Watergate revelations and the changing congressional leadership. With the old Congress, leaks did not develop. However, with many newly elected congressmen, who were anxious to make a reputation for themselves or who felt the old leadership lacked credibility, leaks proliferated.

Feeling that full disclosure could save the CIA, Colby introduced Congress to the skeletons hidden in the CIA's closets. These skeletons came from Schlesinger's final directive issued shortly before he departed the CIA. It consisted of things done by the CIA in the past that may have been beyond the agency's legislative charter to perform. Colby unfolded the skeleton list to the shock and disbelief of his fellow CIA officers and agents.

Among the disclosures was Operation Chaos that originally started in 1967 by the Counter-Intelligence section headed by James Angleton and was based upon a directive from President Johnson to determine if the anti-Vietnam War movement was manipulated or financed by any foreign governments. It flourished under the Nixon Administration as "Activities Directed Against U.S. Citizens," revealing a mail-opening operation that had its inception in 1953.

When Colby was the Deputy DCI he saw no merit to the mail opening operation, particularly since it was illegal. Colby recommended to Schlesinger that it be terminated. Angleton fought Colby for its continuation. Schlesinger finally listened to Colby and suspended the operation.

Angleton was to suffer even more under Schlesinger as broad staff cuts in personnel were made. A final confrontation came between the two men over the issue that the CIA might have been penetrated by a KGB mole.

This, Colby agreed with and questioned Angleton's motivation. Colby felt that Angleton's suspicions were harmful to the proper conduct of business by the CIA.

Colby tried to quietly relieve Angleton of his responsibilities and the Israeli liaison. On December 17, Colby called Angleton into his office and told Angleton that he wanted to make some changes, effectively removing Angleton from his two primary jobs and retaining him only in a consultant's capacity. The handwriting was on the wall for Angleton and he asked Colby for some time to think things over about the offer. On December 18, a telephone conversation between investigative reporter Seymour Hersh and Colby resulted in a meeting in Colby's office two days later.

Much speculation has been made over the appearance of Hersh's article in the front page of the *New York Times* (December 22, 1974): "Huge CIA Operation Reported In Against Anti-War Forces, Other Dissidents In Nixon Years." Had Colby told Hersh something the investigative reporter never knew before the meeting in order to neutralize Angleton?

Colby claimed that Hersh already knew about some illegal CIA activities when they spoke by telephone on the 18<sup>th</sup>. The meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> was Colby's attempt to purge his agency of any wrongdoings. But in so doing, did Colby provide additional information unavailable to the reporter and secure a measure of protection for himself. The "don't blame me, I didn't do anything wrong" admission did not fit the man who had conducted clandestine operations in the CIA for the past 20 years. Colby was indeed no boy scout!

In fact, the first paragraph of the lead story in "The *New York Times*" read: "The Central Intelligence Agency directly violated its charter, conducted a massive domestic intelligence operation during the Nixon Administration against anti-war movement and other dissident groups in the United States, according to well-placed government sources." Did Hersh obtain this information prior to his meeting with Colby? Did Colby simply elaborate on Hersh's knowledge or was Colby the only "well placed" government source that revealed this information?

After the meeting with Hersh, Colby effectively fired Angleton, telling Angleton that his resignation and his chief assistants were necessary in light of the future news story about to unfold to the American Public. Given this purge, Angleton and his senior staff resigned, convinced that Colby had been the well-placed government source that leaked the news story about the illegal mail-openings to Hersh.

Acting like the dutiful servant who had stolen from the cookie jar, Colby reported the loss to President Ford, that the Hersh story would come out, and denied any culpability for the misdeeds entailed in that article. Colby informed Ford, "Nothing like that happens now." Boy Scout image intact so far, Colby prepared a report for Ford, who in his youth was an Eagle Scout. It was known as the Vail Report concerning the domestic activities of the CIA.

As the Republican Administration had done under Nixon, heavier world crises and problems would first be handled by the National Security Coun-

cil's staff. This procedure continued under the Reagan Administration. The

Oliver North Case and the Iran Contra Arms Initiative Affair showed the NSC's involvement. The same was true in the Reagan Administration when FBI Special Agent Taus uncovered several illegal intelligence operations. In addition to the Iran-Contra Arms Initiative, there were several others, including the Iraqi-BCCI scandal, the U.S. Savings & Loans Association debacle, worldwide drug-trafficking activities and organized crime connections, all involving the CIA.

## CHAPTER NINE

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### Transfer Within the System

**T**hroughout 1975, Taus remain on active duty with the Army. Initially, his orders were to handle Army National Guard recruiting matters in lower New York. Sturm 's political friends in Congress warned him to maintain a low profile, causing him to reduce some covert activities. Sturm felt it would be best to get Taus away from New York since a minor investigation had begun at Information Sciences concerning leaks of financial client information and it was possible this could escalate into the firm's links to covert activities.

Taus himself had made this suggestion to Sturm, which was followed by orders sending Taus to an eight-month course of instructions at Fort Benning, Georgia. This enabled Taus to remain on active duty while enhancing his military qualifications, perhaps for some future para-military use.

Known as the United States Army's Infantry School Training Center, Fort Benning conducted courses from boot camp for new recruits to the advanced courses for infantry officers. A host of related training was conducted by Fort Benning's Airborne, Ranger and Special Warfare schools, which included the notorious "School of the Americas." It was here that Taus spent eight months in training. The Infantry Officers' Advanced Course (IOAC) was mandatory for his promotion to major. It will keep him current in the military, providing him with other opportunities, especially if the Army expanded and reactivated him.

The IOAC class consisted of 180 officers, all male. Infantry was a Combat Arms Branch. As such it excluded females from the battlefield. Taking the training were officers from several Allied countries. The Army hosted officers and non-commissioned officers from foreign nations. This IOAC class included a colonel and a major from Saudi Arabia, a major from Switzerland, captains from the NATO countries of Italy and West Germany and several more majors and captains from the African countries of Nigeria, Ghana and Uganda. The U.S. was trying to build closer ties with the African nations. Although the primary objective of the course was teaching infantry tactics and strategy, another equally important aim in training foreign officers was to establish long-term friendships with them that might prove use-

ful in the future.

For the most part, the class was composed of active duty Army officers who would be assigned to Regular Army duties upon course graduation. Among them were 25 West Point Academy graduates. Also in attendance were 20 part-time Reserve and National Guard officers. That figure included Taus.

The training revolved around classroom instructions, field maneuvers and tactical demonstrations. Classes were held at the main Infantry school building, a large beige brick complex, four stories high and situated in the middle of the fort. In front of the main entrance and circular driveway was "The Infantryman," a larger than life sized bronze statute of a combat soldier leading a charge. The figure's open mouth seemed to be saying the words inscribed on the statute's base, "Follow Me!"

The academic schedule seemed unending. However, the classroom instructions were much preferred to the field exercises in the hot Georgian sun. Demonstrations of tactical weaponry was the most interesting aspect. Defects could be observed in most systems. The more sophisticated weapons had the greatest numbers and frequency of malfunctions.

Tactics taught to Taus had already been applied by him in Vietnam so the training was nothing new. The war rush in the late 1960s abrogated much of the training process. It was too late for men lost in that battle to learn the proper techniques now. However, there would always be future wars.

Proper techniques alone do not win battles nor save men's lives. Wars are chaotic and the stresses on the battlefield leave little time for adequate planning. It was during the recoveries of downed aircraft, when the landing zones were under attack, that Taus made many life-or-death command decisions.

A new Lieutenant assigned as the platoon leader had less of an idea on how to set up a defensive perimeter around a downed helicopter from Taus' unit. The scale of his tactical maps did not show enough details. There was no strong advice from an equally inexperienced platoon sergeant. Most were learning on-the-job. It was a real pass or fail course in Vietnam.

During that attack, the defensive situation was overcome by events. Chaos developed as the enemy probed each outpost and inflicted casualties. Taus instructed the Lieutenant to re-establish a more secure position, which eventually allowed Taus and his crew to repair and perform a take-off with the damaged helicopter. Now at Fort Benning, Taus was learning the proper techniques in a safe unrushed environment.

The U.S. Army still had not reconciled itself in establishing a separate branch for its flying component. Pilots and aviation resources were spread throughout the Army and it would not be until December 1983 that a separate aviation branch would be established.

Originally assigned to the Adjutant Generals' Corps, Taus was transferred to the Infantry branch. A greater percentage of aviation resources existed in the Infantry. It was the better choice for an aviation career in the Army. At Fort Benning, any aviation matters were peripheral to the training.

The group unit tactics taught at that time nearly excluded any concepts of aerial tactics and vertical envelopment, which the helicopter war in Vietnam had established.

The United States Army identified the main enemy threat as the Soviet Union. Army doctrine was oriented toward an attack from Eastern Europe.

West Germany would be the site for the start of the next major war. Free World NATO forces would oppose the Soviet's sphere of Warsaw Pact countries. Instructions at Fort Benning revealed a "slight" superiority on the side of Soviet conventional forces.

The news media was carrying articles in many journals about the Soviet military strength. Typical liberal magazine articles could be ignored, but not all such publications dealt with the Soviet menace. When authoritative reports began appearing from such respected sources as U.S. *Aviation & Space Technology*, claiming that the Soviets had at least a 6-to-1 numeric superiority in both soldiers and equipment, a hue-and-cry was raised by the clique of West Point student officers in Taus' IOAC class. They wanted better answers to their questions about respective troop strengths and equipment, especially tanks. The Fort Benning instructor staff seemed particularly short on specifics concerning these matters.

Soon a battle line was drawn between the people who formulated the Army's doctrines and the West Pointers, many of whom had served in Vietnam. The former cadets wanted the truth that was ingrained into them at the U.S. Military Academy. They did not want to enter another war like Vietnam where truth gave way for political considerations, resulting in lost lives.

One astute Academy graduate pointed out to a Benning instructor giving a class on armor operations, "Just how does one NATO tank conduct a decisive battle against six equally equipped Warsaw Pact tanks?" The instructor meekly responded, "I don't understand the question."

"Based upon the latest information, Warsaw Pact armored divisions outnumber NATO armored divisions by 6-to-1." Silence fell over the auditorium where the class was being presented. His response, as he groped for an answer, was, "Their tanks are not as good as our armor. Their equipment is less reliable. They have older tanks."

According to the latest technical information and news reports, the instructor could not substantiate his claims. The class interruptions had never been so strong. U.S. Army officers, many veteran war heroes, were not only openly questioning the materials, but were also refusing to accept the sanctity of current Army doctrine. When the instructional department head, a full

Colonel, heard of the insurrection, he paraded into the auditorium. For a short time, the colonel listened to the West Pointers and the instructor. He then bellowed from the back of the auditorium, "Do you people have a problem here?"

Digging his heels into the floor, he approached the podium. Facing the class, he repeated himself, "Who has a problem here, gentlemen!" Standing to attention, a West Point Captain acknowledged, "Yes sir! The instructional materials are not factual."

"Is that so, captain; where did you get your information?"

The captain quoted his news sources, but the colonel dismissed them, saying, "If you don't like the class, you may leave. I will personally handle your out-processing from the course." It was not much of a choice for the captain, leaving the course meant he would also be leaving the Army.

The colonel was unreasonable. The Army doctrine was flawed. The captain could only take his seat and the open challenge to the curriculum had ended. However damage was done to the instructional staff's credibility as the news of the confrontation went around the other student officer classes. It resembled attempts by other student bodies at freer academic institutions to seek the truth. There were quarrels among the officer corps. A third strongly sided with the West Pointers, another third was ambivalent and the last third were simply "yes-men."

The instructional staff emphasized the employment of nuclear deterrents to counteract the imbalance between the conventional arsenals of the Free World and the Soviet forces. The staff claimed it did not have to maintain an equal ratio of men and equipment as long as it had nuclear superiority. There was a "don't worry about it" attitude that pervaded the system.

In another tactics class, a student raised the same question, "Isn't it true that United States policy is not to employ nuclear weapons on a first-strike basis. If the Soviets rely upon their conventional forces alone, and never use any nuclear devices, our Army will be swept off the battlefield. And as a consequence, our nuclear weapons would be of no use at all, unless we employ them."

Seeking cover again, the instructor said that issue would be addressed in the classified nuclear sessions later in the course syllabus. This time the colonel did not interfere.

Tempers flared on both sides between the instructional faculty and student officers. The foreign officers were amazed at the minor mutiny. Although they were included in the armor classes, the foreign students would be excluded from the classified instructions on nuclear deployment. They anxiously awaited news through the grapevine when the so-called secret classes began.

A few weeks later, the classified session was scheduled, dealing with nuclear weapons. The foreign and allied students were not present. Whenever exclusion occurred, the foreign students were given trips and entertainment to distract them from the obvious slight of not attending a classified briefing. The Army simply concealed the fact it did not trust them.

At a meeting held by the student officers it was decided that they would allow the nuclear instructional staff to present their material without any strategic questions, hoping they would cover the employment options on the use of "nukes."

Before being seated in the nuclear class, every student officer had his military identification card checked. Special classified field manuals were issued dealing with the effects of various kinds and classes of nuclear devices from longer ranged missiles to the closer fires from artillery cannons. Classes also consisted of plotting the battle damage for each weapon system and which system should be employed based on tactical considerations.



However, U.S. Nuclear Policy was not discussed.

Disappointed, the West Point Corps raised their hands and asked about the policy of employment the nukes. "If the Soviets use only conventional weapons, how can NATO repel their attack?" Again they received an unresponsive answer. "We have the nuclear deterrent!"

"Sir, are you saying that the United States will strike an overwhelming Soviet assault with nuclear weapons?" The instructor stuck to his original statement, not clarifying the issue. In back of the auditorium, the colonel stood, arms folded, legs spread and angry. Again he marched up to the podium.

"This is the class that argues about the Army's Battle Doctrines! You people are here to learn tactics and apply them on the battlefield. What makes you think that you can question Army Doctrine?"

The Reserves would come to the support of the regular Army as Taus stood-up to assist the West Pointers. "Sir, many of us are combat veterans. We are asking for a reasonable answer on the use of these weapons, particularly if you are asking me to confront an enemy knowing we will lose. Many of us know the realities of battle. In this training environment there is time to at least explain why I will be asking my men to fight and die in future battles."

"You are impertinent, captain! Many of my instructors have seen combat too."

Since the Reserves launched a supporting attack, the main force came to bear on the classroom offensive. A West Pointer stood up and asked to speak. The colonel nodded his head.

"Sir, if we are to understand how to apply tactics on the battlefield, why give us this class and not inform us when we can expect to use nuclear weapons? We believe U.S. Nuclear Policy has been misstated based upon the Soviet forces opposing us. Why is it so difficult to admit that the United States will use its nuclear arsenal first?" The colonel knew the truth, but that was not necessarily part of the curriculum. "You're big boys now. Pay attention to the instructors. That's what you are being paid to do." He stormed out of the class leaving his instructor defenseless. The instructor shyly asked if he could continue.

The issue was never resolved. The thought that the Army would fabricate a story was not something new. The West Pointers were nurtured under a strict Academy honor system. They had seen combat. They were willing to do their duty. They just wanted the truth. They knew the only nation on earth to use nuclear weapons in war was the United States. It did so, not once, but on two separate occasions in World War II, Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

### **Graduating From Officer's Advanced Court (1975)**

Taus graduated from the Fort Benning Infantry Officers' Advanced Course in 1975. Another legislative enactment further curtailed the African junket in Angola known as "Operation Feature." Probing congressional leaders and investigative reporters were determined to halt any illegal cover operations. President Gerald Ford was more concerned about leaks that may prove injurious to any secret operations. He was not concerned about estab-

lishing an Intelligence Oversight Committee. That kind of structure would not prevent covert operations from continuing, though it could lend some legitimacy to them.

As Chairman of the African Affairs Subcommittee of the Foreign Relations Committee, Democratic Senator Dick Dark knew about Operation Feature, Dark became suspicious of U.S. involvement with the Union of South Africa in the CIA's attempts to aid their Angolan friends. In early December 1975, testimony before Dark's committee revealed the administration was lying about certain aspects of its role in Angola. Dark immediately introduced legislation designed to stop the operation. It was known as the Dark Amendment and passed the Senate on December 19, 1975, the day Taus returned from Fort Benning.

Once back on Long Island, Taus read another article by investigative reporter Seymour Hersh in the *New York Times* relating to the Angolan Operation. An entire year had passed since Hersh wrote about the CIA's operation directed against anti-Vietnam elements and dissident forces by the Nixon Administration.

Of particular interest in Hersh's article was the reference to Feodor Miranda, whom Taus had met in Mexico City in 1973. According to Nestor Sanchez, Miranda coordinated the CIA operation that led to the overthrow of the leftist, pro-Soviet ruler of Chile, Salvador Allende. Part of the U.S. plot to overthrow Allende involved replacing the U.S. Ambassador to Chile,

Edward Korry, with Miranda. The National Security Council's Special Group, which had the responsibility for covert action policy approval, gave the go-ahead and the necessary funding for the CIA's Task Force in Chile, all accomplished under the auspices of Feodor Miranda.

From Chile to Angola, Miranda was spanning-the-globe with his CIA covert activities. Appointed as the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Ambassador Miranda cautioned Kissinger against seeking a military solution to the events in Angola. The media exposures increased. Miranda was perceptive enough to warn Kissinger on the political damage that could occur from a disclosure of the covert operation. However, the administration's view, under Kissinger's advice, was that a new battlefield existed in Angola between the United States and the Soviet Union based upon the aid supplied by the Eastern Bloc countries and Cuba.

Hersh's article on December 21 inferred that these covert operations would continue even against the best advice of experts in the field. It was the same old song that Taus had heard, though Miranda would soon reveal a surprising side to his nature. When media reports concerning Operation Feature continued despite Miranda's objections to it, Miranda resigned. Taus preferred to interpret Miranda's resignation as meaning that a measure of honor and morality still lived within some secret warriors instead of fear from reprisals if they were uncovered.

President Ford would not challenge the congressional mandate. Ford signed the Dark Amendment into law on February 9, 1976, which ended the CIA operation. The Director of Central Intelligence William E. Colby had already been dismissed by President Ford and George Bush became the new

Director. When he became the DCI, Bush refused to state whether or not Angola was receiving any U.S. aid.

In Freeport Long Island, Taus reported to his Army National Guard armory for further orders. Captain Howard Hurst, the unit personnel officer, told him to call General Castellano. "They keep better track of your activities than our commanding officer!" noted Hurst. "They must have something planned for you." Hurst was very curious about Albany's interest in Taus, but he figured it had something to do with the lackluster recruiting and retention results. National Guard efforts to maintain an adequate manpower pool were a dismal failure, which could lead to losing units along with federal funding.

Since General Sturm did not contact him, Taus reasoned that General Castellano was concerned about a military problem, perhaps the poor recruiting effort. With the media still exposing covert intelligence operations, Taus felt Castellano would not be planning any other secret missions.

### **The General's Call: 1976**

For the time being, it was as close to active duty as Taus could get. Full-Time-Training-Duty (FTTD) orders gave him all the benefits of actually being in the Army. It was the U.S. government's way of increasing the military force without congressional approval. These orders were for a limited period. Later, under the Reagan Administration, these orders would be more formalized and referred to as "Army Guard Reserve" (AGR) tours. Short of a major war in 1975, no one was being called back to active duty for any extensive length of time.

Having seen enough of the "rat-race" in the business world, Taus decided to stay in the active Army National Guard, or at least until other opportunities presented themselves. In the meantime, he could continue with his education going for a Master's degree in Business Administration by attending evening classes at Adelphia University.

Taus' Army National Guard duties consisted of recruiting and retention responsibilities dealing with the local media and promoting recruitment. At the same time, being an Army helicopter pilot, he was required to maintain his flying proficiency. This enabled him to secure some additional aircraft training and ratings.

Starting in late 1973, the oil crisis and the reduction of airline crews offered few openings for anyone interested in a civilian aviation career. With an adopted son to support, Taus still had to earn a living. There was little time to squander with an advancing recession. He had tried his hand by flying private local commuter flights, but the low pay and long hours were most unattractive. The civilian aviation industry could pick and choose from a bottomless reserve of former military pilots leftover from the Vietnam War.

The Bell Helicopter Company offered him a decent salary as an instructor pilot. However the job was overseas, training Iranian military officers to fly the Shah's aircraft. Tensions were always great in the Middle East and Taus did not want to get involved in any other foreign wars. Though he had repeatedly declined to take any more clandestine missions, an opportunity

always existed.

The former State Adjutant General of the New York National Guard, General Vito Castellano, telephoned and asked him to come to Albany for a meeting. Taus suspected the meeting's purpose would be to discuss the low retention rate of first term volunteers.

It was no wonder. Full time state and federal technicians were inundated with repetitive and useless paperwork. With a low salary, there was little incentive to diligently work the many long and extra hours required to fulfill the meaningless administrative burdens. Career burnout occurred very early for these otherwise dedicated government employees. Most of the Guard and Reserve Force commanders were part-time officers who had to schedule their time in order to accomplish the myriad of duties imposed upon them. Somewhere along the line, the Army had forgotten that it was a part-time job for Reservists. The training requirements and duties expected of a Reservist were the same as an active duty soldier.

Politics were played at every level. A good soldier had no guarantee that his performance would be recognized. Cliques developed. The "good ole boys" system was in effect. It resulted in little time being given to new recruits. These "first-termers" only military experience was at basic training where a harassing drill sergeant tempered their enthusiastic attitude towards a military career.

After several weeks of boot camp, the new recruit reported back to a reserve unit that had little time to take an interest in him or her. Low pay, meaningless duties, the lack of recognition, little or no status in a state and a country that only wanted to forget the recent war in Vietnam made the new recruits realize that a military career, especially a part-time one, was not worth the effort.

Taking an Army National Guard helicopter to Albany took care of ten flying hours towards his "annual minimums." An Army Aviator had to fly a certain amount of hours each year in several different flight categories. There were night, instrument, instructor and other training hours to satisfy in order to remain current as an aviator.

At Albany Airport, a National Guard captain and a sergeant met the cop-ter. They were from General Castellano's office and drove Taus to the State Capital's office building.

Once at his office, which was located near the State Recruiting Headquarters, Taus met Colonel Decker (alias), the State Recruiting Officer in the hallway. "What does General Castellano want with you, Captain Taus?"

"I thought you could tell me that Colonel. I called your office before coming here, but your secretary told me you were in Washington."

"Right, I just returned last night. He's probably upset with my recruiting plans and wants to hear about it from our field people."

"Well sir, I'll let you know as soon as I find out something."

Plaques, citations, and awards lined two whole walls inside Castellano's office. He had been the State Commissioner of Commerce under Governor Nelson Rockefeller. Now with Governor Hugh Carey in office, the Democratic Party had control of the State Executive Branch. Castellano simply

shifted his duties over to the New York National Guard. It was still very much a political appointment that only an individual who had connections at the highest levels could secure. The General was an older man, but still stood tall. He had an Italian name, but looked like an original member of the famous "Fighting 69<sup>th</sup> Infantry," a nearly all-Irish regiment in World War I.

Returning Taus' salute, the General invited him to take a seat and offered him a cigar. "These are excellent Nicaraguan cigars. I asked you here concerning your present duties. As you know, your orders will soon expire. We have been renewing these orders every year; however, budgetary problems mean we'll have to make some reductions. You understand, take out unnecessary people. I see you have been doing a good job, but with these cuts in recruiting I cannot guarantee you anything." Taus was defenseless. His job was being threatened and he could not argue the matter, especially with a General.

"I need a job, sir; I liked to stay in the military. May I ask you what other areas are you talking about?"

"Your previous service with General Sturm is what interests us. Sturm and I go back many years. We've been in this business for 30-years. People like to think that we are affected by the political winds. They believe laws and regulations constrain the types of activities we conduct in the national interests of our country and our state. In a certain way, that's true. As a practical matter, we abide by the rules established for us. Sometimes we interpret them in a different light. I think you have done that in the past. Am I right?"

The General was smiling as he lit a cigar.

"General Sturm suggested I see you. He said you might not feel too comfortable after the tragic events of a few years ago." A reference to the massacre at the San Salvador orphanage in 1973 where a right-wing death squad murdered several people claiming they were communist sympathizers. Taus knew the Director of the orphanage and was planning on adopting a child. That child was also killed in the massacre.

"Yes sir." Taus did not enjoy beating around the bush. "May I ask you what you have been told about these events?"

"Everything, of course." Castellano stood up and walked around his desk to where Taus was seated. He rested his hips on the desk front and reached for a portrait picture of his family on top of the desk. Pointing to one youngster in the picture, he said, "This is Kim. We adopted him from Korea."

The 1950's picture included the General, then an Army Major, his wife and several children. "Kim became an Army officer. He was killed in Vietnam." Suppressing tears, the general stood up again, gently placed the picture back in its place and returned to his chair. "I believe in my country and in my party. We need dedicated people who share the same beliefs."

"Will you undertake another mission for us, Rich. It will be here in New York. We need men we can trust for this operation." Taus' eyes were still affixed to the picture as he said, "Yes sir. Would you first tell me what will be involved."

"Good!" The General had inferred Taus already accepted the task and

further explained, "You remember Gary Smith from your days at Citibank?

Well he was never very stable. Evidently the Vietnam War had a serious mental effect on him. After a few missions for us, he became psychotic.

That's when we asked you to assist us. We were very pleased with your performance. In any case, Smith's been seen by some of our best doctors for treatment. He's been deeply depressed and suicidal. That would truly be a shame."

"If that happens, there are many papers that he may have involving our operations. He's told one of our psychiatrists that he might release the information to the news media. Rich, that would be catastrophic for our cause.

The doctor said those papers are in his house. We need to get them before someone else does."

"Your friend Greg Lawson needs another man to get those papers. I'm sure some of those papers involves mission you undertook. We need to take care of ourselves. We want to secure your position in the Guard with us too.

If we know that this matter has been handled properly, we can get on with things without any embarrassments."

The offer was clear to Taus. Accept the mission or his orders would not be renewed. The possible disclosure of his involvement in several clandestine operations could create even more personal problems. This was the era of the Watergate scandal. The public was sensitive about unapproved covert operations.

"Are you ready for the details?" asked the General. When Taus said yes, he consented to the offer. As far as the General was concerned, he had a contract. It included a two-year extension on the FTTD orders for Taus.

"Sturm will cover the plan with you and Greg. You want to get into Smith's house in Queens. He lives alone. Search everywhere and take whatever papers that concern us. It might be wise to take some valuables just to show it was a robbery. Remember, it's in the best interests of our organization and our country."

Knowing that he had Taus in his hip pocket, the General asked him out to lunch in the Albany cafeteria. There, they met Colonel Decker at a table.

"Sir, how are you doing?" Decker was worried about the meeting. Apparently the General did not draw any connection and said there could be some changes. It was Castellano's way of keeping his subordinates on edge and off-balance.

Decker pried, asking Taus how things were going. Without an adequate answer from Taus, Decker asked the General if he had any suggestions for improvements. Knowing Decker's drift, Castellano said he was satisfied with the recruiting and retention efforts given the country's anti-military mood. However results were lacking somewhat and due to budgetary requirements some of the staff had to be eliminated.

One week after Taus' meeting with the General, he learned that Colonel Decker's orders were not renewed. Decker retired earlier than he had expected. On that same week, Sturm called Taus at the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Armory in Manhattan, where Taus worked, suggesting a luncheon appointment the next day. They met at the Armory's officers' club to discuss matters.

Before noon on the next day, Lawson appeared at the Armory's Recruiting Office. Initially Lawson did not recognize Taus who was dressed in his Army green uniform. Taus' numerous decorations made Lawson remark,

"By gad. Rich. You look like a Latin American Dictator!"

Nothing had changed for Lawson. He was still working at the FBI's 69<sup>th</sup> Street office in Manhattan. He did mention acquiring a new aircraft. He added, "I know General Sturm will be here shortly, let's go over the plan I have for this Thursday." Lawson prepared the details using his FBI training.

(And, as it would turn out, there were omissions in the planning.)

"Gary Smith has a night appointment with Dr. Gould, his psychiatrist. Smith lives alone. We'll make a forced entry through his front door."

"Isn't that asking for trouble; why not go through a back door or something?" asked Taus. "Because if someone sees us, it's even more suspicious.

I have a special tool that will get us in quickly. Together we can find any incriminating papers and have the place looking like a petty thief ransacked it."

At noon, they went to the Armory's Officer Club and met Sturm. The General was already at the bar with Chief Warrant Officer John Rheingold, an old friend and comrade-in-arms. In spite of their friendship, the Chief did not join them at a table. They sat in a corner of the dining area and discussed Lawson's plan. "Have you seen Smith's house?" asked Sturm. It was a simple question needing an obvious answer, but neither Lawson nor Taus had ever visited Smith at home.

"Well," Lawson slowly responded, "It's in a group of similar town-houses. There was no name on the mailbox, but the front screen door has a wrought iron fence with an initial "S" on it. Smith's car should be parked in the driveway. It's a gray Monte Carlo."

Taus noted, "I thought he had a gray Grand Prix? They are similar. By the way sir, what if Smith decides to talk to the Press anyway?"

"Accusations happen all the time, without the damaging paperwork, it's his word against ours." Sturm was satisfied with the plan and wanted it carried out that week, before Smith approached the news media with any documents.

### **The Break In**

The Woodhaven neighborhood of Queens County was peaceful enough near the Cypress Hills Cemetery. The streets were confusing. There was an 85<sup>th</sup> Drive, an 85<sup>th</sup> Street, and an 85<sup>th</sup> Road. Making it doubly difficult in this area, were the cross-streets, which had the same numeric numbers, 85<sup>th</sup> Street intersected with 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 85<sup>th</sup> Drive. The address Lawson had was 85-14 85<sup>th</sup> Street.

It was Thursday evening and darkness had set in though the neighborhood was adequately illuminated. Lawson pointed out the address to Taus. There was no car in the driveway. An "S" initial was present in the middle of the iron scrollwork on the front door. Lawson found the nearest public telephone and called Dr. Gould to insure Smith was away from home. He was.

Ringng the front door, Lawson also used the doorknocker to see if anyone else was there. Using the special tool, he inserted it into the doorframe,

between the locking bolt and its pocket. A quick jerk opened the door. After going through some papers in a desk, they were dumbfounded to discover that the owner of the house was a Peter Schwartz. It was not Smith's house.

The confusing address and Lawson's inept FBI talents fulfilled Murphy's Law: What ever could go wrong, would go wrong." And it did.

It was too late. Peter Schwartz arrived at the front door while the catburglars were still arguing about the faulty address. "What the hell are you people doing in my house?" Lawson said, "Let's go. Sorry, we made a mistake." He apologized to Schwartz, claiming he thought a friend of his lived in the home. It wasn't enough of an explanation to calm down the excited owner. Schwartz was in his late forties and refused to move aside from the doorway. At 6'4" and 325 pounds, neither intruder could easily push him aside.

"You bastards aren't going anywhere. I overheard your conversation. You can't fool me. I know you work for CBS (Columbia Broadcasting System). You are here after me!"

Psychosis seemed to run in that neighborhood. Maybe it was due to the proximity of a nearby cemetery. Schwartz was obviously paranoid now, though he had Lawson and Taus confused with others who he had a grudge against. Throwing a fist at Lawson who avoided the lethargic swing,

Schwartz pushed him with his huge stomach into Taus. Raising his other fist, Schwartz landed a blow into Taus' chest. Both Lawson and Taus did all they could to prevent the fight, but other blows from Schwartz decked both men.

A well placed kick from Taus brought down the mountain of humanity.

Lawson and Taus made a rapid exit saying, "We are not from CBS. We made an honest mistake." Managing to return to their parked car, Lawson yelled, "Dammit! How could I have made such a mistake?"

"So much for your FBI training, Greg." Taus was even more upset, "No wonder Nixon's plumbers got caught at Watergate!" Driving down Woodhaven Boulevard, Lawson pulled over and checked his handwritten notes.

The address read, 85-14 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue. "It says avenue, not street!" complained Taus. Lawson was at a loss. Then he said, "Well, there was the initial on the front door? It was just a tremendous coincidence."

Knowing that the police were probably called by Schwartz, they had to decide whether to take another chance and try again. This time, at the correct address. "Let's get this over with," noted Lawson, "The general is expecting us tomorrow."

Another phone call was made to Smith's doctor to extend the session, and then proceed to the correct house. From a distance, they saw a police car by Schwartz' driveway. Lawson was nervous.

"Don't worry," said Taus, "The cops have probably been called on a number of occasions by that nut."

Finding 85-14 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Lawson rang the doorbell. Then he jerked open the door using the special tool. Inside they found several documents concerning information Sturm wanted, including numerous papers on Smith's covert activities, travel documents and the like. Using two canvas



duffel bags, they stuffed in the pilfered paperwork.

“Forget about making this look like a robbery,” Taus said. “If the police ever catch us now, we’ve had it.”

As they walked back to their car, another slow moving patrol car pulled up to them. The police officers asked them what they were doing there.

Lawson said they had just finished jogging in the park.

Still suspicious, one of the cops asked, “What’s inside those bags. Pal?”

The police smelled a rat. “Let’s have a look, guys.”

Lawson carefully pulled out his FBI badge and credentials saying, “FBI business.”

Shining his flashlight at the credentials, one of the police officers said, “It’s the FBI alright,” to his partner, and then apologized for stopping them.

“That’s a handy thing to have,” remarked Taus.

An inventory of the items was compiled before Lawson burnt the papers. Lawson entrusted the list to Taus who would deliver it to Sturm on the next day. [Three years later in 1979, Taus was a FBI Special Agent in the BQMRA. Peter Schwartz came to the Brooklyn-Queens FBI office, to be interviewed about his complaint that CBS had fired him and that they were involved in a government conspiracy to ruin him. His allegations of mistreatment by CBS, included discrimination since he was a Jew.]

Ironically, this became a FBI Civil Rights case assigned to Taus. When Taus met Schwartz for the interview, Schwartz failed to recognize him as one of the intruders back in 1976. For all intents and purposes, Schwartz’ paranoia was not baseless. CBS-TV’s Chief Executive Officer was William Paley who was a Jew himself. Schwartz’ allegation of discrimination were unfounded, but his belief in a conspiracy was fortified by the mistaken break-in.

By 1981, Schwartz sued CBS and the U.S. government. Named in the federal lawsuit were President Carter, Vice President Mondale, the U.S. Attorney General, FBI Director Webster and several other officials, including SA Richard Taus. The case came before the Eastern District of New York in Judge Charles P. Sifton’s federal district courtroom. Taus was the only witness called to the stand. When Schwartz’ attorney examined Taus, Judge Sifton intervened and finally dismissed Schwartz’ allegations given insufficient proof. Schwartz had a legitimate complaint. It is unknown whether Sifton acted on the merits of the case or was influenced by other forces. ]

The following morning, Taus arrived at Sturm’s office. Sturm told Taus that Lawson had called him the previous night saying the operation went smoothly.

Producing the list, Taus gave it to Sturm who carefully read it, then smiled saying, “Fine. That appears to be most of our items and some peripheral papers and documents. You know, Gary Smith also called me last night saying some thieves broke into his house, taking papers and other valuables. At first he was concerned that some of those papers might implicate us, but later he said, after calling the police, that another house in the neighborhood was also broken into last night.”

“I told him nothing like that has ever happened to us. He seemed to ac-

cept my answer, as well as a trip to Hawaii from Citicorp for some rest.”

“We only took the papers,” Taus wanted Sturm to know they did not rob Smith. Of course, neither Lawson nor Taus admitted to the break-in at Schwartz’ house.

“That’s just like Smith,” added Sturm, “Probably filed a false police report on some valuables to collect on his homeowner’s insurance. He’s very unstable. President Ford’s election cannot be placed in jeopardy by any more revelations that might prove harmful to our administration. DCI (Director of Central Intelligence) George Bush is monitoring the situation.”

“What will happen to Gary?” asked Taus.

“Nothing. We will continue to see that he gets the best psychiatric help from our physicians. I think they can treat him properly and insure that he will not be a danger to himself or others. No one will believe stories from a patient undergoing psychiatric care.”

Lighting a match to the list, Sturm placed the burning papers in his trash can and asked, “What can I do for you? Are you interested in returning to Citicorp?”

“Thank you, sir, but no. I spoke to General Castellano about extending my orders on active duty. Short of a return to the Regular Army, I suppose I am happy with the Reserves.”

“I also spoke to General Castellano yesterday,” announced Sturm, “He told me he has already taken care of your request. You realize though, that these Reserve tours are not indefinite. Would you be interested in a civilian job with a federal agency?”

“Sir, I’ve been in the Army as an aviator most of the time. I’d like something more than flying a desk.”

“Not all civilian positions are desk-bound. Captain. Would you be interested in the CIA or FBI?” With only a nod from Taus, Sturm press a telephone button and told his secretary to get a hold of George Bush at Langley. “I’m going to get you an appointment with the DCI. Bush will probably ask you to go down to Langley.”

Having witness CIA operations, Taus had no desire to join “the company.” Aware of CIA drug-trafficking, Taus knew of a host of other shady CIA activities, including the indiscriminate slaughter of thousands of innocent Vietnamese by the CIA supported Phoenix program. It has been estimated that 20,000 Vietnamese were rounded up and killed’ allegedly for being Viet Cong leaders or sympathizers. Many were completely innocent.

Taus made these thoughts known to Sturm.

“I understand your concerns, but I want you to speak to our folks at Langley first. If it makes you feel any better, you’ll also be meeting William Sullivan, the former FBI Assistant Director, whom I know you are acquainted with already. You may want an appointment with the FBI instead.

In either case, you’ll meet the people who will take care of you.” They hired Lawson. And I understand from Greg, he wants to leave the FBI now.”

With one reservation, Taus asked Sturm, “This is the first time I heard that Greg wanted out of the Bureau all together. He’s told me he’s unhappy, because he’d rather fly missions.”

“Yes, that’s part of it. He still enjoys playing with the new Navajo Turbobprop. It’s what he wanted. We also needed longer range aircraft more suited to our operations. It’s keeping him flying for us with little time for his FBI position. Frankly, both Greg and I feel he’s better off working closer to our Central American operation. There are those in the FBI who are questioning his long absences. Not everyone is hired by us. But we can use more men in the FBI.”

“I thought Sullivan and his former Bureau associates could cover for Lawson’s trips? As I said, it’s not that easy. Rich. Bill Sullivan must maintain some distance between himself and Lawson’s missions for us. There are other factions working against us, including some rather honest, but I intelligence people who have no idea of what’s happening in the world.” Taus half shrugged his shoulders, cueing Sturm for a further explanation.

And Sturm obliged, “Things are not going too well for us politically since the Watergate scandal. President Ford did not provide the kind of leadership we needed. It’s hard to blame him; the country is in a different mood since the disappointment of Watergate. Ford traveled on the same credibility ticket with Nixon, and his pardon of Nixon did not help.”

“That’s why the Georgian Governor defeated him. Carter’s liked by the American Public. They wanted a change and got it. We’ll have a rebuilding process ahead for us. You can be a part of it, as you have in the past. Go to Langley; speak with Sullivan. Let’s get you into the Bureau.”

Sturm was not in the habit of giving a sales-pitch. But Taus still have another question, “Why go to CIA Headquarters at Langley if I’m looking for an FBI position.”

“Your chances will be better and quicker if you allow us to get you situated. Believe me the Bureau is archaic, but still useful for our purposes. You’d be amazed at the trivial information they collect, and the misinformation they have, supplied by the CIA.”

“Where is Lawson going,” Taus asked Sturm. “To another federal agency, down south, as I said.” It was the usual half answer. Taus should have known better than to ask. If Sturm wanted him to know, he would have told him.

“I’ll have Lawson contact you in a few days and work on your application for the FBI. In the meanwhile, I think General Castellano has something in mind for you, another mission. It’s some local thing.”

Another half answer, but it explained why Castellano extended Taus’ active duty orders. He would be employed as long as he was useful to, what was known as, the Steering Committee.

The country’s liberal trend affected Taus too. He found it increasingly difficult to justify these activities. The men selling these ideas were all patriots, most high-ranking officers, conservatives, and seemingly well-intentioned individuals. But there was something else in each man, a selfishness borne of a self-righteous attitude. An attitude that only they knew best. And in the end, each man looked out for his best interest too.

The oath of office Taus took, when he received his commission as a Second Lieutenant, was to protect his country, not political interests. Now

political interests were described as national security interests. Was he doing his duty? Perhaps this was above and beyond that call of duty.

The meeting ended. Smith had been eased out, and Lawson was being replaced. Taus would be groomed for the primary role in any future New York missions.

Once back at the 14<sup>th</sup> Street Armory, Taus was informed by his secretary that General Castellano had called him.

The recruiting secretary, Linda Torres, was an Army Specialist 5<sup>th</sup> Class. She was recently divorced and the mother of a 5-year old girl. SP5 Torres lived at home with her mother in Spanish Harlem. Her dark hair and equally dark Hispanic eyes attracted the attentions of the new recruits, as well as the recruiting sergeants.

"I've got General Castellano's office on the line. Captain," Linda said. "Shall I transfer it to your extension?"

The General was friendly enough on the phone. He told Taus to fly to Albany the next day. Taus would comply, knowing it would probably interrupt the weekend with his young son's soccer game.

By noon the next day, Taus was in Castellano's Albany office. The General outlined a mission for Taus. "We have some New York National Guard aircraft that we declared surplus. You will fly one down to Delaware."

Two separate trips were made to Summit Aviation in Delaware, delivering aircraft to a company called Shenandoah Leasing. The same group of people who would later be involved in the supply of aircraft for the Contra effort in the early 1980s.

## CHAPTER TEN

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### Taus and the FBI Academy

**M**embers of some organizations tend to exhibit certain common cultural characteristics. These traits become a part of the make-up of each employee. During the hiring process, if these traits were not apparent, than the individual may not be employed. It is a cultural uniformity found in a number of major conservative corporations such as IBM. Not only is there a prerequisite that an applicant be “spiritually in tune” with the behavior patterns of a corporation, but a recruit must also be trained to behave in a culturally similar fashion. The basic reason for fostering such cultural patterns is to accomplish organizational goals that are most easily achieved by a work force that relates and interacts with each other.

Given these shared feelings and sentiments, an unscrupulous leader will use them as weapons in his arsenal to make his members achieve whatever goals are set for the organization. Such a leader would play upon the members’ shared feelings to get an action accomplished. Often these actions are created in crisis situations and require the members to undertake dangerous assignments that they know could be injurious to themselves and others. Member who are thusly indoctrinated, exhibit shallow leadership qualities or simply none at all. If they rise to a position of leadership, they apply the company’s standards to all situations. They lack innovation and are unconcerned about their subordinates’ welfare. They will be brutal in handling challenges to their authority.

Long after J. Edgar Hoover died, his handpicked appointees, all assistant directors and supervisors, continued his ingrained organizational patterns. Ineffective directors succeeded him, all presidential appointees. Nixon so distrusted his intelligence agencies that he was not going to allow another Hoover to reign supreme and dicker with Nixon’s every request or, worse, lie to him. Since no strong personality existed at the top of the Bureaucracy to influence or change the usual behavior established by Hoover, the system continued to function as it had under him. Now that the director had died and those that followed him were ineffective, the Bureau performed in an autonomic fashion using the cultural patterns of the past to provide guidelines for the future.

Although Taus could have been hired on his own merits, the groundwork was paved for Taus' entry into the FBI. The FBI applicant coordinator, James Morris, at the FBI New York Field Office (FBINYO) told Taus he had scored a combined total of 96.8 points on the FBI's overall testing system, which consisted of an intelligence test, psychological testing, personal interviews along with an evaluation before a board of senior FBI agents. That was the second highest grade ever achieved. A letter of acceptance was forwarded from FBI headquarters to Taus's home, advising that he was selected for appointment as an FBI Special Agent.

Upon being hired, Taus was sent to a sixteen-week course at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia, located on the U.S. Marine Corps base. The Academy operated independently from the Marines. The FBI used the Academy to train new agents and conduct recurrent training courses for agents already in the field. All of the FBI's functions were located at the new J. Edgar Hoover Building in Washington.

Running parallel with the new agents' instructions were classes for law enforcement officers from around the country and from several foreign countries. These officers were predominantly from state and local jurisdictions such as cities or villages in an eleven-week program of instructions. Future Bureau goals could more easily be achieved with these new friends at the various municipalities.

The friendly camaraderie nurtured by the FBI class counselors resulted in numerous beer parties and little study time for the country's elite law officers. The FBI told its new recruits and the police officers, who were trained in separate classes, that their training programs were similar. They were not. The FBI agents were involved in a do-or-die struggle. None of the testing, law studies, firearms and defensive tactics and physical fitness, were easy for the new FBI agents. The extra five weeks of training for the FBI agents had to do with internal matters not needed by the other law officers. To make the separation more apparent, the officers attended the FBI National Academy, while the new agent recruits attended the FBI Academy. Both training courses were held in the same facilities at Quantico and often used the same instructors covering the same materials. But the emphasis upon the course work and the testing was much more strenuous for the new FBI recruits.

### **The FBI Curriculum**

Training was conducted in three main areas for both new agent recruits and law officers: academic instructions on legal materials, including classroom topics; firearms and defensive tactics instructions; and physical conditioning that included boxing, wrestling, handcuffing, swimming, and related areas. New agent recruits needed to pass testing in all three areas. If they failed any area, they were summarily dismissed from the Academy and hence, the FBI. But performance indicators were lenient for the FBI National Academy law officers. There was little serious testing for them. Officers were never sent home because they were academically deficient or failed performance testing in other areas.

Whether the law officers really absorbed many instructions may not

have been so important, most classes dealt with FBI exploits. The avowed purpose for this education was to enhance knowledge of local authorities in the field of law enforcement. The Bureau's real aim was to plant seed to assist the Bureau with its own investigations. Such FBI cases could often be dumbfounded based on legal technicalities or agent incompetence. But with a "friend" at the local level, an FBI investigation could come back to life.

The officers were given official FBI National Academy diplomas to hang in their home offices to impress the locals. They received hats, clothes and insignias with the FBI National Academy logos prominently displayed on them. This paraphernalia fed upon their machismo personalities.

Law enforcement personnel tend to be fraternal in their approach to one another. They are brothers in the fight against the criminal elements in society. A funeral for a law officer killed in the line-of-duty is attended by officers from many police agencies. Fellow officers from all segments of the law enforcement community try to provide close and lasting support for each other. Their grief for a departed comrade is genuine and deep.

This comradeship is exploited by the Bureau to achieve its own ends. Of foremost importance to the Bureau is the protection of its image. As a result, these fraternal "buddies" would be called upon to assist the Bureau, often unofficially and, in fact, illegally when attempts through legitimate channels have failed. There is no doubt an informal covert system has been structured by the Bureau throughout the nation and in foreign countries in this regard.

The FBI Academy complex consists of ten interconnected buildings that were constructed in 1972. A bronze plaque is mounted near the main entrance commemorating the dedication by President Richard M. Nixon. It points out Hoover's unique ability in achieving his ends, even under Nixon.

Students are housed in two seven-story-high dormitories that can each accommodate 360 residents. Two students share a room. There is a large gymnasium with an over-sized Olympic swimming pool, an adequate library, recreation room, Marriott-catered cafeteria, multi-media classrooms, lounge areas, and administrative offices. A separate barroom serves beer and snacks. It's adjacent to a gift shop located near the twin dormitories. Everything is in close proximity. Firing ranges are within 100 yards of the dorms.

Taus' orders read he was to report to FBI headquarters in Washington for further assignment to Quantico for training. At the mammoth new J. Edgar Hoover FBI Building located in downtown Washington, Taus entered a classroom for orientation, where he met 34 new agent recruits who came from around the country. They would be classmates for the next 16-weeks at the academy. The average age in his class was 32 years; it was a slightly older class than average. The FBI's policy was agents must retire by age 55; in order to have 20-years of federal service with the FBI, a person could not start later than his/her 35<sup>th</sup> birthday. With William Webster as the new director, appointed by President Jimmy Carter, minorities were to be incorporated into the Bureau. There were 4 females in the class and two blacks. Since one new recruit was a black female agent, she counted twice in the FBI's minority tally.

The Bureau recruited attorneys and accountants, as well as linguists.

People who possessed certain scientific degrees or technical backgrounds were selected if they could successfully pass the entry tests, interviews and background checks. Seventy percent of the new agents possessed none of these skills. They belonged to a classification known as the modified program. This catchall group consisted of police and military officers, bankers, teachers, and whoever had a relative or friend in the Bureau or in a higher place. Many new agents were former Bureau clerks who had secured an appointment. During the training course, some surprising situations developed concerning Taus' classmates.

Wayne Zaideman was Taus' roommate. He was an attorney who worked as a civilian employee for the Army. As an attorney in the Advocate General's office at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, Zaideman handled legal problems for the personnel stationed at the Fort. He was 29-years old, six years younger than Taus, who had just made the age limit. Zaideman was intelligent, understanding and Jewish.

Every new agent felt he was under observation. The agents thought their dormitory rooms were bugged. Even the bathrooms could have listening or observation devices installed. After all, this was the FBI. The inner-workings of the Bureau were still a mystery to the new agents. In retrospect, the FBI was too frugal to invest in such a monitoring system, but most new agents did not know better, and were constantly mindful of their every actions.

During one of the first physical training classes, Taus was paired off with a female recruit for a boxing match. The class put on boxing gloves and head protectors. The instructor told them to spar with their partners. Three instructors walked around the gymnasium floor as the class, now consisting of 32 people, boxed each other. Two new agent recruits had dropped out or were told to resign.

Taus' sparring partner was 5'4" tall. Her rounded shoulders and heavy thighs made it a complete mismatch. She never participated in any heavy organized sports activities. Never fired a weapon. She was a former grade school teacher. How on earth did the Bureau decide she should become an agent? Taus knew that some women could handle an agent's duties. Administratively most could, and in many cases, they would do better than their male counterparts. But being able to engage in strenuous physical conditioning was a different story for most.

Taus' punches landed softly as he tipped-toed around the floor, occasionally fending off her weak blows and pretending to hit her. Suddenly the boxing instructor yelled at both of them for faking it. "We're here to box, not practice ballet! I want all you people to hit each other as if your partner had killed your baby!"

The sparring continued. Taus' partner felt his heavier blows. When she sighed he again lessen their impact. Again the instructor cried out, "What are you doing?" You are mocking me! I told you to hit her as hard as you can."

"Sir, may I have a word," Taus asked the instructor to step aside to discuss the matter. "If I land a solid punch, even with her head protector on, I'm liable to knock her out, if not causing more grievous harm."



“Then knock her out!” came the reply. “We’re here to see if you can take it, otherwise a person should not be here.” Taus did not appreciate the instructor’s remarks. She did not belong at the Academy. It had to be apparent to the FBI when they hired her. Why did it become Taus’ job to eliminate her?

Taus was not going to injure a defenseless person. He let the instructor know, “If she doesn’t belong here, it’s not my job as a new recruit to break her neck, sir.” A second instructor approached them and asked what was the matter. After explaining, Taus noted his background. He had trained soldiers for combat in the martial arts. Then Taus served two combat tours of duty in Vietnam and another in Central America. He had far more experience than the entire physical fitness staff at Quantico.

The Bureau claimed its selection process was rigid. It did not hire neophytes. Yet the fitness program was geared to basic boot camp recruits that demeaned the agents and wasted precious training time. Taus was polite, explaining that he understood the need for discipline, but not when it placed someone’s life in jeopardy.

Evonne Winters, the former schoolteacher, was still staggering around the gym floor, along with two other female agents who suffered the same fate from their more powerful boxing partners. “And what rank were you in the service, huh?” a sarcastic question from an instructor who knew he was wrong. The instructor was looking for a weakness in his opponent. But Taus was not his opponent. It was part of the old Hoover philosophy, instead of fighting the real bad guys in society. “Captain,” answered Taus.

“Well, Cappy. We are going to fix you right now!” From that day forward, Taus would spar off against only the biggest new recruits. They were also instructed, to knock him out. Taus survived the brutal matches, taking away several black eyes and busted lips. Many other recruits in the class suffered the same punishment. The physical fitness classes left them groggy in their academic classes.

As a trainee, Taus could appreciate the situation. But the instructor despised the military for some reason, although he tried to adopt its boot camp methods. This was one of the many incongruities in the FBI.

The Bureau always tried to closely associate itself with the Marine Corps, imparting the combat qualities to their agent personnel. There were many former servicemen in the FBI. The New York Office Assistant Director Thomas Sheer was a former Marine Captain who said he never wielded the power commensurate to his position when he met with the other assistant directors at the FBIHQ. The Bureau had far more draft-dodgers and the sons of those who avoided their country’s call to duty in World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

Winters had other problems in the program besides her sparring ability. She failed most physical challenges, including the firearms program where she broke down crying on the instructor’s shoulder. Her complaint was the rifle’s recoil hurt her own shoulder. Incredibly they passed her anyway. It wasn’t until graduation when her luck became apparent. Her father presented her FBI credentials during the closing ceremony. He was an FBI su-

pervisor who never had the son he wanted. So Evonne tried to fill that space for her father's love. She was a decent person who certainly tried her very best to succeed. She wasn't cut out for being a street agent.

On the other hand, a fellow classmate, Charles Nichols, was an ideal street-agent. He was a former "Narc" (narcotics) officer for the Illinois State Police Department. Nichols was also a semi-pro heavyweight boxer with no sense of humor. Within a week after starting the boxing regimen, the class dreaded the physical fitness sessions in the gym. Duffel bags containing boxing gloves and headwear were the first equipment the new agent recruits saw as they entered the gym. They knew another fitness session would result in injuries. Classmates maneuvered on the floor to avoid standing next to men like Nichols before the instructor announced, "Grab your partner, the person next to you, and put on your boxing gear."

Most classmates knew that throwing real punches would badly hurt someone. It wasn't necessary to deck your partner. The Bureau simply wanted everyone to know how it feels getting into a fight. Many new agents led such sedentary former lives that they were not in shape to fight an opponent. The fisticuffs sessions never made an agent a better boxer. There were few instructions. It was learning by the school of hard-knocks. After having your lights put out at ten o'clock in the morning, it was difficult to pay attention or shoot on the firing range later that day. So most agents took it easy on their sparring partners.

Nichols never fathomed that. By the sixth week of the course, most of Taus' classmates had been knocked out at least once by Nichols. The instructor smiled sadistically as each new agent hit the floor. Finally, Nichols hit the road. He failed one of the three written legal examinations by a small margin. He was academically deficient and quietly called out of class, the day after the legal test and told to pack-up immediately.

Later that same day, when the boxing matches begun, Nichols' absence was noted. Everyone acted quite sorry that Nichols had left. Knowing they would never have to face him in boxing again, was more than enough compensation for the loss of a classmate. Even the smile on the boxing instructor's face seemed to have faded with Nichols' departure. However, this was a real loss for the Bureau. Nichols could handle himself and had an excellent track record on the streets to prove it. He was an accomplished investigator and would have been an excellent FBI Criminal Division agent. The class counselor, SSA Robert "Smokey" Burgess, noted Nichols' had failed by a small amount. Burgess was another Bureau luminary who held his counseling sessions mainly in the snack bars over several pitchers of beer.

Four other classmates had assorted problems with the course after Nichols' departure. They too, departed the Academy. Two were woman; both had developed hairline fractures in their legs due to the intensive physical training. Why was there such a great attrition rate from such a highly selected group?

During a wrestling training session, the instructor used his whistle to start and stop the new agents' matches. In one bout, a male and female recruits were wrestling, another mismatch. She was getting the worse of things

from her male partner who tried to suppress his broad smile. The instructor came over to them and yelled in his southern drawl at her, "Fight him! Fight him!"

A loud scream came from the man, now grimacing and holding his chest. When the instructor asked him what was the matter, he pointed to the teeth marks on his chest where she had bitten him. The instructor turned to the female wrestler and asked her, "Why on earth did you do that?"

"Well," she said, "I thought you told me to! I heard you say, 'Bite him! Bite him!'" The class roared with laughter. The instructor blew his whistle, ordering everyone to return to their matches.

When the instructor blew the final whistle to end the matches, Taus' partner suddenly grabbed him and tossed him over backwards. It certainly was poor sportsmanship, but worse, it snapped Taus left ankle with a crack that could be heard by all in the gym. Taus grasped his ankle in pain. The instructor looked down at him and asked if he were all right, his classmates carried him to the gym office where icepacks were applied to a rapidly swollen foot.

Taus asked to have it x-rayed. The staff looked puzzled. The instructor said, "We have no x-ray equipment here. You will have to go to Potomac General Hospital about 20 miles from here." The Academy did not provide him a ride to the hospital. Taus had to limp to his own car and drive to the hospital. When the gym instructor told him to go to the Academy's main office first and secure a pass to go off base, Taus knew he could not rely upon the Bureau for any support as he had with the Army.

The X-ray revealed a broken ankle. In rapid succession two other classmates broke their ankles, both from accidentally slipping while running on the gravel Quantico roadways. All continued the course. The gym instructor provided encouragement, "It's okay to get injured. But you cannot stay injured. You'll have to get better before the physical fitness test is given."

"No problem, boss!" whispered one of Taus' classmates, Dave Hanna, a former Arizona state trooper. Hanna looked at the cast on his broken ankle and said, "You heard that, foot; get better." Hanna and Taus smiled at each other, but there was no smile on the instructor's face. It was difficult on the injured classmates ambulating around the Academy campus for the next several weeks. Hanna's injury had not healed prior to the physical fitness test. He took the test anyway, running on his broken ankle. He managed to pass along with Taus.

The academic classes could have been condensed into three weeks of studies. The platform instructors told lengthy jokes and socialized with the student because of the lack of instructional material. The class on paper administration was termed a communications class and the exercises were tedious as the class tried to absorb and understand the meaning of "bureauese."

The missions of the FBI involved investigations into any violations of federal laws. This area included all kinds of criminal activities, organized crime, white-collar crimes and civil rights violations. In addition, the Bureau had the mission of foreign counter intelligence (FCI) within the United

States that included intelligence-gathering activities. The CIA had this responsibility overseas and the FBI in the United States. When it came to U.S. citizens, the FBI was supposed to take over. In his future career, Taus learned the line was very thin between these two areas, as he found the CIA illegally active in the United States.

By the time the FCI class was scheduled, everyone was anxiously anticipating an interesting presentation. As usual, little creative research was done on the subject. The class consisted of watching a video surveillance film for an hour and forty-five minutes, shot from a telephone pole by a remotely controlled camera that focused on a parked van for the entire filming.

No action was on the film until the very end, when an individual approached the van to pick up some classified materials; it was a sting operation that snared a low ranking Soviet operative.

The class' attention perked-up the next day when the academic schedule noted the subject matter would be sex crimes, but it was another disappointment. The instructor noted the subject matter and slide-pictures were personally offensive to him and refused to discuss the subject in any detail. A few slides were shown, one of which pictured an FBI agent dressed in female clothing who was a cross-dresser, and who accidentally strangled himself trying to get off on a sexual high by restricting his breathing. This was not a sex crime but deviant behavior.

#### **Firearms Training, May 1978**

The new recruits took their seats in the firearms training classroom located in the academy complex. Opposite the rarely used chalkboard, deactivated weapons were mounted on one wall. In walnut picture frames, they hung alongside other firearm exhibits designed to show the ballistic effects of various types of ammunition. The displayed weapons represented the arsenal used by the FBI throughout its history. There were only a few different weapons on exhibit, although the Bureau used the same type weapons for 70 years. One exception was the Thompson submachine gun that was introduced in 1929 and was replaced in 1978 by the military Colt Automatic Rifle known as the M-16. This class was the new agents' introduction to the FBI's Firearms Program.

The instructor was Robert "Bob" Harmon, a likeable, down to earth Virginian who stood 6'2" tall. All of the firearms instructors were special agents. Harmon was the supervisor in charge of the academy's firearms program. A staff of five permanently assigned instructors were supplemented by several on temporary duty.

Twirling a red-handled revolver in one hand, Harmon approached the podium, holding a wood-gripped snub-nose revolver in the other. Instead of standing at the podium, Harmon's comfortable style made him sit on top of an empty student's desk in the front row. His outstretched legs wore spit-shined combat boots. He was going to set a good example to the new agents. However, something was missing. Harmon's personality was not that of a hardened warrior or an uncompromising instructor. Instead, he personified a friendly high school firearms coach.

“What we got here are two weapons you all will be using.” Holding up the red-handled revolver he said, “This is the old 4-inch barreled 38, affectionately known as the ‘Hoover Heater.’ The red grips means it cannot fire.

He clicked the trigger several times. “There’s no firing pin. The barrel’s plugged too. These are used for instructional purposes only.”

Placing the weapon in his waist belt, he used both hands to show the class the snub-nosed revolver. “This is the one you’ll gonna be issued today. We’ll keep them locked in our gun vault. You-all sign for it every time you fire on the ranges. Now I know what some of you-all are gonna say.”

Harmon had been through this drill many times with the other new agents’ classes since the Bureau modified its side arms. He knew what questions would be raised by the new agents who had some familiarity with weapons.

“It’s a 38 Caliber Special with a 2-inch barrel. We use Smith & Wessons. There are several other models, including some Colts that you can later purchase on your own. But this one, the government is issuing you-all for free.”

As anticipated, the student gun experts raised questions concerning the wisdom of using a revolver instead of an automatic. “With the current drug wars on our street, aren’t we better off with an automatic?”

Harmon sighed, “We leave the drug business to the Drug Enforcement Administration to handle.” The reply did not address the student’s concern. Another student added, “It’s the criminal element out there, not just the drug traffickers, that are using the more sophisticated weaponry.” Unknown to Harmon at the time, the FBI would be engaged in the drug war within two years. And an FBI supervisor would replace the DEA director.

“Let’s face it,” Harmon admitted, “There are different weapons out there, some better, some worse. The Bureau has a budget to consider, along with certain requirements.” One student remarked, “It will cost the government more if we are outshoot in a gun battle!” This ominous prediction would come true many times over for the Bureau. In 1986, the worse situation occurred in the FBI’s Miami Field Office. It was a vehicle surveillance that turned into a shootout with only two gunmen who carried Ruger Mini-14s, a semi-automatic rifle converted to full automatic. The two gunmen were suspects in a series of armed robberies and were being pursued by a team of ten FBI agents. The results of the gunfire were two dead gunmen, two dead FBI agents and seven other FBI agents wounded.

For the time being, Harmon found himself answering the questions he initially cautioned the students not to ask. After trying to justify the revolver, Harmon finally confessed, “It was designed by a Bureau committee, and selected as a compromise. Well, we had to get a pistol that could fit into a female agent’s purse. So we chopped down the barrel, but added a thicker “bull” barrel, hoping for the same accuracy. Then we had to go away from the 357 Magnum to a 38 Special to lessen the weight and the recoil.”

It did not make much sense to the students who pointed out aberrations in its design. “The bull nose barrel increases it weight without any improvement in accuracy. It’s too short no matter how thick the barrel. It lacks the knock-down power of a magnum.” Harmon shrugged his shoulders. He

had heard the same student complaints' before.

Next Harmon showed the pancake-styled holster, another government-issued cost-saver. Placing the snub-nose on the other side of his belt,

Harmon motioned to another instructor to come forward. From the rear of the class, an instructor carried a rifle and handed it to Harmon. As he opened the rifle's receiver to clear the weapon, he tried to close the bolt. It jammed.

He fumbled around with the rifle, at times accidentally pointing it at some nervous students who squirmed in their seats. The other instructor returned to assist Harmon in releasing the jammed action. With a loud clunk from the rifle and a low whimper from Harmon, the action closed causing a small cut on Harmon's hand. He acted like it did not bother him, but for the remainder of the class, he sucked on the slowly bleeding cut.

Licking his wound, Harmon said, "This is the Remington Model 760, a 308 caliber, pump-action Rifle." Now the class knew the Bureau committee that selected the FBI's firepower was composed of imbeciles. The 760 was a sporting rifle, not designed as a man-killer. Its pump action detracted from its accuracy since the rifle moves considerably off-target as it is reloaded.

One student asked why the Bureau had not gone to the military's M-16.

"Right now, our Thompsons are being replaced by the M-16s." The class was not shown either automatic weapon, except for the lone deactivated Tommy gun hanging inside the picture frame. "Our special weapons and tactics teams (SWAT) use the M-16s," added Harmon.

The third and last weapon shown to the class was the Remington Model 870, a 12-gauge, pump-action shotgun. It wasn't the best weapon but adequate for its purpose. A semi-automatic would have been better and more costly. Considering the moneys spent, there was no excuse for not providing the best weapons to its agents.

The M-79 grenade launcher was discussed, which could be employed as a teargas gun. It could also fire high-explosive grenades. There was a bolt-action sniper-scope rifle used, either a Winchester Model 70 or a Remington Model 300. Both these weapons were available in the various SWAT teams.

A much larger percentage of female agents had difficulties with the fire-arms training program. They were not used to firing weapons and their smaller hands and arm strength became a problem, along with a hidden fear. Many had never experienced competitive sports and lacked the aggressiveness or combative traits necessary to fight the criminal elements. They were hired as part of a minority opportunity program. Some female agents freely admitted their reservations about using weapons. Some cried while on the firing ranges. Still, they became FBI agents. Most supervisors kept them off the streets or paired them off with the squad's biggest male agent.

#### **Assigned to the FBI New York Field Office**

During the summer of 1978, General Sturm suffered a stroke and retired. His replacement at Citibank and with the National Security Council never contacted Taus. When Taus arrived at the FBINYO, he learned that SA Lawson had resigned from the Bureau and joined the U.S. Customs Service.

His love for flying took him to the Customs office in San Antonio, Texas.

In 1978, the FBINYO had moved from its uptown location on East 69<sup>th</sup>

Street in Manhattan to the then unnamed Jacob Javits Federal Office Building in lower Manhattan near City Hall. The new federal building occupied a small city block, appropriately named Federal Plaza.

During this period, there were about 8500 special agents in the FBI. By 1988, the authorized strength increased to over 10,000 agents. The New York Office was the largest of FBI Field Offices throughout the country. Nearly half the agents in the NYO handle foreign counter-intelligence (FCI) matters. It has ten percent of the total agent force assigned, mainly due to the location of the United Nations. Two separate divisions in the NYO were dedicated to tracking the Soviets and their Eastern Bloc neighbors.

The FBINYO was the only Field Office with an Assistant Director-In-Charge (ADIC) as its head. Of the ten or so ADICs in the Bureau, the others were all assigned to FBIHQ at the J. Edgar Hoover Building in Washington, DC. All of the other FBI Field Offices have SACs (Special Agent-In-Charge). For each of the four divisions in the NYO, there was an SAC.

There were several other offices in the downstate New York area that were part of the NYO and answered directly to its ADIC. These outlying offices were called Resident Agencies (Ras). The two largest were the Brooklyn-Queens Metropolitan Resident Agency (BQMRA) with a SAC overseeing 125 agents and the New Rochelle Metropolitan Resident Agency (NRMRA) with another SAC working with 100 other agents. There were smaller offices with approximately 20 agents. These offices were run by Supervisory Special Agents (SSAs) who normally would control individual squads in the larger offices. These smaller offices were located on Staten Island, at JFK International Airport, and in Melville Long Island.

NYO was unlike any of the other FBI Field Offices with an ADIC and a DADIC (Deputy Assistant Director-In-Charge) as its two top executives.

Under them were at least four SACs in Manhattan, plus the BQMRA & NRMRA SACs.

Living in or around any large city is expensive. Out-of-towners felt unwelcome by the fast and furious pace from the New York City lifestyle. The cost of living in New York is especially difficult for a new agent. An FBI agent assigned to a smaller office such as Jackson, Mississippi, where the cost of living was much lower could live comfortably on the Bureau salary. The Bureau had no cost of living adjustment (cola) for those agents living in the more expensive areas of the country.

Not until late November 1988, did the Bureau finally start providing a small pay differential to its New York agents. Forty percent of the new agents being assigned to the NYO resigned from the FBI rather than accept the new assignment. For a few years before the cost of living increase, agents were being advanced for promotions over their peers if they would accept an assignment to the NYO.

If a new agent did come, he or she lived with relatives. They could not afford housing. Rentals were too high and purchasing a house was nearly impossible. Many who came were forced to resign. The Bureau did not want to recognize the problem. Like everything else, the problem was used as a disciplinary measure. If you were not liked by the SAC, ASAC or a SSA,

your chances were excellent for a NYO assignment; unless they knew you wanted to live in New York.

There were other immediate punishments, deserved or otherwise, that supervisors could conjure up. The Bureau car (bucar) was an example. If you were not in your supervisor's good graces, then you did not have an assigned bucar. You had to rely upon your fellow squad members to loan you their assigned bucars to conduct your investigations. The alternatives were to use public transportation or your personally owned vehicle (POV). Only public transportation was reimbursable, but that did not include the cost of commuting from home to work. Having a bucar took care of any commuting problems. In fact, most mileage on these cars was due to commuting not investigating.

Deals were made between supervisors as to who got what cars. These bucars are GSA (Government Services Administration) vehicles, normally sedans and coupes. The brand new ones went to supervisors or reliefs, who rarely left the Field Offices. The "favorite sons" would also get a better bucar with the excuse that they had more important cases to work. Better cases were assigned to the favorite sons, while the "dog-cases" were tossed to the rest of the squad members. Career wise, this alone would keep an agent down and unproductive no matter how hard he/she tried. In fairness to some supervisors, they tried to be equitable, but were often at the mercy of the system, which was penny-wise but pound-foolish.

All new agents started as GS-10s (government service, grade level 10). Every few years a new agent would get a grade promotion. Within seven years, the new agent could expect to be promoted to GS-13. An agent could request consideration for a supervisory position. It is termed "The Career Program" for administrative advancement. Any agent between GS-10 to GS-13 could apply. If accepted and selected by a Career Board, then the agent was termed a Relief-Supervisor. As such, an agent will start handling the paper flow across his supervisor's desk. If another supervisory position became vacant, the reliefs could apply for it. If selected, an agent's grade would be accelerated until he became a GS-14.

Agents were always maneuvering for career positions and vacancies or just trying to hold onto their present status quo. A big investigation anywhere could drain personnel resources. A supervisor would give up his least liked agents to such manpower intensive cases or requirements. This factor also reduced the effectiveness of many less favored agents who were taken away from their own assigned investigations.

### **New Agents' Assignments**

While at the FBI Academy, SSA Robert Burgess conducted a counseling session in a classroom. Everyone was concerned about his or her future assignments. "It's like I have been saying, 'Bureau policy is to assign each one of you to a smaller office, as close to your home as possible.' After eighteen months, you will move onto a larger Field Office, such as New York, Chicago or Los Angeles."

Several students raised questions. It was clear many of their fellow classmates received the assignments they wanted, while others were placed



far from their homes. Burgess continued to say the assignments were based upon the needs of the service. A clear statement that Bureau policy was whatever suited the desires and conveniences of those in charge. There were vacancies in most Field Offices from an attrition rate, retirements, etc. In the summer of 1978, there was no major “crime-waves” requiring special assignments.

There was little doubt FBIHQ's Assignment Section went to little trouble in slotting new agents. On the whole, new agents were assigned without any special regard for their personal preferences, except the few that had connections. The sixteen-week course at the FBI academy developed that story.

Students spoke freely with one another and exchanged stories. Everyone knew of one classmate whose brother-in-law was a Bureau supervisor. He received the assignment he requested.

“Why can't we go to a large Field Office first, Mr. Burgess?” asked one student. “It would be closer to my present residence than the smaller offices?”

“Because you would be lost on the job there. The smaller Field Offices will give you better training on the job,” Burgess replied.

A new class entered the Academy every two weeks during that time. There were many scheduled retirements. It had been over twenty years since the Korean Conflict and more years since World War II. The draft-dodgers from that era had put in their twenty years and were ready for retirement.

Many never fired their weapons, except on the FBI firing ranges. Many never made any arrests or had any credible informants. Many never appeared in court to testify. Their assigned cases were never prosecuted.

Students in Taus' class discovered that the next class, which had entered the Academy two weeks after them, were all being assigned to the New York Field Office (NYO). A contradiction to the stated “smaller office policy.”

A student in Taus' class raised that issue with Burgess, “We have classmates here that would accept an assignment to New York. Why not do so?” Again Burgess countered, manufacturing answers as he went along, “The Bureau policy for this class is the ‘Eighteen Month Program.’ Since the other class arrived, the Bureau policy concerning that class has changed.” It was useless to argue. Taus learned that during the daily physical fitness classes when boxing matches were scheduled with fellow classmates.

In one of the last classes, the subject was titled, “Proper Personnel Management Techniques & Administration,” taught by a higher ranking FBIHQ's Supervisor, William Quilley. Taus' Academy roommate, Wayne Zaideman, turned to Taus as they took their seats saying, “This should be a really short class!” He was right. After 16-weeks in the training program, the students were aware of the poorly and politically managed personnel program. The Bureau failed to address the needs and welfare of its employees.

The subject title was superfluous. The FBIHQ's instructor, SSA Quilley, jokingly asked the students about their assignments. Everyone groaned. Quilley did not expect such an honest reaction. By the sixteenth week, students should have been adequately indoctrinated into Bureau decorum. This

class was different. It had older students with broader backgrounds and experiences.

Trying to soften the class' reaction, Quilley said, "At least none of you were assigned to the New York Office. I understand the entire class behind you received orders there." This only encouraged another groan from the class. Quilley looked distressed and asked, "Some of you wanted to be assigned to New York?" The class pointed to Taus who nodded his head.

Quilley had been embarrassed and was not going to be put down in front of the class. "You want New York!?" directing his remark towards Taus, "then I'll make sure you get it. What's your name?"

Immediately after his class' graduation, Taus was told to report to FBIHQ. In Quilley's office, Taus was handed a letter on his reassignment to the New York Office. The original assignment was to the Albany, New York office. That would have required a family relocation.

Within a year after Taus' class graduation, nearly eighty percent of the class was reassigned to the NYO. Evonne Winters was no exception. Within a few years, Winters would become a squad supervisor. Formerly an elementary school teacher, Winters had no major cases solved, no major arrests, no accomplishments, but her father was a Bureau Chief.

During an anatomy class at a famous American medical university, students were introduced to their first cadaver. Seeking to ease the students into the moribund examination and autopsy, the medical professor referred to the outstretched corpse as "Bob." Then, as if to test the students' forensic abilities, the professor asked them, "What is the problem with Bob?" From the student group, an unidentified voice simply said, "Bob is dead!"

As a young Army student-pilot, Taus was told that for every significant FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) regulation, people had died before the rules were adopted. The very nature of bureaucracies makes it difficult to change or adapt innovations until something tragic occurs. When disaster strikes, procedures are reviewed and some changes eventually happen. But people died in the meanwhile and the problem still remains.

### **The FBI's Manual of Instructions (MOI)**

There are three thick loose-leaf binders filled with the U.S. Attorney General's guidelines and the FBI's instructions, termed the MOI (Manual Of Instructions). The unidentified authors and any FBI supervisors will tell newly assigned agents to read them when they first arrive at a squad. More often than not, a supervisor will berate an agent for some impropriety when those instructions are not adhered to, saying "Haven't you ever read the MOI?"

An agent could sit at his desk and read the cumbersome manuals for weeks and still be incapable of executing every step correctly, according to the MOI. In short, foul-ups were bound to occur despite every effort to catalog and predict human behavior.

To compliment the dull reading materials, there were two more loose-leaf binders in the supervisor's file cabinet safe dealing with Foreign Counter-Intelligence matters. Bound in a red-colored vinyl binder, to indicate it was of a "Secret" classification, these volumes were just more of the

same.

The FBI Academy did little to instill confidence in the new agents who might be going to an FCI squad for their first assignments. The formal FCI training classes were usually based upon previous FBI case experiences.

A few pages of notes were usually taken by the new recruit agents at the FBI Academy. These notes dealt with terms such as a "Recruitment-In-Place" (RIP); what is the definitions of a source, operative or asset; why do defections occur; etc. In 1978, the bulk of the new agents' training in FCI was consumed by a 3-hour video surveillance tape from an FCI case. Nothing happened for the entire 3 hours until the last few minutes when the subject finally arrives and delivers some classified papers. The subject is then arrested.

The short block of instructions on this phase of FBI work included instructions that everything in an FCI file would be classified as "Secret" by the submitting agent. This practice has led to the massive accumulation of reams of useless and unimportant paperwork dealing with trivial matters.

To solve the problem, every several years, teams of FBI agents would be temporarily reassigned to a major Field Office to read through older closed case files, eliminating materials not considered essential. It was kind of like examining Bob now that he was dead. The only thing different was that no lessons were learned by this Bureau exercise.

### **Working on an FCI Squad**

Ill-prepared to begin an FCI assignment, a new agent would find himself sitting down at his desk pouring over the MOIs or pulling other case files to follow their investigative forms and procedures. On most occasions, these files were done by equally incompetent agents. While a Soviet KGB agent received three years of training to function as an Intelligence Officer (IO), an FBI agent, who must counter this threat, has received 3-hours of formal instructions. Three hours of a boring video surveillance tape!

Depending upon the interest of the FBI supervisor, a fledging agent would be placed under the wings of another more experienced agent from the same squad. And again, the new agent's development depended upon the caliber of his assigned tutor. Some agents were exceptional, but they were the exceptions.

When Taus was first assigned to an FCI squad in 1979, he was warned about his assigned "big-brother" tutor. SA George Brown was a regular guy, a decent family man, polite and soft-spoken. At 5'10" tall with red hair and blue eyes, Brown was a Red Skeleton (the comedian) look-a-like. Fellow squad members said he had one fault. He had a case of the "for realies."

When he pursued his subjects, on the job out in the streets. Brown was overly aggressive. One could compare him to an otherwise mild-mannered person when once he takes the wheel of a car becomes a maniac filled with a case of "road rage." Since Brown seemed knowledgeable enough in the office, Taus dismissed the gossipy advice about Brown's road demeanor.

The next day, Brown told Taus they had to follow a Chinese Embassy official suspected of being an "IO." They waited in Brown's bucar which had 75,000 miles on the odometer, due in part to some 45,000 miles placed

on it by Brown's 3-year commute to his southern New Jersey home. Agents had to live outside the city and neighboring suburbs since they could not afford to purchase or rent in the higher-priced metropolitan areas where even the adjacent suburbs commanded premium prices.

The federal pay scale was slightly higher for new FBI agents than for CIA agents. Still living expenses exceeded starting salaries in New York City. Not until November 1988 did the Bureau provide their agents in New York with a cost-of-living-adjustment. The CIA never had this problem, though their agents had lower GS grades. CIA agents had a provision for a housing allowance, which the FBI lacked, effectively doubling CIA take-home pay.

As Brown and Taus waited outside the Chinese Foreign Embassy office, Brown nervously gunned the engine after spotting the departing IO. Then, Brown drew the bucar to within a few feet of the departing IO's car. This was highly unusual. Brown should have conducted the "tail" at a respectable distance.

After nearly bumping into the IO's rear bumper several times, Taus asked Brown why he pursued the IO so closely. There was rage in Brown's eyes. He replied that he would not give them any space. "But our surveillance is burnt now," Taus said. He could not see the IO carefully checking them out through the IO's rearview mirror.

Brown mumbled something about always asking the State Department for permission before the FBI could seek prosecutions. "I want them to know we are here!" Brown uttered while his face reddened matching the color of his hair. The pursuit was uneventful. After a few miles, the IO parked his car and left for parts unknown.

At lunch the next day, Taus asked another experienced agent on the squad whether the FBI periodically provided psychological consulting, especially for agents who are under stress. The answer was no. Some years later, in the mid-1980s, psychological consulting was offered to agents who had engaged in shoot-outs, but even these sessions were limited in scope.

There was no preventive examinations or therapy sessions.

Outsiders would refer to the Bureau as a quasi-military organization. It was not. The rank-and-file structure that one could see at some local Police Department did not exist in the Bureau. Taus had come from the military and expected a more regimented organization, instead he found a lack of discipline and uniformity in accomplishing different investigative leads and bringing cases to success indictments and prosecutions.

Only if the agent or supervisor cared enough about the lessons learned from such an operation or case were they sent down to the FBI Academy. And even then, it was a question whether or not the operation would be incorporated into the Academy's curriculum.

Lord knows what value an FBI Academy supervisor found in the 3-hour FCI surveillance tape! Evidentially, the boring video shown to each new agents' class was the only FCI related item ever sent to the Academy. Fault must also be attributed to an uncreative instructor who employed the tape just to fill a 3-hour block of instructions.

### **The Latest Guidance**

There were manuals available and senior agents to question, but neither were kept abreast of the rapidly changing legal developments in the area of national security affairs. It was secretive, even to agents with “Top-Secret” clearances. Supervisors insisted upon appointments from their own squad members to handle “knotty matters” and more often than not, anything classified was a knotty matter.

Under President Reagan, Intelligence operations were manipulated by the issuance of Executive Orders. At the time, the National Security Council was handing down a ream of new National Security Decision Documents (NSDD), NS Action Memorandums (NSAM), NS Decision Memo (NSDM) and NS Study Directives (NSSD). Whether these documents were ever made available to the field agents remains an open question. Such guidance in the form of instructional directives should have been placed in updates or revisions to the FBI’s MOIs.

Taus recalled a stack of new pages changes in the squad MOI binders. In those documents, he found no mention of any extended covert action definitions or “special activities,” phrases coined and used in President Reagan’s Executive Order Number 12333, dated December 4, 1981.

Comparing these proclamations to congressional legislation and its intent, left an FBI agent wondering how his investigation could proceed. For instance, NSDD-7 approved covert actions against Nicaragua in November 1981. Domestic CIA operations and activities traditionally banned or not authorized by Congress were now circumvented by the Executive Orders and decrees, which Congress should have addressed. Also unfortunate, the Senate and House Intelligence Oversight Committees were either already staffed by Reagan sympathizers or they were not diligent in performing their duties and responsibilities.

### **CIA Infiltration of Congress**

Adding to Congressional problems were many new Congressmen who were former CIA officials and agents. The CIA supported their election campaigns and insured their success. CIA wanted its people handling legislative actions that would affect their “company.” The CIA office seeker and eventual Congressman owed his allegiance, not to his constituency on the street, but to his former employer, the CIA, which could just as easily remove him. It goes without saying that a conflict of interest exists when CIA personnel enter the political arena where their company seeks favors, which often conflict with American citizens constitutional rights and interests.

FBI agents would work their cases based upon previous methods and procedures. The consequences were obvious. Taus knew that CIA officials and agents were smirking at the dutiful FBI agents trying to work FCI matters under such limitations.

If the CIA smirked at the FBI, the CIA had to be laughing at loud in the faces of the American Public by engaging in all forms of criminal activities including the wholesale bilking of the U.S. Savings & Loans Associations and the profiteering from drug-trafficking and illegal weapons sales, not to mention other fraudulent financial schemes. Their criminal actions were on

a scale unheard of in the past. CIA officials and agents, both on active duty and retired, reaped outlandish personal profits while costing irreparable losses of human lives and huge unnecessary expenditures of taxpayers' money. The CIA Covert Operations Section had taken over the CIA.

### **FBI & CIA Jealousies**

On the surface, there appears to be interagency jealousies working against each other. That's what FBI agents thought, but it is not as simple as that. There were other forces motivating the CIA. The CIA evolved from a notorious brotherhood of outlaws, spies, renegades and organized crime factions. It was the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) that created the sinister relationship between the U.S. government and many disenfranchised organizations overseas in the war torn countries during the early 1940s. Though a legitimate Intelligence network was in place at that time, it was under the control of the FBI. There were worldwide offices and agents, which the FBI possessed to do the U.S. Intelligence mission abroad. However, with the creation of the CIA in 1947, FBI Director Hoover abdicated his Intelligence responsibilities to the new CIA.

Many experienced FBI agents who worked overseas in the Intelligence sections had to decide whether they wanted to stay in the FBI and return to the States or be reassigned to the fledgling CIA. Hoover's lack of foresight propelled many good FBI Intelligence agents into retirement or ineffectiveness. They were disappointed to find their own work absorbed by the sinister remnants of the criminally influenced OSS.

A grave mistake had been done by the stroke of a pen, approving the CIA's charter, without any resistance from the FBI Director who lacked the drive and ambition attributed to him in earlier days.

To accomplish their Intelligence missions during World War II, the OSS had to work with criminal organizations in foreign countries dominated by the Axis powers. An example of the notorious cabal was the Italian Mafia, which worked with OSS officials in undermining Mussolini's Fascist rule. The problem with the intelligence service after the war was the great influence that criminal elements had upon its successor, the CIA. The cancer that existed in the OSS grew to engulf the new CIA. No longer was there a legitimate law enforcement agency pursuing intelligence matters. The FBI now had only the responsibility for Counter-Intelligence and Criminal matters. Both these areas were diametrically opposed to the OSS style of Intelligence.

As the decades passed by, a new Intelligence battle game was being played. The FBI "brick-agents" from both the Criminal and Foreign Counter-intelligence Divisions were engaged upon a new battlefield. They were in the trenches often oblivious to the spreading cancer within the CIA. Little did some FBI agents realize that part of their fight against crime was actually against the CIA's corruption, coupled with some higher level complicity by FBI officials. As a regularly appointed FBI agent saw things, the problem with the working relationship between the FBI and CIA must be due to simple interagency jealousies. That was not the case.

CIA agents were escorted into the working spaces of the FBI's Foreign

Counter-Intelligence (FCI) Division, and FBI agents were told beforehand how much information to exchange with their CIA Intelligence counterparts. Aside from the open, officially approved jealousies that come with joint investigations, many FBI agents were envious of the wages and extra compensation paid to CIA officials and agents in New York. Though base salaries were comparable, the CIA paid their agents' housing expenses and had a "cost-of-living-adjustment" (cola) built into their wages. Cooperation on a personal level became minimal between FBI and CIA agents. While on a supervisory level, neither agency wanted the other to take credit or gain power by a successful investigation.

If interagency frictions were not enough, there was an internal distrust based upon their divergent and conflicting missions. Neither really wanted to assist the other. It was akin to the Army-Navy Football rivalry, but much more desperate. Unlike the football contest, agents showed little enthusiasm for the game being played.

The sad fact was that there was a great difference between the investigations handled by FBI agents assigned to Criminal or FCI matters. And yet, the Bureau trained all agents with the same curriculum at the Quantico Training Academy.

There were interoffice antagonisms and ill feelings between FBI Criminal and FCI Divisions agents. The FCI Division agents accused the Criminal Division agents of acting "macho," being snobbish, strutting around like prima donnas given the greater resources, and Bureau cars, allotted to their cases. The Criminal Division agents slandered those in the FCI Division as being wimps, working 9-to-5 days, pushing unimportant paperwork and never being exposed to any great dangers inherent in criminal investigations.

In the internal conflict, extreme jealousies existed between FBI Field Offices, including within Field Offices and their own resident agencies. The attitude is why let the other office get credit for an investigation. Statistics were always being compiled and used against those having weaker accomplishments. Field Offices were only too happy to dump difficult investigations upon other offices.

Much to the chagrin of each Field Office's SAC were the sibling distrust between squads on the same division. This problem created a lack of cooperation between squads in the same office. The struggle within the government bureaucracies reached into the streets with devastating consequences upon successful law enforcement efforts.

If cooperation was achieved at all it was directed by the next higher bureaucrat. Even with cooperation among agencies, there were still departmental entities to deal with, especially when a case involved foreign subjects or countries. The U.S. State Department feared alienating any foreign governments. Few positive actions could be accomplished.

In two areas, FBI agents were critically out-gunned. Both in the arenas of drug-trafficking and financial frauds, FBI agents only faced the organized crime elements at the street level. FBI investigations focused on the lower echelons, one might say the symptoms rather than the cause. Investigations should have concentrated on the more important originating end source.

With drug-traffickers, prosecution of the street pushers did not eliminate the problem. And with financial frauds and scams, the FBI lacked the accountability expertise and manpower to handle these complex affairs.

The shallow interagency jealousies were exploited to justify abortive casework and investigations. The CIA had its reason for not assisting the Bureau and, at worse, working against legitimate law enforcement efforts.

CIA officials and agents knew that they were above the law and many reaped illegal profits from their own malfeasance.



## CHAPTER ELEVEN

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### FBI Bank Robbery Squad

Upon arrival at the FBI New York Field Office (FBINYO) in Manhattan, July 1978, Taus was sent out to the Brooklyn-Queens Metropolitan Resident Agency (BQMRA) for further assignment to a Criminal Division squad. Supervising Special Agent (SSA) Bruce Brontman's squad worked bank robbery and by the time the FBI arrived at the scene of a bank robbery the thieves were long gone and the bank was secured by the New York City Police Department (NYCPD) officers who always got there first. The FBI merely monitored police radio frequencies over a "Radio Shack" police scanner to determine if any bank robbery calls were being reported. If one were heard, the agent on duty would call the local police precinct to confirm it and once confirmed, an FBI bucar went to the scene.

The younger agents responding to a call would place their red-bubble magnetic flashing light on the bucar's roof and press the button on the siren (if either the red light or the siren worked), speeding off through congested city traffic as if to nab the suspects. With one agent driving, another checked the map for the exact location. They would usually turn off the siren a block or two before the bank to avoid embarrassment since the robbery had occurred long ago and even the police were gone.

Sometimes the speeding bucar passed the bank before realizing it as the agents were unfamiliar with the many banks in Brooklyn and Queens. Unlike the many police precincts, agents were unfamiliar with the local geography. New York City Police Department always courteously briefed the tardy agents, handing the investigation over to the FBI, who had responsibility for bank robberies under the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation legislation. Since bank robbery is a federal and state offense the FBI coordinates with the Police Department, which also lacked sufficient manpower to handle the investigative footwork. During the summer months of 1979, four bank robberies or more occurred daily in the New York area, causing the FBI and New York City Police Department to establish a Joint Bank Robbery Task Force to more efficiently handle the cases. Agents became bored with bank robbery cases. Each agent on Brontman's squad handled a caseload of 25 bank robbery cases.

### **The Bensonhurst Bandits**

A group of teenage bank robbers were given the name, The “Bensonhurst Bandits,” who confined their bank robberies to Chase Manhattan Banks in the flatlands area of Brooklyn. FBI agent, Ed Woods, a former U.S.

Army Green Beret captain, plotted the locations on a map and noted the days of each job. Some banks had been hit twice by the same group, always on a Tuesday or Thursday, indicating a pattern from neighborhood kids in their late teens who donned ski masks just before entering the banks.

Woods was an FBI pilot and upon learning of Taus’ flight credentials, the two of them would circle over the area, while FBI surveillance teams were in bureau cars. These flights were five to seven hours long, flying at 1000 feet. The agents on the ground had it better; they could stop for a cup of coffee or a snack, or go to a restroom. There was another problem flying in the congested Terminal Controlled Area with three large airports: JFK International, LaGuardia and Newark, carried the risk of midair collisions.

One flight near JFK upset a British Concorde Supersonic Transport (SST) pilot who complained to the Air Traffic Controller (ATC), “Tower, this is Speedbird 13222. You’ve got a bloody Cessna in our way. Ask him to move, over.” ATC’s response was “Roger Speedbird, the Cessna is authorized to fly in that area. Please avoid him, over. Cessna 5761, are you aware of Speedbird’s transmission, over?”

A plan was developed by Woods to catch the Bensonhurst robbers, relying upon his Army training, and Brontman went along with Woods’ suggestion. Three FBI squads and a police task force assembled for an expected bank robbery on a Tuesday, and police units were staked out at several bank locations. Nothing happened. The same set-up occurred on the following Thursday.

Woods had friends in U.S. Customs and arranged to use their Jet Ranger Helicopter, placing Taus at the controls with the Customs pilot and two New York City police officers. Flying less than an hour, Taus overheard the ground units on the police radio report that a suspicious car with four teenage occupants arrived at a Chase Bank. Another transmission stated the suspects were carrying long packages and ski masks. One FBI bucar was in the bank’s parking lot observing their entry.

There was nothing anyone could do to prevent it. The young thugs entered the bank and all units waited until the thugs made a getaway. By waiting outside, a hostage situation was avoided. As expected, the trio came running out of the bank carrying weapons and a package of money, jumping into their car and speeding off.

The Joint FBI & Police Task Force units that were waiting in various directions then converged upon the fleeing bank robbers. Taus headed over the area in the copter at low level. As the bank robbers were fleeing with police and FBI in pursuit, the car careened out of control and hit a tree. The bank robbers jumped from their car and ran into the back yards of the adjacent houses.

Police units caught the fleeing robbers. Taus landed the copter in an empty schoolyard and walked over to the scene. “Anyone hurt?” he asked.

Everyone was preoccupied with the arrests. Woods said everything was under control and he did not need the copter. Taus surveyed the normally quiet suburban neighborhood, seeing the astonished faces of residents who had witnessed the drama. One FBI agent from Taus' squad came over, carrying a shotgun and smiling, "Wow, that was neat! All the units surrounding the bad guys and the chopper flying overhead. It was just like in the movies!"

Later that afternoon, back at the office, the suspects were being interrogated as Taus arrived. Woods told him they were the group that had committed the string of neighborhood bank robberies. The bandits were escorted out of the office for their ride to the Metropolitan Correctional Center in Manhattan. As they left, Taus scanned the interview room and noticed a small key resting on the chair where one of the handcuffed suspects sat. The key just did not fall out of the suspect's pocket. It was jammed into the chair's cushion. Taus turned the key over to the supervisor.

Brontman asked, "Alright, we'll check it out. By the way, why did you land the copter?" with the smiling young FBI agent standing nearby still holding the shotgun. Taus replied, "Because I thought if someone was hurt we could Medevac them. No one was listening to the radios when I called and asked if there were any injuries to the ground units." Taus added, "I landed the ship for effects. Too bad, I didn't have loudspeakers mounted on the copter's skids, blurring out the FBI theme song." At that point, others in the room laughed.

The Bensonhurst Bandits never robbed any Manufacturers' Hanover Banks, which was where they kept their account. The police discovered that the key Taus recovered opened a "Manny-Hanny" safety deposit box that yielded \$25,000 in stolen bank money.

The main FBI New York City flight detachment consisted of five FBI agents who operated out of Linden Airport in New Jersey, and flew full time, without any caseloads. Taus asked to be assigned to that section if the Bureau wanted him to fly, but this request was refused. He could fly part-time, which meant taking the worse flight missions that the full-time FBI pilots did not want. They were flights at night, on weekends, during bad weather, or involving long surveillances. These were all available to the part-time flyers.

In conversations with his former FBI academy classmates, Taus found many whose expertise were not being used at all on their assignments. By 1980, two years after Taus' graduation from the FBI Academy, nearly all of his classmates were assigned to the FBI New York office, which they disliked. The explanation given to those who asked their supervisors for reassignment was always the same answer, "It's based upon the needs of the Service."

### **FBI Salary Predicament**

The typical workday was from 8:15 a.m. to 5 p.m. An agent would try to sign-in before 8:15 because the squad supervisor or his relief was supposed to draw an ink-line across the check-in register after that time. That would leave an agent no recourse but to sign-in sometime after 8:15. An agent ar-

iving at 10 a.m. could have two hours of annual leave charged to him unless he concocted an adequate story. Perhaps he needed to work a case later in the evening hours. Normally, different shifts could be worked if an agent justified the timing. A physical surveillance of a case subject or a late interview was considered adequate justification.

Also, in addition to their base salaries, agents were given overtime pay known as AUO, Administratively Controlled Overtime. A maximum was always paid, unless an agent had done something that upset his supervisor. To merit the maximum AUO, an agent had to show he worked enough time for it. As a result, agents insured they signed in and out with enough daily overtime to meet the AUO limits. The first agent on the register would sign in around 6 a.m., leaving enough time for the last arriving agent to fudge the roster. Occasionally the supervisors would complain about agents taking liberties with the sign-in registers.

Most agents never signed out at 5 p.m., and instead, the next morning, sign-out for the previous day and sign-in for the present morning. In this matter, they could adjust whatever AUO they needed. Supervisors were more upset over poor statistical accomplishments, such as few informants, or weak cases, then mischief at the sign-in register.

As an additional check on an agent, a three-by-five inch buff-colored filing card, known as a "Three Card," was kept near the secretary's desk. The agents were supposed to fill out a new card each day, showing their activities, and estimates of time required to complete those items. An agent would list the time he spent on cases in the office too. If he had to conduct an interview outside the office, he had to list the location and case number on the card. In this way, the card also acted as a locator card. However, its uses were marginal at best.

Unless they were going on a lead, agents would often complete the cards on the following day. And, every now and then, the supervisor would crack the whip on this abuse. These agents were college graduates, many with advanced degrees and extensive experiences, and the system created by J. Edgar Hoover was demeaning. Occasionally a case developed that required expenditure of an enormous amount of time and effort, causing the agent to work more hours than permitted by the AUO system.

One agent operated a mobile frankfurter stand from the trunk of his bucar. He parked alongside a busy highway waiting for drivers to stop and have lunch at his stand. Inside the bucar's trunk was the portable stove to heat the franks. Like any good entrepreneur, the agent had an assistant.

One day the agent became involved in some pressing officials investigation. His assistant operated the stand without him. Accidentally the stove malfunctioned, causing a fire inside the trunk. The young assistant frantically used the bucar's two-way radio to call for help. The FBI Field Office radio operator handled the distress call and notified the local fire department. The fire was suppressed and so was the agent who took an early retirement.

Stories of FBI agent misfeasance were published in a monthly paper released only to supervisors, without the employee or Field Office identified.

The purpose was to alert supervisors to possible misconduct.

Supervisors also abused the use of Bureau time and equipment. When an agent borrowed one supervisor's bucar, he had a flat tire. Opening the trunk to get the jack and spare tire, the agent discovered two full duffel bags with Little League bats, balls and bases. It was a lesser sin than the frankfurter mobile. The term used by agents for leaving work early was "ballooning." The saying was, "It ain't a balloon if it's after noon."

Scheduling an interview or surveillance away from the office could get an agent a day-off. There were many unsuccessful interviews attempts and surveillances where the subject wasn't there.

These irregularities developed because of the low salary and the nature of the work. Salaries in the private sector were much higher. Inflationary spirals created during the Jimmy Carter Administration followed by inadequate federal pay increases under the Reagan Administration, produced economic hardships for all Bureau employees, both agents and support clerks.

There was an extremely high turnover of clerical personnel. Once the romance of working for the FBI wore off, an employee looked into his pockets and could not find enough lunch money, causing reality to set in. The employee would leave for more lucrative work in the business world.

The actual workload was another story. Either an agent was over-assigned or under-assigned. Often this over-assignment was strictly a paper device. To reflect an appropriate picture, agents inflated their work requirements to supervisors. In turn, supervisors did the same to their ASACs and SACs, and the SACs to the ADICs at FBIHQ. The bogus work figures were then further massaged by the Bureau and delivered to Congress. Bureau officials knew that the figures were inaccurate because they grew-up in the very same system.

Agents frequently went to gymnasiums for three hours a day, much the same as prisoners who work out at correctional facilities waiting their release dates. Other less-physically inclined agents went window-shopping or conducted their own personal business on Bureau time. Many held down second jobs. These were some of the real secrets the Bureau kept from the public.

The main objection to an agent having a second job rested with Hoover's biblical opinion that a man cannot work for two masters. All agents were designated as key federal employees to insure they would be present on the job. However, on two occasions in 1980 and in 1984, President Reagan refused to sign the federal budget. Agents were told to go home, since legally the government could not pay them.

An agent was not authorized to participate in the Armed Forces Reserves, even when off-duty. It was construed as working for another master and having an unauthorized second job.

At a higher executive level, participation in the Armed Forces Reserves was authorized. Edwin Meese was the U.S. Attorney General under President Reagan and was an Army Reserve Lieutenant Colonel. Immediately after his appointment as AG, Meese received an Army Reserve promotion to full colonel. This greatly upset many other more qualified and capable re-

servists.

Another example was John Lehman, Reagan's secretary of the Navy who held a U.S. Navy Reserve commission as a commander. He continued to participate in the Naval Reserves, flying off the decks of an aircraft carrier, performing the duties of a Naval navigator. Both Lehman and Meese were key federal employees.

In 1983, the U.S. Comptroller-General issued a decision on the participation of FBI employees, including agents, in the Armed Forces Reserves. It stated they could not be denied permission to participate. Such denials would abrogate their ability to maintain their equity in the Reserve system.

In an attempt to show that they had modified their position, the Bureau declared that agents could be in the Reserves, but they could not wear a military uniform, or accept military pay, or participate in any drills, off-duty or not. There was no way for an agent to maintain his status in the Reserves under such restraints. This issue was fought by several agents in court, who were subsequently reassigned or subsequently resigned as their Bureau careers came to an abrupt halt.

Supervisors were always at their desks, trying to beat their secretaries in answering the squad telephone. If the ASAC or SAC called, an answering supervisor was proof-positive that his squad was properly supervised; he was there.

In every organization there are people who go to extraordinary lengths in decorating their office space. Typically placed upon a desk are pictures of a spouse, a family member or a close friend, even a pet. Artifacts are also conspicuously placed upon the desk. They are conversation pieces, which the owner is eager to talk about. A fellow employee can make the mistake of picking up an artifact or, worse, asking the owner its significance. The price to pay will be a long-winded conversation about the owner's prowess.

Some artifacts are appropriate conversation pieces, also serving as decorative paperweights. Some agents had items on their desks that looked like they came from a junkyard or were picked up from the streets such as Bernard Whalen's rock. He recovered it from the pathway across the Brooklyn Bridge. Everyday, Whalen ran six miles around lower Manhattan to stay in shape. Unfortunately, one time he did not notice the small rock in his path and stepped on it, twisting and breaking his ankle.

Another agent had an oxygen regulator, used on scuba-diving equipment, prominently placed on his desk. This was to inform all who passed his desk that he was the Bureau's Jacques Costeau. SA Thomas Pierce had many hang-ups besides his oxygen tanks and was called "aquaman," among other less complimentary nicknames.

Other artifacts included attention-getting posters or bumper stickers placed wherever space was available. They denoted the current philosophy of the owner. One sign read, "If you can't fight 'em, join 'em!" Certain events prompted that owner to post the sign. One can only wonder what signs Robert Philip Hanssen or Earl Edwin Pitts had on their desks. It was best not to ask what it meant. Agents who had confrontations with their supervisors were also avoided, lest the same stigma attached to them.

In 1978, Taus worked a criminal case with a seasoned FBI agent, Eddie Woods who was a former Army captain. There were 25 FBI agents assigned to early morning surveillance to arrest the “Bensonhurst Bandits,” a group of young men that robbed banks in the Bensonhurst Brooklyn area. The former Army captain notified all the participating agents and outside agencies (such as the NYPD, NYC EMTs, etc.) days ahead of the event in a general alert. On the morning of the operation, FBI agents and NYPD officers were given a detailed briefing. Schedules were handed out, along with contingency plans, including radio communications, weapons required, safety measures, coordinating points, etc. The arrest went without a hitch. It was a model operation, which could be applied again to other similar cases.

The morning after the Bensonhurst bandits operation Taus thought about Eddie Woods’ operational briefing. It resembled a military operation order. Taus had been through a few FBI operations that were conducted with much less planning and coordination. The reasons were apparent. Even with the FBI manual of instructions, no clear-cut methodology was spelled out to structure any Bureau operation. Whether the operation was a major task force or a small raid on a gambling joint there were no outlines or planning guidance beyond some legal warnings. As a practical matter, the case agent had to formulate his own plans, often using those from similar operations, if he was lucky enough to find a copy of a successful past operation.

The U.S. Army had operational guidelines and planning steps. That was how Woods planned his operation. His office memorandum to the joint task force members included most of the key planning elements, which a successful military operation order would follow. Taus noted it did not include every contingency. One item not addressed was medical evacuation and treatment if someone was shot or injured, a very real possibility, causing Taus to ask about developing such a plan.

Sitting at his desk cluster, Woods was talking with the New York City Police Department on the phone, while another agent patiently sat near Woods waiting his turn to use the phone.

The typical FBI agent was considered a mid-level manager. “Journeyman” level is a government service grade thirteen or GS-13. The title indicates an agent is an investigator. Had the American public known that four agents were sharing a single phone, they might well ask if the investigators were being given adequate tools to pursue their cases. Not every agent had a Bureau car. Many used public transportation to get their leads done. Others felt public transit was demeaning and just did not handle leads requiring them making a trip. The Bureau was quick to point out these measures as cost saving due to a restricted budget. The expression “Penny-wise and pound-foolish” was never heard at FBI headquarters.

There were other administrative problems complicating an investigating agent’s effectiveness. Only one secretary is assigned to each squad and a squad may consist of 17 or more agents. If the secretary has a day-off or is on sick leave, another squad’s secretary must assist. Secretaries only work for their supervisors, so if an agent needed something typed he had to submit his work to a steno pool. Less than six stenos handled the paperwork

created by more than 100 agents. If the stenos became overloaded, the work would be mailed off to the FBI resident agencies to type.

It was not unusual for an agent to wait for several weeks before his paperwork was returned. Corrections may require sending the paperwork back to the RA before it was suitable to be sent to FBIHQ or included in a file. For an agent conducting an intensive investigation, the system was slow and unresponsive. To have paperwork expedited, it required the supervisor's signature.

Woods finally got off the phone. His "cluster mate" quickly grabbed the receiver and started talking to him, "By the way, Eddie, can I borrow your bucar today?"

"Sorry Fred. I'm headed to the 104<sup>th</sup> police precinct on yesterday's arrest." Then, obviously trying to fend off any further requests from Fred, Woods turned to Taus and asked, "What is it?"

"Ed, how did you set up the planning for yesterday's operation?" Woods responded, "Very carefully."

"No, I know that," Taus said, "I mean, did you follow any Bureau planning procedures?" Again Woods answered saying, "Sure, I read the manual (MOI)."

Part of Taus' home library had Army staff manuals with sections on operational planning and orders. He typed up a general warning order and an operation's order. These could be used for any military movement, such as a coordinated attack, retrograde action or defensive position. Taus saw how easily an FBI operation could fit into the topical headings of the written orders. This was what the former Army Captain tried to achieve when he planned the arrests of the Bensonhurst Bandits.

"The MOI doesn't say much on how to plan an operation or for that matter any operation." Woods agreed, "I know. I remembered some things from my Army experiences planning operations." For a moment Taus thought and then said, "I have a book back home from the U.S. Army on infantry operations. It's from a course taught at Fort Benning that covers operational plans. It's comprehensive and I believe the same military steps could be followed in conducting an FBI criminal operation."

"I agree." Woods was interested. "Why don't you look the book over and call the training division at FBI headquarters and see if they are interested. You'll have to light a fire under their pants to get them moving on it." Woods reached into his desk drawer for his Walter's PPK automatic pistol.

Hurriedly, he tried to make his appointment at the local police precinct.

"That pistol is not authorized for Bureau use," Taus pointed out as Woods looped his holster harness around his shoulder and replied, "Neither is a shoulder holster!"

"Aren't you afraid you'll get in trouble?" asked Taus. Woods glared and said, "Yep! That's the reason why I use an automatic and not the revolvers the Bureau issues."

The next day Taus found his old Army manual entitled, "Commander's Tactical Planning Guide." The booklet had all the planning steps for a tactical military operation. It was an invaluable guide that could be adapted to



bureau operations. Taus called FBI headquarters and spoke to the chief of the training section about the Army manual. "Sounds good," said the training supervisor over the phone. "Send down a written proposal and the booklet so I can look it over."

It took five weeks for the steno pool to complete the typing before it could be sent to FBI headquarters. Another month passed, so Taus called the chief of training for his reaction to the proposal. The chief had retired and the paperwork could not be located. "Send us down another copy," added the acting chief, showing some interest.

Having forwarded a second copy, Taus waited another month. Again he called headquarters. For the next three months, various excuses were given: "The chief's out-of-town for two weeks," or "He's been reviewing your proposal. Call next week," or "He's in conference all day," etc. The proposal had found its way into the Bureau abyss. The reason was evident. The imprimatur of the U.S. Army made it unsaleable to the Bureau bosses who would never credit the military with providing them guidance.

This behavioral aloofness was imbrued into the hierarchy of the Bureau. It stifled cooperation with other agencies and created jealousies and ill feelings. This occurred at both a federal and a state level. Many law enforcement agencies throughout the country will attest to the high-handedness by the Bureau when conducting joint investigations. Such behavior included a one-way streak; that is, other agencies supplied the Bureau information, but the Bureau rarely reciprocated, at least not with critical information.

The greatest fault was that many agents, especially supervisors, conveyed an impression they were experts in the field. More often than not, they lacked the experience and expertise that local law enforcement authorities possessed. On too many occasions, the FBI took full credit for an investigation without acknowledging the assistance of other agencies. Those who were responsible for breaking a difficult case resented the FBI. And as always, the Bureau image had to be maintained at all costs, even if brother and sister agents had to be sacrificed.

### **The Civil Rights Squad – Developing One's Program**

Leaning over Taus' desk, Woods said, "Wait till you see the Piper Navajo. I got approval to lease it for our operations." His remarks made Taus nervous. Only a few years ago, another FBI agent had a Navajo. "Whose Navajo is it?" Taus bit his inner lip waiting for the reply. Could it be the same one that took him down to Latin America in the early 1970s?

"Cosmopolitan Airways is renting it to us. Our supervisor wants to take a ride in it tomorrow. Want to go along?" Taus was still concerned and asked, "Did you ever know another agent who flew a Navajo?"

"No, I never knew another agent who could fly helicopters either."

"Does the name Greg Lawson ring a bell?" Woods answered, "Nope, can't say it does." Woods was anxious for Taus to answer his first question, "Well, do you want to go or not? The Navajo has wing tanks. We can stay up all day."

Apparently Woods did not know Lawson. There was no connection. Taus felt less tense and agreed to the flight. The next day Bruce Brontman,

Woods, and Taus met at Islip-MacArthur Airport. Taus had assumed Woods was going to give Brontman a check-ride in the Navajo to make him current by FAA standards. Instead, the next four-hours, while Taus sat in the back seat, Woods gave basic flying lessons to his FBI supervisor. A Cessna 150 or a Piper Cheyenne would have been less expensive for such elementary flight lessons compared to a turbo-charged twin-engine passenger aircraft. If an aerial mission was scheduled on some FBI investigation, Taus would not have minded, but this was a waste of taxpayers' dollars.

Before the day ended, Taus told Woods, "I could have used some of that flying time if you ever intend to have me take a mission in the Navajo."

Brontman called Taus into his office the following day, "Say Rich, the ASAC (Assistant Supervisor-In-Charge) asked for a few mature individuals for his squad. You'll be reporting directly to him. The transfer to the ASAC's squad meant he would handle civil rights violations. They were very frustrating and unexciting investigations and cases that could only ruin an agent's reputation. The ASAC, as his title suggests, was the second person in charge of a Field Office. All of the supervisors answer to him. Often it depended upon the SAC as to how much authority was delegated to the ASAC. SAC Ed Sharpe was an effective leader, earning the respect of his subordinate, concerned for their welfare as much as the Bureau would allow. Rarely did he delegate things, particularly to the new ASAC who was a sly fox himself.

ASAC John Hanlon came to the FBI New York office after a serious dispute with SAC Neil Welch of the FBI's Philadelphia Field Office. Welch would later be made the acting director of the FBI until a political appointee was named as Director. Although Hanlon had a serious fallout with a powerful FBI boss he did not suffer too badly. Hanlon was still a boss of sorts and was assigned to the Big Apple instead of the Great Plains in the desolate Midwest.

Hanlon did not get his promotion to SAC, and the higher cost of living in New York City hurt him financially. It was a disciplinary transfer and he was less than enthusiastic and spent his days making small talk with the female clerics. Two other agents were assigned to Hanlon's squad. Both were

Taus' age, late thirties, but each had over twelve years in the FBI. Bob Dicker and Frank Monserrate had also committed some mortal sins in the Bureau's eyes.

### **The Civil Rights Squad**

It was in the middle of 1979 when a rash of civil rights violations spread across Brooklyn and Queens. The news media had inflamed the public over one incident that involved an innocuous cross burning. The symbolism sent a rippling shock wave through the Black community, which saw an obvious message of racial hatred.

Two small branches, approximately 2-feet long were tied together by string and placed in the front yard of a black couple's home. They had recently moved into an all-white Brooklyn neighborhood. A few white teenagers had committed the minor act consisting of igniting the branches, which burned for a few minutes. Nothing else occurred. The New York media hit

upon it as the coming of a new wave of violence and discrimination, reporting it as the Ku Klux Klan and that a new Nazi organization was not far behind. As could be expected, the media incensed both racial extremes and other minor incidents happened.

People viewed with alarm the new acts of racial bias. There were larger cross-burnings; Nazi Swastikas and racial epitaphs were painted on buildings by teenage vandals, heightening the fears of the non-white public. The media used each incident as fuel for the fires they flamed. The Black community demanded a thorough investigation be undertaken to bring the culprits to justice with a maximum sentence imposed upon them.

Zachary Carter was a young black Assistant United States Attorney (AUSA) in the Eastern District of New York (EDNY). In his late twenties, he was anxious to prove himself when the prosecution was handed over to him. Taus was assigned the case by ASAC Hanlon. New York City Police Department also assigned detectives from the local precinct and police headquarters sent other detectives to canvass the neighborhood for leads. While the greatest rash of bank robberies was occurring in the "Big Apple's" history, the police diverted their attention and manpower to the two burnt twigs still lying on the victim's front lawn.

Trying to direct Taus' investigation, Carter said, "I want you to double check all of the police interviews. Try to develop some informants in the neighborhood. Re-interview the victims and let me know what's happening."

The FBI had taught their agents never to allow the U.S. attorney's office to tell them how to conduct an investigation. The FBI would not act subservient to them. The FBI was an investigative arm of the Department of Justice and Hoover saw the political nature of U.S. attorneys. They were political appointments recommended by U.S. Senators. Hoover demanded aloofness must be maintained by the FBI to avoid the political quagmire.

Hanlon advised Taus, "It's a hot case; politicians are making the most out of it. Everyday the media writes about it. I want you to maintain the FBI's independence from the U.S. attorney's office, but do the investigation. Cover what they ask you to do. Just be sure that they don't tell you *how* to run your investigation. We work for the FBI, not the U.S. attorney's office."

Taus decided to do what Carter wanted, within reason. Fortunately, the immense police effort resulted in a lead; it was the teenage girl friend of one of the cross-burners. She and her boyfriend told the police a story that was doubted. The girl was subpoena to appear at the U.S. attorney's office, where she denied any involvement.

Taus' relationship with Carter became strained. Taus had told Carter that the whole incident was overblown, and Carter felt Taus did not understand racial problems because he was white. Carter's name was making the headlines for his own notoriety and purpose. Taus was offended and pointed out his adoption of a Vietnamese child during the war. If anyone was prejudiced, it was not Taus.

Carter wanted a black FBI agent assigned to the case and called Hanlon to complain about Taus. Hanlon told Carter that Taus was his best agent and

could handle the matter. Hanlon had read Taus' reports and felt he was diligently pursuing all leads. If Carter persisted in complaining, Hanlon would pull Taus off the case, leaving no FBI agents to work it. He could do that, given the epidemic of bank robberies and the FBI manpower needed to cover those cases. Carter relented.

The teenage girlfriend answered Carter's subpoena and came to his office. Taus was present for the questioning and saw that Carter was unable to resolve the conflicting stories she gave. Carter looked with scorn at the worried teen. Finally, Taus reacted. He leaned forward toward the girl and said, "I know this seems to be a minor matter, blown out of proportion. You are not the type of young lady who would become involved with a bad boy friend. I interviewed your boy friend, Vito. He's a decent fellow, but he's made a mistake. These poor minorities don't know him."

Taus continued, "Look at it this way. Everyone wants to live the American dream, a good job, a happy family, a nice home. These minorities are no different. They struggled for what they have. They moved into a neighborhood and suddenly are told to get out. A simple cross is burnt on their lawn. But it's an old symbol of fear and persecution to these people. They are truly in fear. Because they aren't white, should they be forced to suffer? Supposed you lived in an all-black neighborhood and the same thing happened to your family. How would you feel?"

"These people wanted a safe community to live in and raise their children." Taus reached into his pocket and pulled out his wallet. He showed the girl a picture of his, then, 3-year-old adopted Vietnamese son. "This child could not live in his war-torn country. I brought him home to a better life."

Perhaps, Taus was being melodramatic, but it had a positive effect.

The girl was nervously twisting her purse strap when she saw the picture of an emaciated waif. Tears were flowing from her eyes as Taus leaned back in his seat. Carter leaned forward and asked to see the orphan's picture. At that moment, the girl confessed, saying her boy friend and two other friends only meant the cross to be a prank. They intended no harm to the Dominican family residing at that house. She was very sorry.

After she left the office. Carter stood up and stretched his hand across to Taus; Put it there, brother! I had you figured wrong. Thank you for the splendid effort."

After the case went to court, the teenagers received several months of community service working with non-whites. Later, Zachary Carter resigned from the U.S. attorney's office and joined a major Manhattan law firm; the same firm that defended the cross-burners. Carter crossed the legal fence between prosecutor and defender. In the early 1990s, Carter was appointed as the U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of New York.

Taus always wondered how the Dominican family could afford to move into the middle class white neighborhood. During the 1980s, gangs from the Dominican Republic trafficked in drugs. They were particularly active in the five New York City boroughs. When Taus was assigned to the Criminal Division, a vehicle was observed at a Harlem drug meeting. The license plate came back to the same house address where the cross was burned in 1979.

Civil rights cases were uninteresting and laborious. If a prisoner complained his civil rights were violated by a corrections officer or if a private citizen said a police officer had brutalized him, an investigation was opened.

Racial discriminations, anti-Semitism, all required an investigation. Taus even interviewed an inmate at a mental hospital. The inmate's wife claimed he was beaten by the hospital staff. On that occasion, Taus asked Hanlon if it were necessary to interview the mental patient. Hanlon suggested Taus interview the family and close the case.

On a Friday, Taus drove out to Laurelton, Queens, to interview the wife. The family lived in a middle class brick townhouse. The 40-year old wife answered the door and invited Taus into the living room. Deeply distressed, the housewife and mother of two small children had been despondent over her husband's mental condition and incarceration at Creedmour Psychiatric Hospital. She admitted he was not a well man.

Her civil rights complaint was about the beatings her husband allegedly received from the hospital guards. Her husband was prone to uncontrollable rages during which time he would lash out at people. With that comment, Taus was ready to leave and close the case; then he noticed a family portrait in a frame on a small upright piano.

"That's before, when George was at home with the children." Tears filled the woman's eyes. Taus wanted to comfort her in some way, but he was a law enforcement officer not a social worker. The FBI Academy left this area to one's discretion. "I'm very sorry, Mrs. Frescet (alias). You have a fine family. I'll speak to George and the staff at Creedmour tomorrow and let you know what's happening. Please bear with the situation a little longer.

The interview took place the following day, and Taus arrived at Creedmour on a rainy afternoon. The staff appeared happy despite the depressing weather. A health professional told Taus that some of the staff took medication, including unauthorized drugs. Perhaps they needed some "happy pills" in order to work in such a depressing environment.

The interview was conducted in a locked ward with a psychiatrist attending, along with his patient, George Frescet and a few physically strong interns. Sitting around a small card table in the ward, George reached into his robe's pockets and produced a deck of playing cards. The doctor said, "No George, this man is an FBI agent who is here to talk with about your complaint."

Before long, George told Taus he was a personal friend of Al Capone, the 1930s Chicago gangster. When it was apparent that George had completely taken leave of his senses, Taus decided to end the interview. Before he did, Taus explained the hardships that George had created for his family. The doctor shook his head as if to inform Taus that his words were falling on deaf ears. As Taus stood up to leave, George smiled and placed the deck of cards on the table. There were several cards missing from the deck, but that did not stop him from dealing cards to the three men at the table.

George asked Taus to sit down and play cards. Taus declined.

"Why not?" asked George. Taus looked at the doctor who was still shaking his head and said, "Because you don't have a full deck." George dis-

agreed, "Yes, I have. There are 52 cards in this deck."

"That's not the deck I'm talking about," replied Taus as he departed.

Before returning home that evening, Taus paid a courtesy call to George's distraught wife. Though he carefully explained there was little the FBI could do, she seemed to feel better that someone had at least tried to help.

When an interview is conducted, a nearly verbatim written record is prepared by the interviewing agent. When typed, it's called a "302 Form." Taus wrote about the interview with George, including his mention of knowing Al Capone. It was obvious he did not, but Taus added everything to the form. He submitted a report on the ASAC's desk following routine procedures.

Evidently, Hanlon had nothing to do that day and, instead of just signing reports, he read it, and then called Taus into his office. "You can't put that in a report," admonished Hanlon, "saying he was playing without a full deck."

"It doesn't say that. I wrote he was playing with only half a deck." Hanlon grimaced, "You know what I mean Rich; redo that part."

Taus had Hanlon over a barrel. For the past seven months, Taus handled all the civil rights cases. It was time to ask Hanlon for a favor. Taus wanted to go back to the Criminal Division squad. The timing was bad; a draft was underway for more agents in the FCI Division. FBI New York office supervisors had convinced congressional staffers that the FBI needed more manpower for national security reasons. Congress could not ignore that request.

The Bureau would go through contrived exercises to show Congress it needed new agents. This was done by transferring agents from the Criminal to the FCI Division. Six months later, these agents would be reassigned back to their criminal squads as new agent recruits graduated from the FBI academy. The new agents were then assigned to the FCI Division. Taus was assigned to the Soviet Satellite FCI Division in Manhattan.

Agents Bob Dicker and Frank Monserrate, who both worked less than 4 cases between them, were also transferred to their "office of preference" in the FBI's Miami Field Office.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

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### Transfer to Foreign-Counter Intelligence Division

In 1980, Taus had requested a transfer to a criminal squad in the Brooklyn-Queens FBI Office and after several months on the ASAC's squad, Hanlon called Taus into his office. "Rich, the NYO has a draft for agents on their FCI Division. You'll be going into Manhattan." This wasn't what Taus had requested. Taus' friends, who worked in the FCI Division, complained that the work was boring.

"We have no choice," Hanlon said. "Congress had increased the number of agents working FCI matters. We've got to assign people there. Several agents in this office and other Field Offices are being drafted. You see Rich, we cannot grant your request [for the criminal squad]. Things are based upon the 'needs of the service' first. You will have to go to FCI."

The trip into the lower Manhattan office added another 45-minutes to Taus' one-way commute and cost him \$125 extra a month in train and subway fares. He was not assigned a bucar on the FCI squad. With 15 agents on most criminal squads, there weren't enough bucars assigned to cover transportation needs. Some squads had a car for each agent. This was not the case for the FCI squads that ranged in size from 12 to 19 agents.

The majority of agents assigned to the New York office came from New Jersey where living expenses were less. Nearly all of the bucars headed to New Jersey at night from the New York office, returning the next day with the commuting agents. One or two of the decrepit bucar wrecks that no one wanted went to Long Island. Taus and several newly assigned Long Island agents would have to take the Long Island Railroad and New York Transit System. The rest of the working public had to deal with the massive transportation problems, so why not agents. The high qualities demanded of a person before hiring was not reflected in the salary. Many agents resigned, taking better paying jobs in the private sector. FBI hiring standards were then lowered, bringing in younger and less qualified people. These reductions in standards continued as the Bureau attempted to hire more minorities.

The New York office supervisor, who had a new GSA bucar, would tell the agents that New York City had the best transportation system in the

country. "Use it to do your investigations. You'll never worry about parking.

He would add, "If you need a car, and mine is available, ask me."

God forbid an agent who borrowed his supervisor's car had a fender-bender. He would have hell to pay. No matter who was at fault, the Bureau would pay for the accident and chastise the agent. Every accident, no matter how slight, required an official investigation, including interviews, police reports and voluminous paperwork. The unlucky agent who had the accident would be assigned the next accident investigation as a form of punishment.

FCI agents resented the Criminal Division agents in the New York office because they all had bucars. Emphasis went to organized crime and criminal cases. They would generate more favorable media exposure for the FBI, showing the public the great job the FBI was doing. The Bureau image would be enhanced. FCI cases offered no rewards. They had to be handled low-keyed. There were few arrests in FCI matters. Such cases had to be coordinated with the U.S. Department of State, which usually declined any actions, fearing the respondent's country would retaliate in some diplomatic fashion or otherwise be offended.

In practice, foreign counter-intelligence meant just that. The job of the FBI was to neutralize any hostile government or person's efforts at obtaining information that could affect the national security of the United States.

Often the FBI openly followed spies just to let them know they were under surveillance. But care had to be taken or the hostile country would register a diplomatic protest at the United Nations or with world opinion.

When arrests were made, the subject was usually deported and labeled as Personal Non Grata. That usually resulted in the offended country taking actions against U.S. diplomatic personnel overseas by doing the same. FCI agents primarily wrote reports. Any and all information about the subjects in a case would be included in those reports. Just like criminal investigations, agents were sent undercover to develop more information. Informants were relied upon heavily. If an agent did not have an informant, he was not doing an acceptable job.

People became informants for a variety of reasons. In the Lufthansa Airlines robbery case, called Lufrob, revenge was a key motive. Another reason was money; informants were paid for valuable information. Those with a sense of patriotic duty offered the least valuable information. Unless an informant was close to the subject in a Criminal Division case or in a position of importance in an FCI case, the informant's information was marginally useful. Ideally, an informant was in the employ of the targeted organization and could provide the FBI with confidential inside information. The informant would be in a position to affect that organization. But finding such an informant was difficult. These informants were, at times, referred to as "assets" or "sources" of the FBI.

### **The Asian FCI Squad**

Welcoming two new agents to his FCI squad, SSA Joseph O'Brien explained his squad's mission. "We cover the Asiatic communist countries. Congress had increased our budget and manpower authorization. They came down here last year with some congressional staffers to ascertain our role in



handling these FCI matters. We poured it on thick and heavy.”

Raising a hand to cover his grin, O’Brien continued, “Gosh, they believed every word!” It was not that the Bureau would lie to Congress; they called it by different names. Exaggeration was one name. O’Brien said, “So you new agents will be helping us out.”

SSA Joe O’Brien was a tall lanky Irishman, sandy brown hair, blue eyes and a bushy handlebar mustache. He wore a shamrock pin on his coat’s lapel. Individually, O’Brien interviewed the two new agents. Taus gained no further insight on why he was assigned to that squad. O’Brien only said, “You were drafted. That’s all. A lot of agents were simply transferred. Did you tick-off the ASAC?”

In a defensive reaction, Taus noted his heavy caseload and congratulatory memos in his personnel file. “I worked every case assigned to me and then some.”

O’Brien continued, “You will not be under much pressure here. The State Department has the last word as to whether or not we make any arrests. Even then, it’s a question whether or not the U.S. Attorney’s office will prosecute the case. Normally, we wait until the Soviet Bloc countries do something to one of our diplomats before we accuse them of anything. It’s political. What can I tell you?” O’Brien continued:

*I see you have less than 2 years in the Bureau. Let me tell you, we play some games here. When the congressional staff people came into my office last year, it was the result of the Bureau’s appeal for a larger budget. But, we didn’t say it that way. We said more manpower and additional resources were needed to handle the FCI mission assigned to us. So Congress sent a research team to the NYO to ascertain exactly what was needed.*

*We ‘snowed’ them. We took them around in the worst bucars, through the worst areas, showing them the problems that a typical New York agent faces here and the amount of cases we’re supposed to handle. In short, we convinced them we needed the increases. They bought it.”*

Taus wanted to work serious cases, not increase meaningless Bureau statistics. “If you are telling me there isn’t much pressure here, why did the Bureau lie to Congress?”

O’Brien wanted to make sure he had not said the wrong things to the wrong person and asked, “Whose team are you on Rich?” Taus responded, “Your team now.” Suddenly it dawned on O’Brien that he failed to explain the real reason for asking Congress to increase the FBI appropriations.

*We’ll use what they give us. The increase will come to the FCI Divisions first. That’s why you are here. Then it will be drawn off to the Criminal Division, which uses more manpower. Congress will not increase the size of the FBI so we can increase our criminal investigations. Hell, that might mean we could start investigating some congressional members and their crimes. But, if we cry the national security of the country is being jeopardized, then Congress will react.”*

Taus asked, “Could you explain how this manpower and budget are shifted

over to the Criminal's use?"

Taus had poorly phrased his question, but O'Brien understood his meaning and answered. "Criminal Division, you mean! Division II is the NYO's Criminal Investigative Division. As you know at BQMRA, you had several squads handling those matters. Here we have one whole division under a SAC with a couple of hundred agents assigned to cover organized crimes and other criminal cases. For the Bureau to maintain its image, we need to beef-up those investigations. Has our past work been satisfactory?" O'Brien posed a question trying to establish a point. "As far as I know from working cases at BQ and reading the newspapers, Yes." O'Brien replied:

*Sure, but the Assistant Directors at FBIHQ wants us to enhance the Bureau's image. They can do this by increasing its size. In several months, criminal investigations will be intensified by us, creating the need to transfer agents over to the criminal side of the house. You'll have an opportunity then to get on a criminal squad. The supervisors realize there isn't too much work on this side, so if you do a good job and don't create any waves, we'll transfer you back in the next draft.*

O'Brien's secretary handed him 25 "tickets," assigned cases. When Taus asked for a bucar to handle the leads, O'Brien told him there were 15 agents on the squad and only four bucars. Taus asked where the other cars went that were authorized by Congress. The Criminal Division already had them. Nearly every agent on a criminal squad had a car. Every FBI agent had a job to do, but some were given resources to accomplish it while others had to fend for themselves.

Using the New York's mass transit system for physical surveillance was out of the question. Not only couldn't it be done, but depending upon the season, the FBI agent would either freeze or roast using mass transit. An agent was frazzled before an interview was started after riding on a hot subway car during the summer months.

Concealing the Bureau issued revolver also became a problem when wearing light summer clothes. An agent had to buy an ankle holster and wear a four-pound revolver strapped around his ankle. Some agents purchased smaller revolvers like the five-shot Smith & Wesson Chief's Special. These were purchased with the agent's own funds and then had to be inspected by an FBI firearms instructor.

Some agents also bought larger S&Ws or Colts for firearms practice, which was required eight times a year. Four sessions were conducted indoors during winter and four sessions outdoors during warm weather. An agent must shoot a minimum score or retake the course. If an agent fails to requalify, his weapon is supposed to be removed. Taus never heard of anyone losing their weapon for failing to qualify.

Within the deep crevices of Bureau safes were records showing how many revolvers, badges, credentials and other government items, agents had lost. It was an unwritten rule that before an agent left the office he would stand up at his desk and start palming his breasts, hips and thighs, searching for lumps created by weapons, credentials, badges, handcuffs, and wallet.

Misplacing any of these Items could result in a censure letter.

Palming the body was a ritual, as if to invoke the powers of some mysterious deity to insure an agent had all his worldly Bureau possessions. The same held true for the female agents, and their search included rummaging through their Bureau-issued purses. In desperation, a female agent would dump her purse upon the desk to locate the secreted 4-pound weapon.

Whether male or female, the same confused expression appeared on their faces when they discovered an item was missing. "Did I put it in my pocket? Did I leave it at home? Once the item was found, a feeling of deep relief and a relieved smile erased the worried frown.

If a Bureau property item were lost or missing, an agent would receive the dreaded "Letter of Censure." An official written reprimand would be placed in the agent's personnel file. There were two personnel files on each agent: One file was placed in an office cabinet. That file contained routine personnel data, while the other file was placed in a safe. An agent never saw his file firsthand. If an agent wanted to see his file, he had to make a special request. The written request allowed those in charge to review the file and further abridge any information they did not want the agent to see.

"Letters of Censure" were not so bad, unless they carried punitive actions such as the loss of pay. "A few days on the beach" was an expression used when an agent pay was deducted. The usual period could be a month. Greater punishments could include an involuntary transfer or a request for that agent's resignation. The realm of probabilities could be stretched even further for graver situations. Civil and criminal charges could be filed against an agent.

Although each FBI Field Office had a legal counsel and staff, they were there to represent the Bureau and not the individual agent. FBI agents had to hire their own lawyer if they encountered any difficulties. The Bureau did not back its agents where there was any doubt of the correctness of their actions.

### **Outdoor Firearms Training**

Often a change of pace from the office commute and routine was the trips to the outdoor firing ranges. These existed at the Peekskill Army National Guard training base, Camp Smith, and at Calverton Airport on Long Island.

During the ten years since Taus had joined the FBI, firearms training never varied. The revolver was fired at 60 feet and closer in what was termed a tactical combat revolver (TCR) course. Training on a close combat course was also given with sixty rounds being fired at ranges of twenty-five feet and closer. Within five years, training with the Remington Model 760 pump rifle ceased. It was replaced by the full automatic M16 Colt Armalite rifle, which only the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) teams used.

The Remington Model 870 Pump Shotgun stayed in vogue, creating large black-and-blue welds on even experienced shooters' shoulders. Most agents disliked firing this bruiser; and, rarely had one ever been discharged in the city, except unintentionally by a careless agent. It was a comforting weapon to have by one's side during an arrest situation, but not on the firing range.

At Camp Smith, agents could fire the shotgun on a skeet range. "Pull high, pull low, doubles!" were the calls as an agent took his turn firing from a semi-circular range. Taus wondered if criminals acted the same as clay birds. There were a number of incidences that involved shooting fleeing suspects in the back.

The Bureau's arsenal also had the M79 grenade launcher that resembled a sawed-off shotgun, but with a much wider diameter barrel. Pushing a lever near its pistol grip opened the receiver end of the weapon, allowing a large round to be inserted. The Bureau used a variety of projectiles: tear gas, smoke, concussion and high explosive.

An older firearms instructor gave out misinformation on the M79, a weapon that Taus knew how to operate while on active duty in the Army. During Taus' second tour of duty in Vietnam he carried an M79 whenever he was flying. Having been in several crashes, confronting the enemy was a distinct possibility. With an M79, a soldier had a small Army.

The firearms instructor placed the M79 to his shoulder and pointed the muzzle down range. He pulled the trigger. A round came spiraling out and hit a small tree. As he lowered the weapon, the instructor complimented himself on the hit. One agent in the class cried out, "You didn't tell us what target you were aiming to hit!"

The agents agreed, putting the instructor on the spot. "Okay wise guy!" shouted the instructor as he scanned the group looking for the initial heckler. "If you think you can do better, have a try." No one accepted the sarcastic invitation. After a few more seconds, the instructor lowered his empty gun thinking he made his point when Taus stepped forward. "I'll need at least one round to hit a target," Taus noted.

Handing Taus a round, the instructor picked out a tree, which was at twice the distance than the one he had struck. "It isn't fair shooting at that tree," said Taus. "It's too close. Do you see that small black boulder between the two Spruce trees near the top of the ridge? That's my target."

The spot was fully 300 meters away, the maximum range of the M79. There was a greater chance the round would entirely miss the rock and sail over the range. It made the instructor beam with joy as he watched Taus adjust the M79 sights to their maximum elevation.

The weapon produced a large pop with the round traveling towards the ridgeline. Did the shot go over the ridge? Fractions of seconds seemed like minutes. Then in the distance, a small white cloud burst upon the targeted rock. The impact noise followed in a second, "Pow-ump," as it hit dead center. The group cheered and applauded, while Taus tried to soften the ego blow to the Instructor: "You taught us good."

The firearms instructor was a former New York City Police Officer before joining the FBI. He had two agents get in a bucar to drive down to the firing range for a shootout. Each agent carried their revolvers and one had a shotgun. At a signal from the instructor, the bucar traveled down the dirt path from the parking lot to the range and would stop at an empty 55-gallon barrel, at which time the agents exited. The agent with the shotgun would exist first, placing his shotgun over the hood and fire downrange. Mean-

while, the driver would exit and hide behind the barrel, firing his revolver at the same target downrange, then reload. Once both agents had reloaded, they ran closer to the target, much the same way as they trained on the TCR course, insuring the paper silhouette target was fully perforated.

Taus rarely saw the 55-gallon drums on the streets of New York. Still, the instructor made the practice session more realistic. No one dared to criticize the former New York Police Department cop who looked like Jake "The Raging Bull" Lamota. Part of the day's training consisted of defensive tactics, including boxing using headgear and gloves.

Despite the self-regimented physical fitness program, agents were not in shape like they were at the FBI Academy and injuries occurred. Several knocked out teeth and a few broken bones later made the Bureau cancel the boxing portion, much to the sadistic displeasure of the instructor who exclaimed, "We got a lot of cry babies here!"

The truth was that the Bureau had a lot of sick people in its employ. Agents would take sick leave the day following the sessions because of the physical injuries they suffered. Other defensive tactics were taught such as wrestling, judo and handcuffing. The instructor took pleasure in using agents to demonstrate the proper wrestling techniques, judo throws and takedown procedures. If an agent had joked around earlier during the firearms portion, retribution was at hand during the defensive tactics portion.

The firearms instructor would say, "Now we'll go through the sleeper hold, and handcuff the subject. Say Harry, you didn't do well following my directions on the firing line, did you? How about coming over here so I can demonstrate this hold for the rest of the class."

From a fashion standpoint, agents were required to purchase a range uniform, similar to work clothes from Sears or Woolco, where a gas station attendant might go for his ensemble. The range outfit was a long-sleeved gray work shirt, gray trousers and a blue baseball cap, all having no insignias, medals or badges. Later in the 1980s, the Bureau adopted a dark blue shirt and tan trousers. Evidentially some Bureau fashion designer thought the colors were more synonymous with the FBI's emblem.

The sessions at Calverton would end at noon, and agents would stop for lunch or coffee on their way home. Dressed in their Sears' work clothes, they looked like they just finished servicing an auto fleet. They were also covered in dirt from rolling around on the ground during the courses. They had earned an early noontime release.

### **Asian FBI Squad**

Sitting at his desk, Taus asked: "Does anyone here speak Chinese?" It was clumped among twelve other agents' desks on SSA Joseph O'Brien's squad, which handled the People's Republic of China, Vietnam and North Korea.

"No one here speaks any Asian languages. Gary Ki How and Bruce Chang do. They are assigned to the Criminal Division." This response amazed Taus. Of the thirteen agents on the Asian FCI squad, eleven were white males and two were white females. Not one could speak Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean, or for that matter any other Asian languages. Fur-

thermore, not one agent said he wanted to be assigned to that squad. At least none admitted it.

“How do we interview the subjects, if we cannot speak their language?” asked Taus. Sitting at a desk next to him, SA George Brown answered. “We don’t. Why would you want to interview any of our case subjects?” Brown seemed confused by Taus’ investigative style. Brown was an English major at a Catholic University. He decided to become a G-man.

“Aren’t we conducting investigations,” Taus questioned. “We’ll need to interview these subjects and their associates at some point.”

Brown knew his answer was not satisfying Taus so Brown changed gears. “Well, that’s easy. Just ask Ki How or Chang or one of the language translators to go along with you on the interview. You will have to coordinate it all with both O’Brien and their supervisor. You need permission to use the language translators too.”

As he scratched his head, Taus knew the pressures in this job would not be the actual investigation, but the cumbersome administrative process involved in proposing and conducting an interview.

Sarah Edwards (alias) had just returned to her desk. She was one of the two female agents on the squad. Placing a Bloomingdale shopping bag on her desk, she leaned over to where Vetta Lieberman (alias) was seated on the opposite side. Nearly whispering, she said, “I’ve got a beautiful full-length sweater today. It was on sale at Bloomie’s. Gaining Vetta’s attention and George Brown’s as well, Sarah repositioned the shopping bag on the floor under her desk. Brown eyeballed it and asked, “Shopping again? Did you buy me anything?”

“Oh, shut-up George! I see you going out and buying those perverted nudie books at Ralph’s bookstore during the day. Brown’s smile disappeared as a deep red blush covered his serious expression. Sarah had successfully shifted the conversation back to Vetta and displayed the contents of the bag. As she held-up the sweater, O’Brien returned from the ASAC supervisors’ meeting and announced, “Everyone, we’re going to have a short squad conference right now. Come into my office.” He looked at the sweater and shopping bag as Sarah’s face developed the same flushed tone as Brown wore.

Only 8 squad members were present. The rest would be informed later. Before O’Brien took his seat behind his desk, he straightened out a slanted picture of Northern Ireland, which was hanging on the partition wall. The agents brought in their own chairs and anxiously waited for whatever words of wisdom had come down from the ASAC.

“SAC MacGordy is cracking down on everything. If you have a bucar, get it serviced at the Bureau garage on its scheduled maintenance date.” The hasty conference covered routine matters. Taus had expected O’Brien to say something about Sarah’s shopping bag, but he did not. Concluding the meeting, everyone departed slowly with Brown leaving last.

“Say George, did you stop at Ralph’s today?” O’Brien’s remark was overheard by Sarah and Taus. Sarah sharply told Taus, “Brown must have a real informant over there.” Then she laughed.

Eager to please, George said, "Yes, I got a few magazines in my drawers." My gosh, Taus thought, the supervisor is a voyeur too!

George rushed to his desk and pulled out the magazines. Taus could see the titles, Computer World, Software & Hardware, Guide to PCs. Brown and O'Brien had home computers.

Taus sat at his desk, near Sarah's and asked her, "Were those George's nudie magazines?"

Without saying a word, Sarah walked over to George's desk and opened a lower drawer, pulling out several issues of "Penthouse" and "Girls Galore." Grinning at Taus, she did not have to say anything else.

Brown exited O'Brien's office with one magazine and a batch of questionnaires in one hand. He said O'Brien wanted all agents to complete the "Career Sheets," a periodical update of an agent's skills, talents and training. "The Boss forgot to hand these sheets out during the conference. Hand them back to Christina (the squad secretary)."

"And do them today!" Christinia snapped as she collected the "Three cards" on her cluttered desktop. The secretary on the adjacent squad was out on sick leave and Christinia had to handle her work too. As everyone listened, she shuffled the cards and added, "Don't ask me to do any typing today either." She was upset. Her rotund figure bugled from every seam on her one-piece polyester dress. Secretaries in the private sector were paid much more and had less work. Why did she have to subject herself to this punishment? Although she appeared outspoken, she was inwardly very shy. Her weight had discouraged her from pursuing other employment opportunities. The fear of rejection constantly hammered away at the hard shell she had constructed around herself. She could be very understanding and sweet at times.

The Career Sheets had questions, asking agents to list all their qualifications, skills and experiences. It was similar to a job application. Once in a while, agents were told to complete the Career Sheets. An update would have been sufficient and the laborious process of providing such data could have been streamlined. This was the process gone through by the nation's number two information collection agency.

The number one collector of information was supposed to be the CIA. Long ago they had replaced their information collection with covert operations. The National Security Agency at Fort Meade, Maryland was the real information collector. Since the CIA's establishment, its covert operations branch had dominated the company. Reviewing the news from the second half of the twentieth century, the CIA has been repeatedly admonished for lacking information on critical events and criticized for exposures of their corrupt and criminal covert section.

"George, I completed this form twice at BQMRA," Taus noted, trying to avoid more unnecessary paperwork. George was happily going over his sheet and said, "So what? Do it again. If the Bureau wants roses, we give them roses."

For nearly two hours. Brown sat at his desk concentrating on the Career Sheet. Finally Taus asked, "Why is it taking you so long to complete a form

you did a few months ago?"

Beaming, Brown held up his work and sailed it across the desktops to Taus. Four sheets were completed listing expertise in every conceivable field. "They'll never believe this!" Taus said.

"Only if they read it." Brown was right. Nothing was ever said to him before. In another six months, the squad would be told to complete another questionnaire.

Several months after Taus' arrival on the squad, O'Brien went on vacation to Ireland. He had complained about difficulties in securing permission from the Bureau to make the trip. There was much strife caused by the Irish opposition to the military occupation by British troops. O'Brien was against England's involvement. On this trip, O'Brien evidently went to the wrong area while over there and was arrested by British soldiers. Scotland Yard discovered he was an FBI agent and handed the matter over to the Bureau. The upper echelon of the Bureau sympathized with O'Brien's position on Ireland and may have abetted his actions.



## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

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### Lufthansa Airlines Robbery

It was 10 p.m., Saturday night, February 23, 1980, when Taus' home phone rang. FBI agent Eddie Woods called him for a flight mission out of Cosmopolitan Airways at Republic Airport in Farmingdale, Long Island. The case agent on the Lufthansa Airlines Robbery case (Lufrob) at JFK International Airport had located his prime suspect at a motel in Riverhead, near the eastern end of Long Island. The case agent wanted air coverage.

Lufrob was an FBI acronym for Lufthansa Robbery. The name was composed by the FBI as an operational code name for the large payroll robbery committed at Kennedy Airport. The heist was done by several insiders, among them the same armed guards entrusted to protect the money. Estimates of the theft were as high as \$14 million. A movie was later made of the case called "Goodfellars," starring Ray Liotta.

Reportedly, several of the perpetrators were killed by the Mafia. An informant came forward after one of the guards was found shot to death. The informant said the dead guard was his close friend and that organized crime had killed him because he was talking too much. The informant put the case agent onto the trail of the suspected ringleader.

It was snowing that Saturday night. Woods insisted Taus depart for the airfield and wait for an expected weather improvement. Taus had promised his son a birthday surprise the next day, which had to be canceled.

By 1 a.m. it quit snowing as Woods called Republic Airport, asking for Taus. Woods provided directions, telling Taus to take a leased Cessna 172 and fly over Riverhead. The Cessna was equipped with a sophisticated tracking device that was extremely difficult to use. An electronic device that emitted signals was attached to the suspect's car. The signals registered on a video screen mounted in the aircraft. It was installed by the FBI Technical Services Division in the New York office. However, they had installed it "ass-backwards" and whatever direction the suspect took, it registered the opposite direction. It was like trying to cut one's hair while looking into a mirror and while trying to fly an aircraft at the same time.

The Cessna was parked at Cosmopolitan's ramp. The aircraft engine was

stone cold and covered with snow. It had to be warmed by a heating machine that blew hot air onto it. Initially, the heating machine refused to start due to the low temperatures. An hour past before things started working. By 3 a.m. Taus and another FBI agent, who acted as an observer, departed from Republic for Riverhead.

At 2000 feet over Riverhead, a small dot appeared on the aircraft's video monitor, showing the signal from the suspect's car. The aircraft began running low on fuel at 7 a.m. from circling with two pilots and the extra electronic equipment. The nearest airport was Suffolk County National Guard Airbase. It was closed due to the snow. Taus radioed Suffolk Tower, getting no response. He then called the FAA Flight Service Station (FSS), identifying himself as an "Idaho Flight" needing emergency refueling at Suffolk. The FSS telephoned Suffolk Airbase Headquarters and asked for assistance. Within 10 minutes, Taus heard Suffolk Tower calling his aircraft, "Sorry Cessna 33725, Suffolk is closed. Try Islip Airport, over."

"No can do Suffolk. 33725 is an Idaho Flight low on fuel. We need to land now and refuel. The Idaho code word alerted air traffic controllers to expedite take-offs, clearances and landings for law enforcement flights. "Roger 33725, I am having our snow plow clear an area for you on Runway One-Two-Zero. It will take at least 15 minutes, over."

"33725 understands. We will circle for 5 minutes before commencing our landing approach. Please notify the plow to hurry. We'll have no choice but to land, out."

After seven minutes, Taus started the approach. The Tower said the plow cleared about 500 feet. "Roger, 33725 always wanted to be a Naval carrier aviator."

The Cessna dropped low over the approach threshold. Taus slowly flared the aircraft, reducing airspeed until the stall warning horn sounded its rasping toots. The airspeed indicator showed less than 60 knots, at that point it was unreliable. Only the mushiness of the aircraft controls told Taus he was about to lose control. Twenty feet over the snow drifts on the runway, the aircraft was still a hundred feet short of the plowed area. "No real problem," Taus told his observer, "So we land in a snow drift. We wouldn't burn. There's no more fuel on board!"

Increasing power ever so slightly the aircraft nearly hovered over to the cleared black asphalt revealed by the plow's blades. It touched down and stopped within the 500 feet. Taus looked at his observer whose face was as white as the snow. "Relax, Frank. It was a piece of cake."

Within 20 minutes, after more of the runway was cleared, they took off with a full fuel load. Once airborne, they radioed the FBI ground surveillance teams. Taus discovered that the suspect's dark blue Ford Thunderbird had moved. "The 'package' is heading westbound on the Long Island Expressway. We are following it and passing Exit 55 now." The ground unit's directions were enough. Soon the blip was picked up on the aircraft's video monitor. By then, the observer could see the car on the highway.

As the car entered the "Cityline" in Queens, it exited the Long Island Expressway and started under the elevated subway tracks. The ground units

would soon lose their air coverage. Taus radioed, "If you're going to take him, make it now. I'm losing him under the train tracks." The electronic monitor was not accurate enough to precisely locate the car. The signal extended for a mile, much too wide an area to find the suspect. The FBI ground units closed in and made the arrest but the Lufthansa robbery money was never recovered.

Monday morning's edition of *The New York Daily News* contained columnist Jimmy Breslin's account of what happened Sunday morning. Breslin had his own informants in law enforcement agencies. Most journalists had more informants than FBI agents. Breslin's story said "The FBI helicopter ordered the ground units to close in and make the arrest when the suspect's car drove under the "EI" (elevated train.)

New York City Police Department knew that Taus had flown the aerial surveillance on the Bensonhurst Bandits and had nicknamed him "Chopper Pilot." It was evident from the mistaken description of the Cessna, as a helicopter by Breslin, that a Police Officer told the journalist the story. The news leaks could be easily located, but it was not necessary. The Bureau too often provided leaks to the press. Whoever supplied the leak was unaware that a helicopter could not stay aloft for such an extended period of time.

On occasion, an FBI squad car was stolen and stripped of its radio equipment. Sometimes the Mafia acquired the equipment and monitored the FBI's radio transmissions. It was quite possible the Soviet also acquire the missing radio equipment.



## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

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### **RICO and the Bonanno Organized Crime Squad**

**D**uring 1980 while Taus was assigned to the Asian FCI squad at the FBINYO, his supervisor peered over his cubicle partitions looking for people to do an odd job. He spotted Taus at his desk and called him into his office. “I’ve got a job for you. There’s a meeting at ten this morning in the ADIC’s conference room. They’ve got some professor who will be giving a legal briefing. Do me a favor and be there. And look interested.”

Any Bureau legal lectures would muster all the strength an agent had just to pretend to be interested. Taus attended the meeting. On the 28<sup>th</sup> floor was the reception area. It blocked egress to the inner areas that contained the Assistant Director/Deputy Assistant Director, SAC and Legal Advisor’s offices. On the opposite side of the floor was the Criminal Division. Nearly 250 agents were assigned to work criminal matters. The lower three floors, the 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> were other FBI offices and working areas such as the FBI Photo Laboratory.

The 25<sup>th</sup> floor included two Foreign Counter-Intelligence Divisions, the Soviet and Soviet Satellites. The 26<sup>th</sup> floor had an entire half filled with FBI case files, the opposite side had the secretive “Confidential Informant Files Unit (CIFU). On the 27<sup>th</sup> floor, there was the Photo Lab and the Technical Services Unit along with the FBI Command Center. Other offices were scattered between the floors and included a weapons arsenal, an Intelligence library, fingerprint and mug-shot room, etc.

The legal lecture topic concerned organized crime, yet few agents from the Criminal Division were in attendance. The FBINYO bosses had to reach down to the FCI Division to “field” an audience.

The conference room’s thick plush carpet and long walnut wood library table surrounded by padded captain’s chairs was quite a different atmosphere than the recycled GSA gray metal desks and wobbly chairs which sat upon the matted indoor/outdoor carpet in the agent’s workplaces.

Taus saw many new agents from the FCI Divisions gathered in the conference room. He took a seat midway along the conference table and en-

joyed the comfort of the cushioned chair. Just then, the guest lecturer entered with a supervisor from the Criminal Division. The supervisor introduced the professor and then left the room. He felt he had better things to do, Taus thought. As Taus looked about the room, there were no supervisors in attendance and most of the audience were new agents from other divisions than the Criminal one. This was bound to be a boring lecture.

However, Taus recognized the professor. It had been fourteen-years since they last met. Professor G. Robert Blakely was Taus' Property law Professor at the University of Notre Dame School of Law in 1965. Professor Blakely was hired on the faculty of the renowned university because of his outstanding credentials. Blakely was an Assistant U.S. Attorney working for Robert Kennedy, the U.S. Attorney General and brother to President John F. Kennedy in the early 1960s.

During that time, Robert Kennedy engaged in a two-front war, one against organized crime and the other fending off the belligerent Director of the FBI, J. Edgar Hoover. Robert Kennedy and his legal staff attorneys, which included Professor Blakely, had developed the new RICO statute (Racketeering Influenced & Corrupt Organizations Act). It was directed against the criminal activities or enterprises that operated across state lines in support of organized crime. The legislation that created the RICO statute made it an effective tool for investigators and prosecutors. For years, it was rarely employed. Professor Blakely was crusading for its use in the early 1980s.

Working at Cornell University School of Law, as well as at Notre Dame, Professor Blakely covered the salient points of the RICO statute and its use. He seemed pleased to be speaking with, as he put it "the people who would carry out the investigations using this statute." Taus again gazed around the room. One supervisor had entered the room from the Criminal Division. The rest of the audience was FCI agents with a small sprinkling of some newly assigned criminal agents. Less than 25 agents attended.

By noon, everyone was fidgeting, anxious to end the lecture and have lunch. Professor Blakely concluded his remarks and asked if there were any questions. There were none. He thanked the group for attending and wished them luck in the future using the RICO statute. Blakely added that he appreciated the opportunity in presenting this class to the supervisors in the FBINYO's Criminal Division. The agents quickly trickled out of the conference room, some mentioning that they were late for the gym, while others discussed where to have lunch. No one had taken any notes. Blakely, Taus and a relief-supervisor from a Criminal squad were now left in the room.

"How do you do. Professor? I'm Richard Taus, a law student of yours back in 1965 at the University of Notre Dame."

"Why, of course! I thought your face looked familiar. I am very happy to see you again, particularly since you will be involved in this effort."

"Professor, I respected your efforts long ago, back in law school, so let me be honest with you." Before continuing though, Taus was interrupted by the Relief-Supervisor who noted their friendship and used it as a reason to excuse himself. "Professor Blakely, things are not as they appear. You were

not speaking to the leaders of the FBINYO. To make matters worse, I recognized only three agents here that work organized crime cases. Only one Criminal Division supervisor showed up, and that was only for a half-hour. The majority of those in attendance came from the FCI Division, including me. It's most unlikely that any of us will ever handle a RICO investigation unless the NYO reassigns us to a criminal squad.

Blakely's face was normally pale as Taus remembered from Notre Dame, but his shocked expression worried Taus. He did not want to cause Blakely any consternation. "I don't mean to discourage you, but in good conscience I feel I must let you know that you have not reach the "movers and shakers" in this organization."

The Relief-Supervisor returned to escort Blakely. Blakely looked at his watch and told Taus he had some time available before his departure from New York. Would Taus be interested in having lunch with him? It was apparent Blakely was upset and wanted to better understand the charade. They decided to have lunch at a nearby restaurant in Chinatown. Blakely was indeed disconcerted over the lack of attention accorded his lecture and determined to do something about the Bureau's apathy to his program.

"Back at Notre Dame, I remembered how difficult it was for you to talk to our Property class about your experiences with the Kennedy Administration." As they covered their personal lives over the years, Taus mentioned his wartime experiences in Vietnam. That triggered Blakely's memory.

"Yes, I remember you had adopted a Vietnamese child. It made national headlines since you were single at the time. I also recall an article on you in the Catholic *Sign* magazine about your missionary work with the people of Vietnam. Then, I believe it was a few months later, I saw you on television news with the child you adopted. I was happy for the both of you. It's a credit for the University of Notre Dame. How's the child doing?"

He's a teenager now, on his high school's soccer and wrestling teams. Doing quite well, thank you." Moving back in time, Taus recalled his personal experience in 1968 with Robert Kennedy, then a U.S. Senator from New York. "Bobby Kennedy was involved in getting the boy into the United States. However, his brother, Senator Ted Kennedy, had been responsible for a 1965 amendment to the U.S. Immigration laws that prevented single people from bringing their adopted children to the US.

It was a terrible law and adversely effected many caring adults and under-privileged children, denying them a chance at a better life, and for that matter, a life, period. When I wrote to Bobby Kennedy, he said he would assist me. Unfortunately, he was assassinated soon after that letter. But the legislative actions were already being worked on by my Congressman, another Democrat, Herbert Tenzer."

"Yes, it was a tragic loss for the country. He was a good man. Though John (Kennedy) appointed his brother as the Attorney General, Bobby was amply qualified and was a very dedicated person. I'm glad to hear he tried to help you." The truth was that Robert Kennedy did nothing more than answer Taus' requests for assistance. Robert refused to help undo the law enacted by his brother, Edward "Ted" Kennedy.

After the luncheon, as they strolled back to the Federal Building, Blakely said he would not be discouraged by the Bureau's attitude; and that he had friends who would light a fire under their seats. In passing, Taus had expressed his interest in working more meaningful cases than the boring work on the FCI Division. He wanted to work organized crime. Blakely said he would speak to his friends at the Bureau about Taus' assignment.

Less than a month later, another FBINYO draft was started to increase the size of the Criminal Division. Taus was drafted and specifically assigned to work La Cosa Nostra (LCN) matters. He could have been assigned to work other criminal matters, such as white collars crimes or different organized crime groups. Blakely's friends must have set the Bureau on the right course because the RICO statute would be dramatically used in the forthcoming investigations.

Taus felt his inclusion in the draft was the result of Blakely's pull. A few weeks later a note from Blakely wished Taus "Godspeed" in his new assignment. The message was clear; Blakely and his friends had interceded. Taus worked FCI cases for only a year, but as far as he was concerned, it was quite enough.

Transferred back to BQMRA, Taus was assigned to SSA Manual "Manny" Gonzalez' BQ-6 squad. Manny's squad concentrated on the Bonanno Organized Crime Family. Manny had a very noticeable scar across his forehead, made even more obvious by his bald head. It gave him a sinister look; he could have been a "Capo" in any LCN family. He looked the part, but Manny was a truly decent guy and a very strong and respected FBI supervisor.

### **Organized Crime Squad, 1980**

"This squad handles the Bonanno Organized Crime family. Supervisor Mouw's squad has the Genovese, Flanagan's squad had the Colombo Family, Schiliro's squad has the Gambino and Carbone squad has the Lucchese." As SSA Gonzalez briefed Taus on the structure of the five La Cosa Nostra (LCN) families, the Colombo squad area became a beehive of activity. The FBI had targeted five major organized crime families in the metropolitan New York area.

With a total of twelve squads on one floor of an eleven-story office building, working areas were congested. The FBI's Brooklyn-Queens Metropolitan Resident Agency (BQMRA) was located in the "Skytrain Building," named after the airline corporation of Englishman Freddy Laker. He had conceived an idea based upon low fares for flights on his "Sky-Bus" to London. There were many other private businesses, offering professional services that were also tenants in the Skytrain building that bordered busy Queens Boulevard in Rego Park, Long Island.

Agents of the Colombo squad checked their two-way radios causing loud static noises in the adjacent side of the floor shared by the Bonanno squad. SSA Gonzalez' orientation speech was being drowned out as the Colombo squad prepared for its assault on the LCN family.

"This is what happens when one of the families starts some trouble," Gonzalez explained to Taus. "An agent on SSA Flanagan's squad has a good



informant who has told him something about the Colombo's. It's the Colombo and Lucchese families that cause the most violence on the streets. The Genovese are no gentleman either. They are the 'shooters.' The Gambinos are more business-like, along with the Bonannos. But a new breed of Sicilians, connected to both the Gambinos and Bonannos has arrived in this country. Both the Gambino and Bonanno families are related to each other."

"This new breed is cold-blooded and violent, so we are expecting more trouble from the Bonanno crews. Frequently we work with Lou Schiliro's Gambino squad since the two OC families are related and do so much business together. The current generation running these LCN families was born and educated in America. Their blood ties to Sicily are strong. However, there is a struggle for control in each of these families with the influx of the new Sicilian breed. They are more ruthless."

"We think the recent assassination of the Bonanno boss, Carmine Galante, was the result of orders from Sicily. Galante's two bodyguards were recent Sicilian arrivals here. They skipped out on him as the assassins opened fire in the back of a small Italian restaurant in Brooklyn."

More noises came from Flanagan's squad as the agents hurried out carrying shotguns, protective vests, radio equipment and other miscellaneous gear for the encounter.

Gonzalez did not go into any details about the unfolding drama. He had his cases to handle. Also, this was part of an overall Bureau policy, a form of "compartmentalization." The less people knew of a situation, the less chance a situation (or operation) would be compromised. Even on the same squad, agents were not aware of each other's activities unless their own investigations were directly connected. No agent knew the names of another agent's informants, except the squad supervisor. Normally an alternate agent would be assigned to assist a case agent with an informant.

There was a deep feeling of mistrust created by this secrecy that many agents felt hindered their operations. It often created problems where one hand did not know what the other hand was doing. In numerous investigations, agents interviewed people already questioned by their fellow agents.

Those re-interviewed had doubts about the FBI's effectiveness. The FBI would never admit any such errors. That could affect the Bureau's image.

Though a need for some secrecy existed, the real truth is that the system is ineffective and inefficient. By the 1970s, computerization of such data should have been accomplished providing access to information for an agent who was authorized to know. Not implementing such a system may have been due to budgetary constraints. Though more probably, the reason was lack of imagination and innovation by senior Bureau managers. If the talent did not exist within the Bureau (to establish a computer system), outside consultant should have been contracted. Quite obviously other federal agencies' resources could have been called upon for assistance, especially the Pentagon. But the Bureau would never condescend to needing help. The FBI image was at stake.

Similarly, the Bureau would never allow outside experts to review their procedures or operations, aimed at improvements. The FBI's defense of this

policy struck below the belt. They claimed any such strangers may be hostile and could compromise the Bureau's secrets. The real question is what kind of secrets did the Bureau have that they did not want revealed to the American Public? And by what stretch of flagitious imagination did the FBI think everyone would be so inclined to upset a mechanism of government that was supposed to protect them. Director J. Edgar Hoover's paranoia persisted long after his death. It was now abetted by sheer incompetence and an inbreeding that produced the congenitally deformed public servants. Rather than risk their careers. Bureau bosses lacked courage to make needed improvements and changes.

People from all professions entered the FBI: attorneys, accountants, teachers, scientists, linguists, electronic and radio maintenance experts, etc. Did these professionals join the Bureau because of patriotic feelings? They certainly did not join because of the salary. Perhaps these applicants who applied for FBI employment lacked the requisite talents needed in the private sector? In many cases it would appear so. Their skills were never put to use. Many decided not to pursue their specialties after being hired and converted their positions to different areas.

Some of the answers could be found in the Career Sheet Questionnaires that were not computerized. When they were, they were not properly utilized by an interested personnel management section. It was not until 1983 that computer systems began to be used to any large extent with storage and retrieval of information. Few agents knew how to use the systems.

There were many system failures with a great amount of computer downtime. So much for the Bureau's internal computer expertise. The computer malfunctions only served to discourage those agents who knew how to operate the system. An effective computer system is only as good as its users. The production of useful information was easily short-circuited by bureaucratic decisions or the lack of them and internal jealousies. Friendships and personality ratings played critical factors in the selection of personnel for assignments instead of performance, merit and experience.

Bias personality factors and political favors effected assignments, promotions and investigations. There were innumerable sad examples. The "choirboys" in the FBINYO had their own standards for selecting people. Their early childhood schoolyard prejudices surfaced in daily informal discussions regardless of the official Bureau policy of non-discrimination.

One FBINYO supervisor, who was prejudiced, despised a male Jewish agent on his own squad. His squad handled sensitive Middle Eastern cases involving the Arab and Israeli worlds. The Jewish agent was an attorney who had served in the U.S. Army. He was fluent in several Middle Eastern languages. With a master's degree in Middle East Affairs, the Jewish agent was pursuing his doctorate degree. He had several good informants and carried a heavy caseload, which was in good shape.

Nonetheless, the supervisor's prejudice overshadowed good judgment. Always complaining and insulting his Jewish subordinate, the supervisor finally was able to transfer the agent to another squad, replacing the expert" with a "choirboy." Regrettably for the Bureau and the country, the Jewish

agent's talents were wasted working on another squad, which handled lower priority Soviet Eastern Bloc countries.

Several months later, the supervisor was caught siphoning money, illegally, from certain informants' case funds. He was demoted and suspended.

A new supervisor took over the Middle Eastern squad and had the Jewish agent transferred back. Damage had been done to the Jewish agent's original cases and informants. The whole affair was unnecessary. The animosities create hurt the entire Bureau.

For a few months, Taus shared a bucar with another agent. During his first file review, SSA Gonzalez became very quarrelsome. Gonzalez conducted the file review in a closed room and criticized Taus' work without reason. It was a Bureau management technique to get the maximum performance and set an example for future work. It did not work.

In reality, Gonzalez was having personal problems at home with his wife and family. He arrived in the office at 6:00 A.M. every morning from his suburban home in Dix Hills, Long Island; and, he did not depart until after 7:00 P.M. (This was what every agent should have been doing, to truthfully collect their "authorized overtime" (auo). Instead agent fudged their extra hour and 40 minutes when they signed in and out of the office. Nearly every agent collected overtime for work they never performed, a true fraud on the American taxpayers.) Gonzalez's nagging wife created depression and stress for him. Aggravated by his domestic situation, he complained about his agents' casework on their file reviews.

"The rest of the squad has transportation. I'm doing at least a satisfactory job without a car. If you are dissatisfied, then give me the resources I need to conduct investigations or transfer me back to Manhattan." This suggestion shocked Gonzalez. An agent would never ask to go from the frying pan into the fire. Taus gave Gonzalez the option of sending him to the NYO and losing a good agent.

"Unlike most new agents, I did not get out of college last year. I've served my country in war and peace; and, I was responsible for more lives and equipment than the SAC here. If you choose to launch an unwarranted attack upon my performance, I know there are other squads that will take me. The FBI doesn't have a whole lot of good investigators as you know!"

It was apparent to Gonzalez that the old Bureau game of threats was inappropriate. He knew his own personal problems had overwhelmed him. The counterattack launched by Taus was a triad in itself and Gonzalez was stunned. The usual reaction by an agent was to place his tail between his legs and pound his chest, asking for forgiveness and mercy. Such was the normal reaction since few agents did thorough investigations on their assigned cases. Even with the investment of many hours of work, a diligent agent could come up empty-handed, showing scan results, the same lack of progress that a lazy agent displayed.

Gonzalez was not as hard boiled as he appeared. The frequent arguments with his wife accounted for his demure disposition as he listened to Taus' triad. Smiling, Gonzalez tried to ease the tension. "You mean, if I get you a car, you'll do a better job?" Gonzalez realized he initially overreacted and

allowed his personal problems to affect him.

Hearing Taus reacting was the first step in Gonzalez' treatment to overcome his depression. Unlike the other members of his squad, Taus was older and more experienced. Gonzalez and Taus were the same age. "All right, Sonny." Manny had the habit of adopting nicknames for his men. It was a good sign. "I'll get you a car. Does it matter what color?"

"Sonny would like black to commemorate his file review." Taus accepted Gonzalez' nickname for him and the results of his file review, which were "excellent." For a bucar, an agent could accept a lot of punishment. Having transportation would save an agent several thousand dollars a year, not to mention the aggravation inherent in using mass transit. From an investigative point of view, a vehicle was indispensable.

BQ-6 had several minority agents on the squad: two Hispanics; two blacks, a male and female; and one Chinese-American. The other nine agents were white. "Just how do I get an informant in an Italian neighborhood?" lamented Harrison (alias), the black male who was a wide receiver from Howard University. One of the Hispanic agents said, "You tell them you are from southern Sicily, the far south!"

"Very funny, taco-breath. The mob is as bigoted as this place." Obviously, Harrison had a run-in with one of the choirboys in the Bureau. "Come on Sonny, tell Harrison what to do," said the black female agent. Beverly Ratcliff had been an agent for less time than Taus. She was a divorced mother of a 6-year old son. She also supported her mother. Aware of Taus' adopted son and situation, she was sympathetic and liked him.

"Eat more pasta and less ribs," chimed in John Flanagan, the brother of SSA Flanagan who ran the Colombo OC squad. Flanagan had a desk near a window overlooking Queens Boulevard.

"You better give me that desk, White boy, before you accidentally fall out of the window or get toss out by some rib-eaters," Harrison grinned.

"Eating pasta isn't going to help," said Roger Suey, the Chinese-American agent who received a disciplinary transfer from the Los Angeles Field Office for some Bureau transgression. "I should know. The Italians learned to eat noodles from the Orientals."

Agent Carmine Russo who was born in Sicily, stood up, annoyed with the banter and walked over to Gonzalez' cubicle. The squad quieted as Taus spoke more seriously, "The best informants are the ones that come into the office, but they are parceled out by the supervisors. Ask Gonzalez for one. Another way is to look up some closed informant's files and check on the reasons that they are closed. Often an agent retires or is transferred and finds it easier to close out an informant than to reassign him.

"Good advice. Sonny." Gonzalez overheard the conversation. Russo was still in Gonzalez' office. He had evidently complained about the chatter among the squad members.

Russo had come over on a ship from Sicily when he was 11-years old. He grew up on the streets of Brooklyn. His family was hard-working people who resented the Mafia's influence and the disgrace it brought to all decent Italians. During Russo's teenage years, he detested the Mafia figures that

strutted around his neighborhood. His parent's attitudes and feelings indoctrinated him. Coming from a large family, there was never enough to go around. Everyone had to share things.

In Russo's teenage years, the mobsters wore expensive suits and lived well. They were respected by Russo's peers since these Mafiosi were the ones that had made it in America, Russo said, "Young Italian kids would look up to these criminals. The Mafiosi handed the kids small change and dollar bills." Russo joined the FBI to wage his own personal crusade against the Mafia.

Earlier in his life, Russo worked as an investigator and legal aide for the Manhattan District Attorney's office. He felt organized crime cases were never seriously pursued. Russo submitted an application to the FBI to join the group focusing on the Mafia. His fluency with the Sicilian dialect and Italian language was put to proper use this time by the Bureau.

Hitching his wagon to a rising star, SA Charlie Rooney followed in Russo's footsteps. They had developed an intensive investigation into the Bonanno family. Rooney traveled out to Arizona where the federal district court had indicted Joseph Bonanno, the retired family boss.

The present investigation involved all the activities of the Bonanno family. The FBI in New York had similar OC squads working cases in Manhattan and the Bronx. Territorial disputes were as common among FBI offices as they were among the rival OC gangs. Added to this problem were inter-agency jealousies among the various law enforcement organizations, both in federal, state and city governments.

SSA Gonzalez was aware of these factors and asked for assistance from the New York Assistant Director-In-Charge (ADIC) Thomas Sheer. There were several meetings between ADIC Sheer, Supervisory Agent-In-Charge (SAC) Lassiter and SSAs Gonzalez and Schiliro over the complications. A Joint Narcotics Task Force (JNTP) would be a solution, if it would include the FBI, DEA, IRS, Customs, New York Police and whatever other agencies were necessary.

### **Case Priorities**

The supervisor would decide the priority of a case based upon the seriousness of the violation. For instance, bank robberies would be classified as an A, B or C category depending upon the method used, violence involved and amount stolen.

One bank robbery case involved a 75-year old man who would hand bank tellers notes demanding \$200. It was for his drinking habit. This case was a far cry from the armed Bensonhurst Bandits, a group of older teenagers which conducted armed bank robberies. The letter designations reflected the differences. The old man's case was a "C," while the armed bandits' case was an "A."

Similar criteria applied to Foreign Counter-Intelligence cases with the alpha designators used to reflect the subject's threat to the country's national security. In Organized Crime cases, alpha characters are based upon the Mafia's position in the organization.

La Costa Nostra had a hierarchy established much like any corporation.

Supervisors parceled out cases to agents based on these factors and a perception of the time required to work the case. An agent with four "A" priority cases could be working harder than an agent with twenty "D" priority cases. Of course, it all depended upon the individual agent and the real amount of effort he puts into his cases. Productive agents got the "A" cases.

Supervisors assigned the better cases to their more diligent agents. To get a better case, one had to be a diligent agent. It was a "Catch-22" for the novice agent who wanted to work better cases. As an assignment was made, a supervisor could be overheard cautioning the agent that he was receiving a good case that needed some work. "I'm giving it to you and I know you will put in the effort it requires for a successful investigation."

This type of warning implicitly meant that an agent who did not apply himself to a case would never receive another decent case. The newer agents got the less important and less interesting cases. So did the older agents who were counting the days until their retirement.

Investigations centered on individual Mafia members, though the other several hundred violations of U.S. laws were also handled as needed. There wasn't enough manpower to handle the numerous requests from assigned case agents for telephone taps and intercepts and physical surveillances. The "favorite sons" on a squad would be allocated the limited resources available and given the better cases.

This procedure held true for most organizations, sort of a tenure agreement, but instead of mere seniority, personalities affected assignments. Had the favorite sons conducted productive investigations, then one could not complain about receiving no assistance. But such was not the case. Often, after a great amount of ruffles and flourishes, only marginal criminal activities were uncovered. Other cases considered secondary became the tip-of-the-iceberg in far greater criminal enterprises.

The more informants an agent had, the greater his reputation among his supervisors and peers. In the past, some agents were deceptive enough to have informant names that really did not exist. The often-told suggestion was that you get a cooperating informant from the local cemetery. Whatever the dead told you, the dead could tell no one else.

There were some problems when it was discovered that informant monies were not received by the informants. By 1984, two agents were assigned to handle an informant's payments. The informant was required to sign a payment voucher. To avoid paperwork, agents pressed informants for information without payments, with other problems of favorable treatment, and other tactics.

### **Mafia and FBI Informants: Who Used Who?**

Money alone did not motivate people to inform upon others, especially given the small sums paid out by the Bureau and the retaliation one could expect if his snitching were discovered by criminal elements. There were greater motivators for informants. Revenge was a powerful one. If an informant was clever enough, he could manipulate an agent and have the agent work against his opposition. Such was the case with FBI SSA R. Lindley DeVecchio whose informant was Gregory Scarpa, a Mafia "Capo" who pro-

vided information to DeVecchio about his rival Mafia Capo's crew and operations. After DeVecchio retired in 1996, he was subpoenaed for working with the Mafia and supplying them with information.

### **The Mafia Social Club**

On occasion, informants supplied interesting and inaccurate information. One such time was when a confidential informant for SA Russo told him about the activities in an Italian social club in Brooklyn. BQMRA seemed to bustle one day when SA Russo told SSA Gonzalez that he had informant information that a Brooklyn Longshoreman's social club had a secretive stash of machine guns at its location. Three FBI squads were quickly alerted. Many agents' plans for the evening were cancelled. Assignments were made as Russo and Gonzalez briefed some 40 agents on the location and their responsibilities during the planned raid that night.

Equipment was issued from the arms' room. There were M16 rifles, shotguns, battering rams, crowbars and additional bullet-proof vest for those agents who left their issued vests at home. It was not everyday that an agent needed to wear a vest. Taus was handed a 5-foot steel crowbar. SA Charlie Rooney told him the crowbar might be needed to break into a reinforced door.

The raid would occur after 9:00 P.M. when it was expected that the machineguns would be there. The informant told Russo the guns would be hidden under some loose flooring in the club. At the last possible moment. New York Police Department and the local Police Precinct would be notified of the raid.

It was a cold rainy winter night when the 3 FBI squads converged on the Longshoremen's club situated in a busy commercial area. The club itself was frequented by Italian emigrant longshoremen, mostly middle-aged workmen with little English speaking ability. Twenty-five Agents in eight bucars pulled up in front of the four-story building. Agents had already moved into the rear exit way waiting for a radio call to enter the building.

It was a chilling scene. Most agents wore topcoats and hats because of the cold weather. They carried weapons at the ready. This was the days before agents wore the blue nylon "coaches' jackets" with the bright yellow letters "F-B-I" printed on both sides of the windbreakers.

Over 200 longshoremen sat in groups of four to six men at card tables. They immediately stopped playing cards when the FBI agents entered the social club's front door. Only a few longshoremen stood up from their tables. They all wore heavy winter overcoats too. The joint had no heat. Everyone had puzzled and fearful looks on their faces.

SA Russo announced in Italian that it was an FBI raid and everyone should hold their hands up by their shoulders. The crowd was also told to line up against the surrounding walls as the club was searched. When the agents came in from the rear, a systematic check was conducted of everyone's identity. Several card tables were converted into interview areas for these checks and short interrogations.

Taus stood holding a revolver in one hand and the clumsy 5-foot crowbar in the other. A wall of old men stood in front of him against the wall,

some shaking from the cold and fear. The strongest drinks being served were some weak espresso coffees. There were no food, no drugs, no gambling receipts, no money, no illegal activities and no machineguns.

Russo gave the order for the agents to holster their weapons. A short 60-year old longshoreman, standing in front of Taus, was shaking. Taus asked Russo what was the matter with him. Russo translated it into Italian and the old man replied. He was concerned about the huge crowbar Taus was wielding. He said the men were relieved to find out that the “invaders” were FBI agents. Initially, the longshoremen thought the agents were from a rival Mafia gang.

A more thorough search was made of the building after the longshoremen interviews. In the basement, Taus found some recently patched up walls and floor areas. He suggested to Gonzalez that he use the crowbar to open the cement areas. Gonzalez declined his request, saying the search subpoena did not include “building demolition.” Taus wondered what skeletons were buried under the cement.

SA Russo was out of the office on the following Monday morning, evidently asking his informant what went wrong. At least that’s what the agents who conducted the raid thought. The whole raid was a set-up. Russo’s informant was being tested by the Mafia. There never were any machineguns. The informant told the mob to expect the FBI raid. That would solidify the informant’s position in the mob, increasing his value to the FBI. It worked, but not even the agents on the squad were told about the subterfuge. Russo had to endure the squad’s ribbing for what appeared to be an abortive operation. Russo rarely smiled.

With a wife and five young sons, Russo had great difficulty making ends meet. His goal was to develop a successful case, achieving his long-planned revenge against those who now represented his old neighborhood mobsters. Then he could try and secure a transfer to Rome, Italy as an FBI Assistant Legal Attaché. Within 5-years, Carmine Russo had achieved all his goals.

Informant information was improving under SSA Gonzalez’ leadership. Even the Mafia had a reason to let it happen. With Mafia Boss Carmine Galante dead and his under-boss Rastelli in federal prison, the Sicilian newcomers were beginning to take control of the American-Mafia’s turf. Their area of greatest interest was the importation, distribution and sale of heroin through the New York Metropolitan area. It was distributed in Pizza parlors not only in New York, but also throughout the country.

There were two factions within the combined Gambino/Bonanno OC Families. The American born group resented the takeover by the other faction, the Sicilian “imports” or new émigrés. It was not long before a violent clash occurred between the two competing forces.

In the late 1970s, a thorough investigation was conducted by the Pennsylvania State Crime Commission against this new Sicilian faction. Pennsylvania published a thick report on its findings in 1980. It had uncovered a vast drug-trafficking network which used the Pizza and Cheese industries and pizzerias as a front for the sale and distribution of heroin and other illicit



drugs. "The 1980 Pennsylvania Crime Commission Report On The Pizza And Cheese Industries" became the primer for the notorious "Pizza Connection Case."

The work done by law enforcement authorities in Pennsylvania and an excellent operation conducted by two undercover FBI agents (Pistone and Roth) would have a dynamic impact upon the work being handled by SSA Gonzalez' squad. Efforts were now directed at breaking up the control held by the powerful Mafia families. Surprisingly, this new emphasis could be traced back to the lack of attention the FBINYO accorded Professor G.

Robert Blakely's RICO lecture. The fire lit by Blakely was fueled by the many ongoing investigations that searched for the best prosecuting device. It was found in the old RICO statute.

Russo and Rooney's cases started to center on an Italian bakery on Metropolitan Avenue in Middle Village, Queens. Physical and telephonic surveillances were set-up on the bakery and the house 24-hours a day by teams of agents.

An old "Archie Bunker" styled house was the center of the physical surveillance or "plant" on the Catalano Bakery. A huge and powerful telescopic lens was used to photograph the people entering the bakery. The camera was located on the third floor, along with two television sets, which fed pictures from video cameras placed on telephone poles near the house and bakery. Taus worked the daytime shift at the house "plant," using the telephoto camera lens to capture customers entering the bakery. These films were brought in daily to the BQMRA, which sent them to the FBINYO's Photo Lab for immediate processing.

The operation revealed several known Mafia figures and the exchange of large sums of money and drugs. The money was shipped overseas to be laundered. After months of surveillances, another case was prepared against these Mafiosi based upon violations of the RICO statute.

Several FBI squads feverishly worked cases related to the forthcoming Pizza Connection trial. Within a few months, as the slow bureaucratic wheels turned, these cases would be combined on one newly created JNTF squad in the FBINYO. Already, selected agents were designated to act as team leaders, coordinating investigations, prioritizing work, supplying leads, etc.

SA Charlie Rooney complied numerous license plate checks that came from the many physical surveillances on known and suspected Mafia locations. There had to be a better way than the archaic methods being used by the "ole" Bureau.

Convincing FBIHQs to use their computers to compile the data, SSA Gonzalez then instructed Rooney to prepared daily input sheets which were forwarded to the Bureau. Back from FBIHQs came huge black binders containing reams of computer sheets. With updates twice a week, the BQMRA office was overflowing with binders and loose computer sheets. Search programs were run for selected case agents. Some productive leads were simply buried under the mass of unprocessed data never to see the light of day from a search program. The office resembled a commodity exchange in the morn-

ing as agents, acting like brokers, tried to get their license plate leads.

There were many trips down to the U.S. Attorney's offices both in the Eastern and Southern Districts of New York. Assistant U.S. Attorney Louie Freeh was always there at the Southern District pouring over the massive leads and reports generated by several squads working the related cases.

Freeh's eyes were sunken with dark pockets from his methodical work.

Freeh graduated from Rutgers University School of Law and became an FBI Special Agent, serving for six years. He then applied to the U.S. Attorney's office in the Southern District for an appointment as an Assistant U.S. Attorney. Freeh could also play politics.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

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### Pizza Connection Case

**B**ecause FBI agents Carmine Russo and Charlie Rooney were overloaded with cases on Mafia subjects and their activities, Manny Gonzalez assigned Taus several cases on known Mafiosi members from the Bonanno organized crime family. Recently published report, "The 1980 Pennsylvania Crime Commission Report On The Pizza And Cheese Industries," brought about an intensification of federal investigations into numerous Mafia-linked drug traffickers. From Brooklyn, the three Casamento brothers had long been involved with the Bonanno and Gambino families and narcotics sales and distribution.

Calling Taus over to his desk, Rooney said:

*Manny's going to assign you the Casamento Brothers. Filippo Casamento has been in prison on an old narcotic's rap. He owns and operates the Eagle Cheese Company and the Casamento Salumeria. Filippo's got two younger brothers. One is Francesco who has been active with the Eagle Cheese Company on Avenue "U." The other is Frank who runs the Casamento Italian Deli on 86<sup>th</sup> Avenue. We're sure they are part of the New York heroin ring which they help operate from their businesses."*

From the squad supervisor's partition, a bald and scarred head peered over the partition and announced, "Rooney, Taus, come into my office. I want to brief you both on some cases."

The briefing lasted an hour. The Casamento brothers were an "A" priority case. They were soldiers in the Bonanno La Cosa Nostra (LCN). Informant information indicated Eagle Cheese imported food produce from Italy that included heroin packed inside large cheese packages. Francesco helped distribute part of the drugs and other unknown contacts took the remainder.

Rooney and Russo had informants, but they needed telephone taps and physical surveillances on the brothers. They could not devote enough time to such an undertaking, especially since the Casamentos were only one part to a much larger drug trafficking operation.

Weeks of surveillances followed for Taus. Filippo and Frank were middle-aged and had their own families. Filippo's wife, Lucia Gambino, was the

chairman of the board for Conair, a large electronics firm in Farmingdale, Long Island. Lucia was a full time housewife whose education stopped in her sophomore year of high school. There were no indications that she ever frequented the multi-million dollar sales corporation during the physical surveillances. She could be observed cleaning and cooking in Filippo's modest Brooklyn home, which was hardly the kind of activities that a chief executive officer would be doing.

A legitimate business can be taken over by the Mafia for a number of reasons, such as outright intimidation and extortion or payment for gambling debts. Then the business would be placed in the name of someone related to the mob, someone who had a clean record, and often, close relatives. There simply were not enough investigators, accountants, and Internal Revenue Service agents, to handle the many business crimes. Lucia's position would never be critically examined.

Filippo was an ex-con with a heroin conviction from 1972. In his late fifties, he was still spry and thin with graying hair. He was active with the legitimate business, Eagle Cheese. Filippo drove a 1970 Cadillac coupe, delivering large packages of mozzarella cheese carried in the car's large trunk. It was a peculiar way of transporting perishables. Other food provisions at Eagle Cheese were transported in a refrigerated truck or van. Informants disclosed that the three-foot long cheese blocks were packed with heroin.

Eagle Cheese Company occupied a small commercial building, hardly more than an average double storefront, nothing compared to the large Pollio Cheese Company located in Port Washington, Long Island, which produced its own cheeses in a modern plant. Eagle was the kind of place where recent Italian émigrés would shop for grocery items not stocked in the conventional supermarkets.

Usually a "geep," the slang term for a recent Sicilian/Italian emigrant, worked as a clerk. This was typical of the pizzerias where newly imported émigrés complimented the Italian atmosphere. These young men, usually in their early twenties, were happy to be in the United States, and often slept where they worked in the pizzerias. Working long days and well into the nights, making hardly any money, these men could eventually manage a pizza shop when they proved to be reliable.

A typical pizza shop located in the Milburn Mini-Shopping Plaza in Baldwin Harbor, Long Island, was operated by a Mafia-connected figure. He had several working "geeps" at his pizzeria. After several years, one particularly intelligent and sociable émigré who proved himself was rewarded and made the manager of a new pizzeria in Lynbrook, Long Island. This kind of apprenticeship was used by the Sicilian mob as it stretched its drug-trafficking activities in the United States.

The third generation American Mafiosi had become typical American businessmen. Many had attended college applying management principles to their companies. Many others went into the corporate world with advanced degrees. Their less educated counterparts became the street-level toughs, used for extortions, illegal gambling, usury loans, street-level narcotics sales

and other crimes.

Frank Casamento was reportedly the brains of their several operations but remained unindicted by AUSA Louie Freeh. Frank ran the 86<sup>th</sup> Avenue Trattoria, an Italian delicatessen located on a Brooklyn main street where an overhead subway added to the city noise and congestion. In his late forties, Frank was brusque and had a hostile personality, occasionally working the counter. A non-Italian customer had better know exactly what he wanted because Frank lacked patience. Frank and Filippo were about the same 5'8" height, but each lived differently. Filippo resided in an "Archie Bunker" styled house near Avenue "X," while Frank lived in a larger 3-storied colonial house on a one-third acre lot in a more expensive residential area.

Despite appearances at his delicatessen, Frank was active with major mob figures in the pizza and cheese industries. When FBI surveillances switched to weekends at Taus' insistence, Frank was seen meeting with several other mob figures. They would meet in Brooklyn Heights and proceed to New Jersey. On one such occasion, Carlos Lauricello, a known Sicilian Mafioso arrived at 8 a.m. and together they drove away to Roma Foods, a large Italian food supplier in central New Jersey, where they met with Roma's Chief Executive Officer. Roma had been extensively mentioned in the 1980 Pennsylvania Crime Commission Report. The connection with Lauricello showed the Sicilian drug-trafficking operations needed a greater network and to gain a greater share, they were willing to employ more vicious means.

Émigrés flooded into the United States, sponsored by Mafia-connected families, most notably the Bonanno and Gambino families, which had ties to Sicily. Eventually, two factions collided: the entrenched American Mafia battled the Sicilian Mafia with its émigrés. Both were street-level organizations, but only the American Mafia was sanctioned by the more powerful Mafia Commission with powerful political links.

When Rastelli was released from federal prison, several "made geeps" were murdered. The American Mafia had no room for émigrés who took over their territory and flouted their control. One example was Cesare Bonventre, in his early thirties, who was one of the two bodyguards who betrayed Carmine Galante. After arranging Galante's death, Bonventre rose to a Capo position in the new Sicilian faction, and was despised by the American Mafiosi. Bonventre wore expensive Italian suits, a white scarf, sunglasses and a topcoat draped across his shoulders when he toured his new turf. He would enter numerous pizzerias and take whatever money he wanted from their cash registers.

FBI agent Carmine Russo had a deep-seated hatred for the Mafia. With his knowledge of the Mafia and his Italian language fluency, fellow FBI agents constantly asked him to assist them with interviews. His partner, Charlie Rooney, compensated for his lack of Mafia knowledge by becoming a workaholic.

Russo had graduated from City College of New York and went to work with the Manhattan district attorney's office before becoming an FBI agent. Rooney attended Fordham University in the Bronx.

With only a few years in the FBI, by 1978 Rooney was assigned the Reverend Jones religious cult case in Guyana, South America. It was a sticky mess for any investigating agent. A U.S. Congressman, Ryan, who was conducting an investigation into the cult, was murdered by Jones' followers who later proceeded successfully to take their own lives in a mass suicide pact. There were many unanswered questions about the deaths of the Congressman and the Jonestown cult.

As the Pizza Connection case developed, Russo traveled to Rome, Italy, for conferences with Italian authorities while Rooney made trips to Washington to coordinate other Mafia cases. Russo was the international case manager while Rooney was the domestic variety.

In the early 1980s, reams of leads came into the FBI Queens office. One of the assigned prosecuting attorneys, AUSA Louie Freeh, had demanded all FBI agents investigating the Pizza case should take down vehicle license plates within a 3-block radius of any known or suspected Mafioso's house or business. Any plates registered to an Italian name became a new lead. In the tight streets of the 5 New York boroughs, the leads became staggering. This extra work came when Rooney was overly absorbed in details.

While exchanging information with AUSA Freeh, Taus asked him to curtail the voluminous and endless leads generated by the license plate tallies. Taus noted the FBI was gathering information on Italian-Americans, placing their names in criminal files and indices when they had committed no crime.

Resembling a colossal jigsaw puzzle, information on the various cases was assembled and pieced together. In the Brooklyn and New York FBI offices, there were large poster boards that had diagrams of Mafiosi members, being constantly updated. Initially, a file system consisting of 3" by 5" index cards was established for vehicle license plates and owners' names that visited the known or suspected Mafia locations. Soon, file cabinets overflowed with cards, requiring the purchase of additional file cabinets.

Manny Gonzalez eventually convinced FBI headquarters to provide his squad with computerized assistance. Within a few weeks, the squad office space at BQMRA became inundated with large binders filled with IBM printout sheets. Computer generated lists were stacked everywhere in the office, including on desks and on the floor.

Each Tuesday, a pallet load of computer sheets and paperwork would be mailed out to other FBI Field Offices that were conducting parallel investigations. On Mondays, a flood of packages would arrive from those offices, which had to be reviewed. It was an immense undertaking with little information useful to Taus' cases.

Taus had no back-up or assistant case agents for his investigations because of the heavy workload assisting Russo and Rooney. Eight different "pen-registers," telephone company machines that recorded numbers dialed and times, had to be prioritized by BQMRA. The New York Field Office refused to obtain any additional pen-registers for other agents working on related cases, which caused cut off of telephonic conversations because the FBI did not have the manpower to operate the electronic surveillances.

The FBI's Pizza Connection case resulted in a highly publicized federal trial and the convictions of 20 defendants. However, the credit belonged to the Pennsylvania State Crime Commission, as it was their original investigation and report in 1980 that forced the federal government to look into the pizza and cheese industries. Pennsylvania investigators had produced a report detailing extensive interstate and international drug-trafficking activities that included the entire northeastern North America continent, including the Midwest and the South, along with Canada and Sicily. The report required the FBI to investigate. Later, Taus discovered this Sicilian drug trade was interfering with other covert government operations, causing competition for the CIA's drug smuggling activities. The federal government was doing a favor for the America Mafia by prosecuting the Sicilian faction.

#### **CIA Involvement**

The American Mafia re-emerged after Phil Rastelli's release from prison. The CIA had set-up the Sicilian faction, effectively removing competition. More than \$50 million was expended in taxpayers' money. The trial alone took seventeen months. The convictions supposedly eliminated a \$1.65 billion drug-trafficking operation. But at that time, heroin drug profits were estimated a \$4 billion a year in New York. Who was making the other \$2.35 billion?

#### **Pizza Connection Trial Verdict**

On March 2, 1987, a verdict was delivered in the Pizza Connection case at the District Court in the Southern District of New York, in the trial that had begun on October 24, 1985. The FBI had rounded-up a slew of organized crime members in coordinated raids, of which a score of the Mafiosi leaders were indicted and prosecuted, revealing some of the inner-workings of La Cosa Nostra. But that case touched only the lower echelons of the Sicilian drug-trafficking operations, without touching upper-echelon leaders in the Mafia.

The vacuum created by the arrested drug-traffickers was quickly filled by others, and narcotics became more available on the streets. Nothing had been done to the suppliers from the Golden Crescent in the Middle East, Turkey, Bulgaria, Lebanon, Syria, Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan; or from the Golden Triangle in the Far East, Laos, Burma and Thailand; or from Mexico, Central and South Americas.

When Taus discovered the CIA connection to the Mafia and drug trafficking, the only excuse offered by one of the prosecuting U.S. Attorneys, Louie Freeh, was he had his hands full and would avoid a "political hot potato." Though Freeh wanted no part of Taus' discovery of the CIA, Freeh was dealing with CIA officials on the arrest and extradition of two overseas Mafiosi, Gaetano Badalamenti and Tomasso Buscetta. Freeh was merely eliminating a Sicilian faction that was competing with the CIA's drug-trafficking operations.

#### **The Cast of Characters**

On July 12, 1979, Carmine Galante, who ran the Bonanno organized crime family in New York was killed at Joe and Mary's Restaurant on Knickerbocker Avenue in Brooklyn. Two of Galante's bodyguards, Sicilian

emigrants Cesare Bonventre and Baldassare “Baldo” Amato, fled, as Galante was gunned-down. The American faction and the Sicilian faction of the Bonanno family would clash and, in turn, destroy each other. Bonventre would rise to the rank of a Capo, the youngest known capo. The younger Amato would also prosper.

Philip Rastelli was then in charge of the Bonanno family in New York, although he was incarcerated in federal prison. There was the American crew and the new Sicilians, and some of the Americans sided with the Sicilians, which proved to be a mistake. Rastelli ingratiated himself with his friends and solicited other organized crime families to support him.

Among these Mafiosi was Carmine Persico, who ran the Colombo family and lived in Baldwin, Long Island. Rastelli managed to keep Dominick “Sonny Black” Napolitano, a New York capo, on his side in the Bonanno family. Also supporting Rastelli was Joey Messina who had his own Queens crew. Salvatore “Toto” Catalano gave Rastelli further financial support. It was Catalano’s Metropolitan Avenue bakery and his home in Queens where FBI agents discovered a large part of the drug-trafficking and money-laundering operations. The imported Sicilian opposition to the American Mafia would be annihilated.

In rapid succession, five Sicilians disappeared. Alphonse “Sonny Red” Indelicato was found dead on a Queens’ street. His son, Anthony “Bruno” Indelicato fled to escape a hit on his life. Dominick Trinchera and Philip Giaccone disappeared. A year later, one of their bodies was found in a Staten Island swamp. Cesare Bonventre was grabbed by the American crew and while his head was held in an arm lock, shots were fired into his skull. Bonventre’s mutilated body was found chopped-up in a glue barrel at a New Jersey industrial plant.

Helping with the prosecution of this case was FBI agent Joseph Pistone, aka “Donnie Brasco.” Pistone used the name of Brasco to go undercover, penetrating the Bonanno family. He first approached Tony Mirra, a soldier in Dominick “Sonny Black” Napolitano’s crew. Mirra owned a bar in the Mulberry Street section of lower Manhattan. Soon Pistone was introduced to Benjamin “Lefty Guns” Ruggiero, another “made” soldier. Pistone got close to Ruggiero during the five years Pistone was undercover. He developed investments for Ruggiero who in turn vouched for him before the mob bosses.

Some time was spent by Pistone and another undercover FBI agent (who requested anonymity) in Tampa Bay, Florida. They were engaged in a bar and hotel business with beach cabanas. Pistone’s trip to Florida was part of an investigation into Santo “Sam” Trafficante who again proved too much for the government’s prosecution. Trafficante played an important role in other events and criminal activities which the U.S. government failed to prosecute, possibly because Trafficante worked with the U.S. government, including the CIA Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba and as suspected, in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The Mafia defendants in the Pizza Connection trial were indicted under the Racketeer-Influenced and Corrupt Organization (RICO) Act and an “848



charge” which refers to a “Kingpin Statute” where the conspiring defendant is a part of a continuing criminal enterprise where he supervised or controlled five or more people. Further charges included drug trafficking and money laundering. Among the defendants and their associates were several unusual connections.

Of the many Mafiosi investigated by Taus, only Filippo Casamento was prosecuted and found guilty. Taus had investigated many of the other co-defendants in the Pizza case as an assistant case agent. But Taus was the case agent on the Casamento Brothers. Although not introduced at trial, Casamento had previous convictions in 1972 on narcotics charges. His “rap sheet” included crimes committed during the years Taus served two combat tours in the Vietnam War. Filippo Casamento was found guilty of the RICO and narcotics conspiracies where he used his two Brooklyn-based businesses, the Eagle Cheese Company and Casamento Salumeria.

#### **Other Leads in the Pizza Case**

The Village of Freeport runs along Baldwin’s eastern boundary on the south shore of Long Island, and both towns share the inland waterway, which empties into the Atlantic Ocean. The initial investigation into the Cremosa Cheese Company in Freeport discovered an entourage of Mafiosi and CIA agents who came from both communities. Baldwin had more than its share of mobster residents. Giuseppe “Joe” Lamberti and Salvatore “Sal” Mazzurco were partners in the Mafia-controlled Pronto Demolition Company. They lived in Baldwin and were defendants in the Pizza case and information tied them to a development in Clifton, New Jersey, which Taus subsequently investigated.

Joe Ganci, another key player in the Pizza case, was associated with the Polizzi Brothers from New Jersey. Ganci had sold weapons to a Filippo Salamone who resided in the Patricia Village development built by the Polizzi Brothers on River Road in Clifton, Salamone’s apartment was raided and guns were recovered. These weapons were traced to the Renco Gun Shop in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, which was also owned by Ganci. The April 9, 1984 raid was part of the roundup of Mafia figures.

During the course of the Pizza trial, FBI agent Carmine Russo was called to the stand to testify about a secret code. The code letters were T-E-R-M-I-N-U-S-A, representing the numbers one through nine; they were used by the Mafia for telephone listings. One of the main Mafia bosses overseas, according to the CIA, was Gaetano “Don Tanino” Badalamenti who fled to Brazil after a 1981 rift with the Mafia in Sicily. Russo’s discovery was no doubt the work of the CIA, which worked to eliminate their drug trafficking rivals.

FBI agents discovered some Mafia connections in the Midwest. Pietro “Pete” Alfano was from Oregon, Illinois where he owned a pizzeria. Alfano was the Midwest leader for Badalamenti. On February 14, 1983, Alfano made arrangements to travel from Chicago by air to Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Then he proceeded by car to New York City. Several parcels of drugs were picked-up by Alfano at Fort Lauderdale. It was clear that Fort Lauderdale was a major drug-smuggling and distribution center. It would take Taus

another year before he was able to go to Fort Lauderdale and witness the U.S. Government's involvement in drug trafficking.

### **The Italian-American Mafia Versus the Sicilian Faction**

A Capo in an organized crime family had his own crew of soldiers and, in turn, a soldier had his own men who carried out business. Some soldiers were mob enforcers, carrying out their Capos' orders. Other soldiers operated criminal enterprises, gambling rackets, prostitution rings, drug sales, hijacking, robberies and whatever turned a dime for their Capos. There were soldiers who also ran legitimate businesses. For the most part, their fathers and grand fathers had secured their positions. Money and power could still buy membership for an aspiring Italian-American applicant. Such was the case for undercover FBI agent Joe Pistone.

The street level Mafia of the five New York City crime families were run by second and third generation Italian-Americans who were sanctioned by the more powerful and secretive High Commission. Despite their sinister family backgrounds, these Mafiosi were educated in New York, raised with middle-America values from the churches and schools they attended. Unlike the older generation, the new American Mafia was not as prone to violence. The callousness required to operate a major drug-trafficking operation was lacking.

The Sicilian Mafia decided to make inroads into the drug trade as they saw the huge profits made by other organized ethnic crime groups, such as the Chinese gangs, black gangs, and the Colombian drug cartels.

Many of the new Sicilian émigrés worked as hard in making a living as any honest person, which was noted by a New York City police detective after many years of investigating the Sicilian Mafia. The detective worked for months on surveillances of pizzerias and found they were fronts for the sale and distribution of heroin. The owner was usually an LCN soldier. His employee would arrive at the pizzeria early in the morning unless he slept there overnight, and make the marinara sauce while heating the hot pizza ovens. By mid-morning, the pizzeria was open for business and did not close until 11 p.m. or later. The drug sales worked hand-in-hand with the Pizza business. On occasion, there was even a helper who sold drugs to the customers.

Not all mobsters worked so hard. Many were parasites who enjoyed an easy lifestyle. They were bullies as youngsters and never matured. When the new Sicilian faction entered the New York crime scene, there was little space for two bullies on the same block.

The American Mafia would exert their influence. But Rastelli and other heads of the New York City Mafia families were not responsible for the initial bloodbath.

The American Mafiosi thought they were exerting their influence, protecting their birthright earned by years of criminal activities. The Sicilian invasion was brought about by some of the older Sicilian-Americans, like the senior Joe Bonanno, who saw his American sons less energetic, less willing to take risks. When the senior Bonanno was approached by relatives from Sicily they constructed a new drug trafficking organization. Cesare

Bonventre and Baldo Amato were blood relatives of LCN families from Sicily. They would take chances.

The Italian-American Mafia had two echelons: The upper crest was the Mafia Commission, those in control of power and wealth, either connected to or part of this nation's political, governmental and business community. In the lower echelon were the street mobsters, those known to the public as the Mafia, such as New York City's five organized crime families. The Godfather, formerly Paul Castellano, was merely a middleman between this level and the Commission.

The lower echelon had three levels. The first was the older successful criminals, the Godfathers, like Castellano, who organized, directed and survived through the 1940s, 50s and 60s. These men turned their power over to their sons and occasionally grandsons who operated and directed the family businesses, which were bought by blood money or taken over by their father's extortions. These sons often became legitimate businessmen through their own power, resourcefulness and motivation. The third level was the street-toughs, strong arms, the rising blue-collar soldiers. These men carried out the family's orders. They were the enforcers who paid their dues, often being caught in the process by law authorities. Many served prison time, getting their credentials, their "tickets punched" for Mafia notoriety.

The more aggressive men in this group wanted the big money. They saw it made by the Sicilian faction running the drug-trade and witnessed this faction emerge, taking all the profits. Whether a "macho" thing or simply greed, the Italian-American Mafia was not going to be subservient to the imported Sicilian bosses and their rising "geeps."

Through the drug trade, this Sicilian faction had plenty of money to exert their influence and control. However, they lacked the power connections to the upper echelon's Commission; and, they were interfering with a CIA operation.

It was time to take action. The Commission directed New York City's Godfather, Castellano, to have the Sicilian faction eliminated. The Commission also cooperated with the government, causing the prosecution rather than assassination of the older Mafiosi. The government was trying to convince the public it was doing a good job through the formality of a federal trial. Other younger and less established émigrés met a different heinous fate. As the rivalry began, some became informants to protect themselves, further cascading the internal destruction of both factions.

From Sri Lanka to El Salvador, new immigrants came to America with their own drug ties and gangs. Latin American gangs took control of their Hispanic communities. Black gangs that formerly participated in the "numbers games" of the 1950s started selling drugs supplied by other ethnic groups. The notorious Dominican Republic gangs did not produce or manufacture any drugs; they imported them into their Dominican-American community.

The FBI Criminal Division squads that investigated the foreign or émigré community crime groups had to coordinate their operations with the FBI's Foreign Counter Intelligence Division, which was ill prepared or

equipped to tackle the drug trafficking problems. Usually an FCI squad only surveilled foreign officials and intelligence officers. Further complicating things, the Bureau would have to coordinate and seek permission from the State Department when pursuing foreign officials, not to mention the CIA which itself was working at cross-purposes to the FBI, and foreign governments were also involved.

One of the most stunning examples of government complicity was found in Latin America. Cocaine was produced in Peru and Bolivia, shipped to Colombia, and processed. Then, it was shipped to Panama. From Panama, it was flown into the United States. FBI Legal Attaches reported that the Colombian Armed Forces transported cocaine to Panama.

### **CIA's Involvement in the Pizza Connection Case**

On October 1, 1984, Tomasso Buscetta was extradited by the CIA from Brazil to testify against the twenty-two Mafia defendants in the Pizza case. One of the most prominent defendants was Gaetano Badalamenti, the former Capo Di Tutti of the Sicilian Mafia, who was extradited by the CIA from Spain. Badalamenti was not as powerful as portrayed by the CIA; he had fell from grace in November 1978, and fled from Sicily, fearing for his life during the so-called Mafia wars.

The FBI claimed, from listening to telephone wiretaps, that they had discovered Badalamenti living in Madrid, Spain. From Madrid, he conducted drug-trafficking and money-laundering operations with Sicilian Mafiosi in the U.S. Midwest and who in turn, worked with the Mafia defendants in New York City.

Since Badalamenti had lost his power base in Sicily and was living in Spain, he hardly met the government's classification of the central character in the Pizza Connection case.

### **Congressional Committee Selective Exposure and Cover-Up**

Neither Buscetta nor Badalamenti ever held political or administrative office and neither ever succeeded in building up sufficient wealth to obtain any real influence in Sicily's political arenas after 1978. Further, they never had anything more than a secondary role in the world drug system according to the U.S. Senate. The McClellan Committee was established in 1965 by the Senate and in its report entitled, "Organized Crime and Illicit Traffic in Narcotics," the McClellan Committee whitewashed the American Mafia's drug involvement, which then covered up for the CIA involvement.

When Badalamenti fled from Sicily in 1978, and when Buscetta struggled to survive as his own family was annihilated, whatever powerbase could be ascribed to either man was simply not there. Whether they exerted any control or influence enough to compete with the more powerful rival factions of the Italian and Italian-American Mafias is doubtful. Those two Mafia groups had influential friends in high U.S. offices that were capable of eliminating competition.

However, there was no doubt that this Sicilian faction created competition and problems for the Italian-American Mafia and the Italian Mafia and their two governments, the United States and Italy. Considerable evidence

existed that the CIA had engaged in drug trafficking, including during the Vietnam War and the subversion of the Nicaraguan government known as the Contra affair.

The FBI accomplished successful investigations mainly due to its informants. Overseas, with only occasional FBI legal attaches in the major capitals, it is hardly conceivable that informants in Sicily, Spain and Brazil were available and worked by the limited FBI staffing that exists overseas.

It was the CIA that provided the liaison for the capture and extradition of Buscetta and Badalamenti. During World War II the OSS established contacts with partisan groups during the Second World War, including the Italian Mafia. When that war ended, these clandestine and often criminal groups surfaced in both economic and political areas of the newly freed European countries. The CIA replaced the OSS in 1947, using the same employees and informants. The cooperation with the Mafia and other groups continued, including drug trafficking.

Federal prosecutors in New York claimed Badalamenti was the Kingpin in the Pizza Connection case and indicted him under the RICO Act. He was convicted of the conspiracy to sell drugs and to maintain a continuing criminal enterprise to deal drugs which was the Kingpin Statute or "848 Count."

The CIA had contributed to the fall of this Sicilian faction by supplying Buscetta and Badalamenti and, with little doubt, providing the information to investigate this faction. Ironically, the FBI had been conducting futile investigations of Mafia figures for the past 20-years with few important convictions. Little results considering the massive resources that the Bureau could call upon. Then, remarkably, Pennsylvania conducts an investigation that opened the doors to Mafia indictments and two international and successful trials. It took CIA involvement to finally bring down a segment of the street-level Mafia. There still existed the Italian-Sicilian faction that was gradually being eroded by prosecutions in Italy; and of course, the Italian-American Mafia was damaged, but still functioning.

### **Pennsylvania Crime Commission Report**

As previously noted, the results of a state investigation triggered the federal prosecution that resulted in the Pizza Connection Case. The 1980 Pennsylvania crime commission report on the pizza and cheese industries was an extensive investigation into interstate and international drug-trafficking operations involving a segment of the Sicilian Mafia. The FBI had many investigations targeted against known Mafiosi and their criminal activities, but a coordinated attack upon the Mafia was never initiated. After

Pennsylvania released its report, the FBI formed a Joint Narcotics Task Force to handle the massive case.

There were numerous major leads to be pursued. The Cheese Industry itself needed to be examined. Large firms such as Kraft Cheese and Land-O-Lakes in Wisconsin were reportedly extorted by the Mafia. Cheese companies in New York State would be asked about their operations. There were many incidences of plant and factory sabotage when owners refused to cooperate with Mafia figures seeking to gain control. For instance, metal shav-

ings were found in many cheese products to intimidate owners.

The connection of the Casamento brothers and their Eagle Cheese Company with New Jersey's Roma Foods and other known Mafiosi required investigative leads. Eagle Cheese Company was a small operation compared to the much larger New York State cheese companies such as Pollio Cheese in Port Washington, Sorrentino Cheese in Queens, Ferro Foods in Brooklyn (operated and owned by Frank Gambino, grandson to Carlos Gambino), and Cremosa Cheese in Freeport, Long Island.

There was a particular interest in the Anthony J. Cremosa Cheese Company in Freeport. The FBI New York Field Office FCI squad investigated a Dix Hills neighbor of SSA Manuel Gonzalez, who lived in Dix Hills, Long Island. That neighbor was Dan Priscu, who operated a financial enterprise in Freeport under FBI scrutiny. The FCI Division was interested in Priscu as an informant for Eastern Bloc countries. However, the firm he ran had an extensive criminal history. Consequently, a Long Island FBI criminal squad was given leads from the FCI squad to determine whether a criminal investigation should be conducted.

That question was answered when Taus observed Priscu's employees frequenting Cremosa Cheese and associating with known Mafiosi. The license plate checks of vehicles near Cremosa identified Mafia figures and employees of Priscu's firm, Drexel Company. A further check of vehicles parked near Drexel identified known Mafiosi.

Cremosa surfaced as a high priority. Taus had visited their location that consisted of a storage and distribution facility near the Freeport docks. He posed as a small entrepreneur who wanted to buy a pizzeria. This tactic, pretending to be an interested buyer, was used several times to gain access and information on the pizza and cheese industries.

Cremosa was connected to the Freeport Speedway, a quarter-mile stock car racing track and stadium, one of only three on Long Island. When Taus met the owner, Tony Cremosa, Cremosa suggested several pizza locations that were up for sale. He recommended that Taus get acquainted with the community. Cremosa used the example of his company's involvement with the Freeport Speedway. This was the seed for the establishment of the Freeport Sports Club. Gonzalez did not want to purchase a pizzeria as a front-operation since there were too many cost factors, manpower problems, and little guarantee that any big fish would be caught by running a local shop.

The early criminal investigation into Drexel's affairs never materialized when the FCI Division handled the case. The newly found connection linking the Mafia and Drexel opened the case. However, coordination with the FCI Division and Taus' case was minimal. There were some very disturbing aspects to the FCI case since both the CIA and the National Security Council were involved with Drexel and, they had instructed senior Bureau officials to keep the lid on the Drexel matter.

SSA Gonzalez wanted some action in the Mafia investigations. AUSA Louie Freeh was pushing him and the FBI to mount a massive investigation. Assistant Director Tom Sheer suggested a Joint Task Force be formed in the FBI New York office. While these steps were being considered, personal

problems surfaced.

Gonzalez, the son of a mortician, did not follow in the family business. He became an FBI agent, got married and had three children. Manny's home life was miserable. He had many arguments with his wife, prompting him to leave home early each day and arriving at the FBI by 6 a.m. Manny also made it a point never to leave before 7 p.m. Taus felt sorry for Manny, who was a very personable fellow with a decent heart. Most agents highly respected him for his professionalism and affability. But sympathies and friendship did not prevent Gonzalez and Taus from exhibiting the same frustrations that come from FBI headquarters' interference and the lack of support with field office cases.

Each agent undergoes a monthly review of his caseload by his squad supervisor. It was during just such a monthly review that Gonzalez admonished Taus to get more results somehow in the Freeport investigation. FBI headquarters was hounding Gonzalez rather than listening to his suggestions for more manpower and resources. Manny's wife was also hounding him.

Tempers flared during the monthly review meeting.

"Give me some significant results to get an AUSA to indict these folks in Freeport," Gonzalez demanded as he pushed a 2-foot stack of FBI files across Taus' desk. Taus continued pushing the files until they fell on the floor and smiled at Gonzalez, "I need additional manpower and equipment for the Freeport case. You have me investigating every cheese company and pizzeria on Long Island. I am chasing leads to different states. Just how can I get anywhere without telephonic monitoring and a 24-hour surveillance on subjects who don't believe in normal working hours. Then, you demand that all agents return to the office to report on their leads. How the heck am I supposed to conduct an investigation!"

Listening to Taus vent, Gonzalez understood his complaints and asked, "Exactly what do you want to do?" What can I provide you with besides manpower and resources that the Bureau is not giving us."

"Perhaps our approach should be different," Taus suggested. Manny picked up the Cremosa file reports, noticing the suggestion of the Freeport Speedway owner, to get involved with the community. "You can go undercover. We cannot buy a pizzeria, but a broader, less expensive operation could be even more productive." Gonzalez reviewed Taus' background while brainstorming some kind of undercover business.

Taus had posed as an FIFA (International Federation of Football Association) official when he solicited several Mafia social clubs in Queens for support. Acting as an FIFA soccer association official, Taus gained the attention of several Mafia members. Manny felt a sporting organization could be the answer.

### **Using Sports Club for Crime Leads**

At Pennsylvania Military College (now known as Widener University), Taus had played Varsity Soccer. By the time Taus' adopted son was 8-years old, soccer had become a popular youth sport with teams springing up all over the countryside, rivaling Little League baseball as the number one youth participant sport. Taus possessed a State Coaching License from the

United States Soccer Federation and was amply qualified to coach his son's team. Within a few years, Taus became a commissioner and then a vice-president for the Mid-Island Soccer League.

The largest youth soccer program in America was the Long Island Junior Soccer League (LIJSL). The Mid-Island League operated as an adjunct to this huge program. Taus became friendly with the soccer program officials, including Peter Collins who was LIJSL's President. Collins was every bit a first-generation Irishman. He was only an employee for the giant Grumman Aircraft Corporation in Bethpage, Long Island, but his leadership of LIJSL provided him numerous contacts in the sports field.

Back in the late 1970s, new professional soccer leagues and teams were emerging. The Major Indoor Soccer League was one of them. Its New York team franchise was the "Arrows" which played indoors at the Nassau County Veterans' Memorial Coliseum in Uniondale, home to the New York Islanders. However, there was no big following for men's soccer. Then in 1976, professional sports stadiums began accommodating larger and larger groups watching the games, including many pro-players and coaches that were foreigners.

Jimmy McGeoghan was the coach of the New York United Soccer Team, an Irish citizen, a Catholic, and a suspected IRA member. Within a few years, the popularity of the outdoor soccer game diminished as it competed for the attention of the American Public against other more popular sports such as the National Football League teams in the winter and the National and American Baseball Leagues teams in the summer. The new American Soccer League soon collapsed from low attendance and the lack of corporate sponsors. The league management founded an alternative form of soccer that would not compete with the entrenched American sports. It was known as Professional Indoor Soccer. It could be played on artificial turf covering the major ice hockey rinks when not used by the National Hockey League.

Unfortunately, the U.S. Immigration & Naturalization Service (INS) decided that many of the foreign coaches and players had expired visas and were now overstaying their welcome. McGeoghan could not show he was still working since the newer league had not been formed. He and his family would have to return to Ireland,

At one LIJSL meeting, League President Peter Collins took Taus aside to make a special request. Knowing Taus was an FBI agent, Collins asked him to assist McGeoghan so he could stay in the United States. A few days later, McGeoghan came down to the local soccer program with his two sons to give instructions to the younger players. It was his way of showing his value and potential soccer contribution for the new American interest. He was a great coach and a likeable person.

The next day, Taus approached his FBI supervisor for assistance. In 1980, Taus worked for the FBI's FCI division. His supervisor was Joseph O'Brien, another Irishman and an IRA supporter. O'Brien was only too happy to help McGeoghan and approved Taus' request to ask the INS officers located in the same building: the Jacob Javits Federal Office Building.



There was no FBI FCI file on McGeoghan and Taus asked the INS supervisor dealing with political asylums if they could grant McGeoghan's request to stay in America. The INS supervisor was satisfied with the story Taus related and suggested Taus have McGeoghan complete an application for political asylum, noting that he feared being "knee-capped" if he should be forced to return to Ireland. The strategy seemed to work since McGeoghan remained in the U.S. even after the newer team, the New York Arrows, collapsed due to financial losses.



## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

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### CIA Corrupt Activities

**T**aus discovered corrupt activities within the CIA and CIA proprietary companies. One such company was Nugan Hand Bank, operating throughout the Far East with headquarters in Sydney, Australia and incorporated in the Cayman Island in 1976. It had replaced another CIA proprietary company called Castle Bank & Trust, which was incorporated in Nassau, Bahamas Islands.

Nugan Hand's operations were designed to launder drug money from the Golden Triangle of Southeast Asia, which was involved in an FBI investigation by SSA Joseph O'Brien's Asian FCI squad. Although the CIA handled overseas matters, many foreign officials and citizens from hostile Asian countries entered the United States and many of their activities were monitored by O'Brien's agents.

Taus' attention was taken to this area when one of his new FCI informants told him about Nugan Hand Bank's involvement in weapons sales and money transfer. One case, involving North Korea, assigned to Taus, involved an informant who entered the U.S. illegally and became an informant for the North Korean government. The informant became successful, and accepted a position at Long Island's C.W. Post College, rising to dean of a prominent department. Taus identified him as an agent from a hostile country and told him so.

Upon being confronted by Taus and being offered the role of a double agent, working against the North Korean Intelligence Service, he didn't have much choice if he wanted to remain in the United States. Taus then had to coordinate the double-agent offer to the U.S. State Department for their approval. He agreed to be a double agent.

The Dean described arms shipments by North Korea to the Irish Republican Army. Taus made out a report and submitted it to the supervising special agent, O'Brien. It was agreed that Taus would get more information from the Dean.

During further interviews, the Dean revealed a startling web of interconnected intelligence agencies, criminal organizations and business leaders, which also involved Middle East arms merchants. Taus provided this

information to O'Brien.

During this time several names surfaced as expeditors and middlemen in the arms shipments: Adnan Khashoggi, Manuchehr Ghorbanifar and Mohamed Al-Fayed. These names were all unfamiliar to Taus at that time.

However, both Khashoggi and Al-Fayed were involved in weapons shipments, not only to hostile Middle Eastern nations, but also to the Irish Republican Army.

Hearing Taus' report on IRA weapons shipments, O'Brien instructed Taus to schedule an interview between the Dean and O'Brien. Further, Taus was told not to contact the Dean again. O'Brien took charge of the case.

Taus suspected a cover-up because of O'Brien's personal and emotional commitment to the IRA movement. Taus expected to receive an involuntary transfer for uncovering information that powerful people in the U.S. government wanted hidden. Instead of Taus receiving retaliation, O'Brien felt the consequences; he was transferred!

O'Brien was transferred to a criminal squad at the BQMRA where he was, for a brief time, the criminal squad's supervisor. A story was spread that he decided to step down and become a "brick-agent." It's an open question whether a trip that he made to Ireland and his sympathy for the IRA resulted in silent repercussions.

Later news reports showed Al-Fayed, Khashoggi and Ghorbanifar as arms dealers embroiled in shipments to the IRA and in other activities against U.S. interests. Their names kept appearing in other FCI files. Before O'Brien was transferred, he told Taus that the Dean's information would be turned over to the FBI Criminal Division for further handling—or cover-up.

### **The POW/MIA Cover-up**

Before O'Brien was transferred Taus overheard a conversation between O'Brien and agent Frank Finn, concerning Finn's case involving Vietnam. In the course of their discussions, both stated that there were still American prisoners-of-war (POWs), some of whom were classified as Missing-in-Action (MIA). They knew this was a very politically sensitive issue. Later that day, Taus asked O'Brien to be assigned to the Vietnam case since he was a Vietnam Veteran.

O'Brien declined Taus' request. "You will be too emotionally involved in working such affairs based upon your wartime experiences." Unfortunately, the POW/MIA issue was never resolved; just buried, despite the efforts from many organizations such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion, the Veterans of the Vietnam War, and the Vietnam Veterans of America. By 1988, the U.S. government released a 44-page pamphlet describing its attempts at locating POW/MIAs to satisfy the veterans organizations. In 1989, this pamphlet was reduced in size to only 20-pages, deleting significant information from the initial issue concerning what was clearly known about the many POW/MIA sightings and reports.

SSA Sherman Thompson (alias) replaced O'Brien, who was well-liked and who realized the futility of some of the FBI's actions.

Important investigations were often political in nature. A Bureau supervisor would not waste his time dealing with a minor case, at least not with

cases that would have no positive results. The Bureau supervisor was taught to seek “administrative advancement” for his own interests.

After placing a folder in his supervisor’s in-box one day, Taus was called into Thompson’s office after he had read the report. The report included investigative leads Taus sent to other Field Offices and requested the Bureau to review its indices. Thompson said:

*What the hell is this, Rich? Let sleeping dogs lie. You don’t have to go to extremes on this case. Close it. No one’s going to read this anyway. You are creating a problem.”*

The case dealt with monitoring the People’s Republic of China’s students who, for the most part, were carefully pursuing their educational programs. Taus had suggested that the matter should be the INS’ responsibility rather than wasting FBI agent manpower when no spies, informants or intelligence officers had been discovered in that population.

It appeared that the less work Taus did, which reduced the office workload, the more he was appreciated, and by doing less, he did not outshine other agents. An example occurred one afternoon when an agent returned to the office from firearms training, still wearing his gray range uniform. It was obvious to everyone that the agent was devoting his unofficial time-off to Bureau duties. A commendable deed by senior management standards, but not in the opinion of brick agents and some supervisors. They felt that returning to the office could establish a bad precedent. Agents could be told in the future to return to the office.

#### **Federal Law Enforcement Officer’s Association (FLEOA)**

Some protection could be acquired in the form of an insurance policy. An agent could take out a liability insurance through the Bureau in case of a lawsuit resulting from an automobile accident. Agents sought further refuge in other organizations created to protect their legal rights. Since FBI agents were not allowed to unionize, artificial associations were created. The Federal Law Enforcement Officers’ Association (FLEOA) and the FBI Agents’ Association (FBIAA) were the two membership groups that addressed FBI agents’ concerns.

FLEOA was open to any federal law enforcement officer and included Customs, Treasury, Drug Enforcement Administration, Secret Service, Immigration & Naturalization Service, Internal Revenue Service and other federal agencies among its clientele. It was run by a private attorney, Jack Solerwitz, who saw an opportunity to expand his office practice by dealing exclusively with federal employees. FLEOA grew rapidly as Solerwitz became the advocate for the previously unrepresented federal officers and agents. An annual membership fee of \$50 entitled an agent to FLEOA’s quarterly news bulletin and legal insurance. The insurance was only in the form of representation in court by the founding attorney,

FBIAA had much more difficulty in getting started. It was founded exclusively for FBI agents, probably because the agents who founded it were dissatisfied with FLEOA. A moderate fee was first set, but increased to \$40. FBI’s purpose was to act as a watchdog for agent’s rights and to keep them informed of legislation or rules affecting them.

The founding agents of the FBIAA were labeled malcontents by the Bureau. The FBI Director refused to recognize them and warned the founders that an agents' union was unlawful. Persistence paid off and the FBIAA was unofficially recognized, much the same as Poland's Solidarity Union in the 1970s. But there could be no union in the Bureau's eyes.

On February 5, 1990, FLEOA's founder Jack Solerwitz was disbarred from practicing law by the appellate division of New York State's Supreme Court. This action resulted from numerous criminal and civil cases pending against the lawyer by his own clients who claimed they were victimized by him.

Many FBI agents tried to avoid paying their federal and state income taxes, using another attorney to do their income tax forms. Sebastian Ragusa's clientele included agents and officers from other federal and state agencies. They all got wind of the many business deductions that Ragusa could make on their yearly income statements. It was appealing for some agents and saved them thousands of dollars in taxes. A thorough investigation was conducted by the Internal Revenue Service for several years as confirmed by former IRS agent Andrea Zaideman.

#### **Questionable Tax Returns**

The Freeport Sports Club's tax returns were prepared by Andrea Zaideman, who was the wife of Taus' classmate at the FBI Academy, Wayne Zaideman. When the Freeport Club was first organized to probe the CIA's operation in Freeport, Zaideman approached Taus, ostensibly to assist him with the organization. Zaideman lived in Merrick, Long Island, a town adjacent to Freeport. He worked on the Iranian Terrorist FCI squad at the FBINYO.

As Taus' Freeport investigation increased in momentum during 1983, Zaideman took a greater interest and suggested the club's finances be handled by his wife. In 1984, Zaideman was transferred from his Iranian terrorist squad to the Hungarian & Romanian FCI squad, to which Taus was assigned. It was a strange switch since Zaideman spent a year at the Defense Department's language school in Monterey, California, learning the Iranian (Farsi) language. Furthermore, Zaideman developed many Iranian informants. It was inconceivable that he would be transferred to a squad where his talents could not be used.

Taus had discovered the Iranian Contra Arms Initiative Affair and the Iraqi commodity and weapons scandals. A counter-probe was mounted against Taus' investigation. Zaideman was transferred back to his Iranian FCI squad upon the termination of Taus' Freeport case. Zaideman did receive his "office of preference assignment" to St. Louis, Missouri, immediately upon Taus' arrest on fabricated charges.

Attorney Sebastian Ragusa, who prepared agents' tax returns, appeared in the federal tax court that decided several hundred FBI agents owed back taxes with interest and penalty payments. In this group were other federal and state agents, including police officials from Nassau and Suffolk Counties' police departments.

It was not only the federal and state tax authorities that lost tax revenue;

New York City also lost. In completing New York City tax forms, agents would state that a great portion of their working time was spend outside of New York City limits, which effectively reduced the percentage of tax revenues that would otherwise be paid. The public never learned about how their law enforcement personnel were filing tax returns with false information.

After the tax court's judgment against Ragusa's unethical accounting procedures, many agents, including supervisors, received notice for large tax payments, including late charges. Several supervisors had to pay the IRS more than \$12,000 for discrepancies on their tax returns.

### **The Freeport Sports Club**

Taus set up the Freeport Sports Club in order to obtain leads on criminal activities, especially at the CIA operation. Many "front organizations" existed, expressing purposes and goals other than their professed objectives. One example of such a structure was the National Freedom Institute set up by the secret CIA K-team in Freeport to deflect attention away from their main activities. Using the backdrop of a patriotic organization, the CIA's Enterprise could hide behind a cloak of American patriotism and freely operate in areas reserved for other government departments and agencies.

A long-time friend of Taus, whom he met when first coaching his son's soccer team, was a Yugoslavian refugee. Claude Mattessich was now a successful businessman, and a great assistant soccer coach. He had escaped from communist Yugoslavia and eventually entered the United States, where he obtained a job and raised a family. In 1988, Mattessich's son received a full scholarship to Columbia University. There were many people with diverse backgrounds that were interested in this soccer, especially among the new Italian and Sicilian émigrés.

When SSA Gonzalez noticed a great interest in Soccer by the Italian community, he saw an avenue for obtaining information. "Let's put your soccer background to some use," Gonzalez told Taus. "Establish a sports organization in Freeport. Then you can go to businesses such as Drexel and Cremosa directly, asking for sponsorships, memberships and assistance. Even if they know you are an FBI agent, they'll never question your motives when they see a sports organization behind you.

SSA Gonzalez obtained Bureau approval for the undercover operation. The organization would be self-sustaining based upon registration fees and sponsorships. It would be incorporated in 1981 as a "not-for-profit, charitable organization" under New York State and Federal Tax Law V 5011. This kind of organization would be able to obtain playing field permits, free use of local school facilities and make purchases tax-free. Volunteers would handle the day-to-day business and activities.

### **Discovering CIA Connections in Freeport**

Taus' surveillance of Cremosa Cheese Company in Freeport produced many leads, including license plates, which were recorded and identification obtained of the owner's name and address. These helped to show a relationship between the Mafia and the CIA. Though many vehicles were registered to companies and organizations, some drivers could be identified from corporate listings. Other vehicles were registered in relatives' names. Mafiosi

rarely used their own names. If they did, they would alter their date of birth (dob) by supplying the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) with a slightly different date to confuse identity checks, i.e., an actual dob of 1/2/45 would be entered as 02/01/45 or 10/20/45, just enough for the DMV computer to miss a "hit."

During the early surveillance in Freeport, Taus found a vehicle registered to another nearby company called "Drexel," located on Bedell Street. This firm was under surveillance by another FBI squad from the FBI New York office Foreign Counter Intelligence Division (FCI). Taus had observed FBI agent Roderick Walls conducting a physical surveillance in Freeport and asked him about Drexel's connection with Cremosa. Walls stated Drexel had been involved in criminal activities since the mid-1970s.

#### **Law Firm Link to CIA**

Another surveillance of that firm found one vehicle registered to the investment company of Drexel Burnham Lambert, a junk-bonds securities company. Another vehicle, a black Mercedes-Benz seemed out-of-place in the lower-class neighborhood. A DMV check showed it registered to a Mrs. FNU (First Name Unknown) Emil. Taus traced it to her husband, Arthur Emil who was an attorney with Surrey and Morse, a law firm. Walls had informed Taus that Emil's law firm had links to the forerunner of the CIA, the OSS. The interesting aspect about Arthur Emil was his relationship to Wallace Surrey, and Surrey had been a member of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) during World War II.

#### **Subsequent Links to New York Governor, the Mafia, and CIA**

Making this lead more important was a *New York Times* article, published in the summer of 1981, about Emil's odd connections to New York State's Governor Hugh Carey. The story concerned Emil's receiving campaign funds for Governor Carey and his running mate, Lt. Gov. Mario Cuomo. FBI agents felt that New York politicians dealt with the Mafia. The news article reported that campaign funds came from Anthony Scotto, a known Mafia boss. Taus looked closer, more concerned with the Mafia ties than the CIA. Information from both the Criminal and FCI divisions confirmed the *Times*' article. Despite this information, there was no investigation into the matter.

Walls eventually filled Taus in on the case. His Drexel informant was Dan Priscu, the president of the Freeport company, who provided Walls with information on Eastern Bloc countries. Walls identified other Drexel employees. One was George Hebert, who attended Pennsylvania Military College, a person Taus knew from the military academy. Hebert pursued a liberal arts or political science degree and had no financial knowledge.

A list was developing of known Mafia figures that were observed at Cremosa, including Carmine Persico. His car was registered to his wife in the neighboring town of Baldwin. The FBI's Brooklyn-Queens office (BQMRA) had a member of its Colombo organized crime squad investigating his activities. Taus coordinated with that squad on Persico's future contacts.

Salvatore Piga, a known Lucchese soldier was one of the more unusual



hits that seemed to be connected to FBI investigations. When Piga's gray Cadillac was spotted twice in Freeport, Taus followed him to the First United Company in Garden City, about 4 miles from Drexel. First United was a brokerage house dealing in credit exchanges and owned by Mario Renda who appeared to be a Mafia untouchable and a financier. Renda's name appeared in several FBI organized crime files and in a Hungarian FCI file.

Since Taus had met agents from the Hungarian/Romanian squad, it made Piga and Renda's relationship more important. Piga's name appeared in a Hungarian file as a business associate of Stephen Samos. It was not until 1985 that Samos' name was mentioned again by George Hebert concerning a Panamanian company that was part of a democratic movement called "Project Democracy." Samos assisted the K-team in establishing a business called Amalgamated Commercial Enterprise (ACE), which was an important part of the Iran-Contra weapons shipments.

The Iran-Contra Arms initiative affair, known as Irangate, would become known in the media several years later. In 1981-82, Taus was more concerned about how the Mafia was using the financial firm. One obvious way was to launder or re-invest profits from the drug-trafficking operations. This was a much different, more sophisticated Mafia than most FBI agents handled, involving huge sums of money.

These funds could only come from two sources in Taus' opinion. One was from drug trafficking, and the other source of cash came from the recently deregulated Savings & Loans Associations. In both cases, there were strong connections to the CIA.

Angelo Ruggiero was another Mafia figure that drove his Cadillac into Cremona's parking lot. The rotund Ruggiero was a Mafioso from the Gambino Family. This was an important lead at the time since Ruggiero was a known suspect. He represented a side of Godfather Paul Castellano's empire that was slowly taking over the Mafia street-level operations involving drugs. A split occurred within the five New York organized crime families. The Godfather, Castellano, wanted no one to be involved in drugs, while the younger Mafiosi saw the huge profits that were going to other criminal groups.

Chinese gangs were taking over the drug trafficking on the Mafia's Mulberry Street in lower Manhattan. The Chinese had their own secret societies, as did the Colombian South American cartels that trafficked and sold cocaine in New York. Both the Chinese and Colombians were taking business away from the Italian Mafia.

The Gambino Organized Crime Family was splitting into two groups over the drug-trafficking issue. Finally in the summer of 1982, the Gambino group parted company with the shooting of a drug-using soldier by John Gotti. The Godfather, Castellano, had not sanctioned the hit. Fortunately for Gotti, Castellano's underboss was Aniello "Neil" Dellacroce who was Gotti's uncle.

Despite Castellano's resistance to drug trafficking, the foreign Sicilian Mafia faction made great inroads into the drug trade. The Sicilian faction

was in competition with the Italian-American Mafia.

Unlike Castellano who was retiring and reclusive, Gotti was aggressive and flamboyant. He wanted his family to reap the greater profits being generated from drugs. The dissatisfaction and clamor from the five New York organized crime families' rank-and-file supported Gotti. In mid-December 1985 Gotti made his move to take over the New York families when Castellano was assassinated in front of Sparks Steak House in Manhattan. It also began Gotti's downfall, since Castellano was the politically sanctioned Godfather appointed by the more powerful Mafia Commission.

Giuseppe Lamberti and Salvatore Mazzurco, partners in the Mafia-controlled Pronto Demolition Company, were also observed in Freeport.

Both men were later convicted in the Pizza Connection Trial.

The Mafia that the FBI was investigating was strictly the street-level echelon and its operating Mafiosi that ran the criminal ventures. Their illegal activities included robberies, hi-jacking, extortion, gambling, drugs, and prostitution. These Mafiosi were territorial; local Mafia families controlled certain sections or neighborhoods, and such areas were now overlapping, requiring agreements to be negotiated between Mafia families. Profit-sharing pacts were approved as one family conducted business in another family's neighborhood.

Dealing in greater profits and insulated from public scrutiny was the Mafia's upper echelon with its political and government leaders and corporate contacts. This Mafia elite could get political favors in the U.S. and overseas. They shook hands with the powerbrokers, aristocrats and owners of a world order unknown to most people.

#### **Early Signs of FBI Management Blocking Mafia Investigation**

Angelo Ruggiero played prominently in Taus' 1983 reassignment to the Bonanno squad in the New York Field Office under the supervision of R.

Lindley DeVecchio. A heated exchange between AUSA Louis Freeh and Taus contributed partly to this reassignment. Freeh had denied Taus' request to pursue his investigation of CIA criminal activities in Freeport. Little did Taus realize that DeVecchio was protecting a Mafia faction. DeVecchio also blocked Taus' investigation into another CIA/Mafia connection in Middle Village, Queens.

Taus originally thought his new squad assignment would allow him to better coordinate his Freeport case since both the Criminal and FCI divisions were located in the New York Field Office. While working his case at the BQMRA in Rego Park, Taus made numerous trips into the Manhattan FBI office to check out his Freeport leads. Another factor that assisted Taus was placing him on an extended night surveillance of Angelo Ruggiero's Cedarhurst, Long Island house.

#### **Tactics Keeping Taus From Learning of FBI Links to Mafia**

Ruggiero's case was being handled by the Manhattan Bonanno squad instead of the BQMRA Bonanno squad, which proximity was closer to BQMRA. In any event, Taus had more time to handle the Freeport Sports Club and the Freeport investigations. Working at nights, Taus could sleep at the empty factory plant where surveillance apparatus was set-up to observe

Ruggiero's house. Nothing was happening at Ruggiero's house, possibly because he knew about the FBI bugs and telephone taps. Taus was able to get enough rest and work the next day in Freeport. It was DeVecchio's way of providing Taus an "accommodation" for his Freeport case that would keep Taus from learning about DeVecchio's connections to the Mafia.

It was 1981 and Taus was uncertain about the CIA's activities in Freeport, their relationship to Cremosa, and whether Cremosa was a part of a large distribution system for the importation and sale of narcotics. He wondered what were the financial connections to Drexel, whether it was a CIA proprietary company, and what Drexel was doing with a suspected Mafia company and known Mafiosi drug-traffickers.

Cremosa had a fleet consisting of trucks that handled their deliveries. Taus followed a few of the trucks, which stopped at local pizzerias. Cremosa's building had a large dock that could easily handle drugs arriving from various local and overseas locations. If night deliveries were arriving at Cremosa, Taus was hamstrung to prove it. DeVecchio had assigned him to the Ruggiero night surveillance!

Nowhere in the 1980 Pennsylvania Crime Commission Report was the CIA mentioned. By late 1985, the CIA knew Taus was investigating them and by early 1986, the CIA was giving Taus statements and answers with half-truths and cover-ups.

There were many more leads connecting the Mafia and CIA to criminal activities in the early 1980s. In 1984, Taus was assigned to the FCI Hungarian/Romanian squad. The president of Drexel, now renamed Castle Securities, was listed as an FBI informant. When Taus took that portion of the case, he simply put two-and-two together. Castle's president was the CIA chief of station in Freeport, and ran the Iran-Contra Arms initiative for Oliver North. The thrust of the original Mafia case in Freeport was now centered on criminal operations involving the CIA. The bogus company called Castle Securities (formerly Drexel) was linked to a vast network of banking facilities, financial markets and fraudulent investments.

#### **DeVecchio and DOJ Blocking Examination of Covert CIA Company**

The K-team was initially thought to harbor the financial support and accountability needed for the large New York City area Mafia drug-trafficking operations, but the FBI denial to Taus of a subpoena for company records was blocked by DeVecchio and the U.S. attorney's office in the Eastern District of New York. This denial was unheard of since Taus had an open FBI case against Castle Securities president. Castle's phony shell corporations and worthless securities provided enough evidence for an indictment. There were sufficient leads of merit before the Irangate scandal broke in 1986, connecting Castle to many CIA proprietary companies and their illegal operations. Nearly a year prior to the breaking story in "Al-Shiraa," the Lebanese newspaper, the K-team was covering up for their involvement in the Iran-Contra operations.

In 1985, FBI headquarters and New York office asked Taus to open a undercover operation against the United Nations' Diplomatic Corps similar to what Taus had done with the Freeport Sports Club.



## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

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### Informants and Internal FBI Intrigue

Agents on the same squad rarely know each other's informants. An informant's identity would be known to an assistant case agent who would fill in for the case agent and co-sign payment receipts for the informant. Unless there were compelling reasons, such as an informant assisting another agent's investigation, only three *primary* agents would know the informant's identity: the case agent, his supervisor and the assistant case agent.

The supervisor's boss, the Assistant Supervisor-In-Charge (ASAC) and the Supervisory Agent-In-Charge (SAC) would also be aware. The so-called secretive identity was known by the Confidential Informants' Files Unit (CIFU), where informant files were secured in a separate storage area away from all other FBI files. The CIFU supervisor and his assistant agent and the clerks, plus any cleric that typed or handled the paperwork would also know and have some access to the files. Secrecy was obviously limited.

When Taus first worked Foreign Counter-intelligence cases in 1979, the 25<sup>th</sup> floor of the Jacob Javits Federal Office Building was shared by the FBI's Soviet Division on the east side and the Soviet Satellite Division on the west side. Each division had 10 to 15 squads with a like number of assigned agents in each squad. The Soviet Satellite Division was considered a choice assignment, with a certain snob appeal and where cases had a greater priority.

Despite often uninspiring leadership and mundane cases, three-foot by five-foot flags of Eastern Bloc countries could be seen hanging from the ceilings or office partitions in the squad's working areas. These flags were purchased privately by agents who took pride in their plum assignment. About 250 FBI agents and another 100 clerks were in that 25<sup>th</sup> floor division.

Among the agents assigned to the Romanian Hungarian squad were Roderick Walls and Thomas Pierce. One member of the Freeport CIA station, Dan Priscu, was an active informant for Walls, although Walls had no idea of the informant's position in the CIA. Priscu was the CIA Chief of Staff in Freeport who supplied K-team and former FBI handling agents with

misinformation. Priscu and the CIA engaged in a practice of misleading the FBI and other federal law enforcement officers. Walls informed Taus that another member of the K-team was an informant on the nearby Cuban FCI squad. Walls added, "I'm not supposed to know that for some reason."

The Cuban squad encompassed the entire Caribbean area. The Bureau did not want to admit that friendly Caribbean islands or Central American countries fell under their investigations, causing the squad to be called the Cuban squad. It surprised Taus to learn that K-team members were involved with both the Romanians and Hungarians and several other Central American countries.

Walls took Taus over to the Cuban squad and introduced him to SA Carmine "Cookie" Rivera, stating, "We're interested in Caribbean affairs." Rivera was initially curious about their interest and Taus told him about the K-team's associations with suspected and known Mafia controlled businesses that were involved in drug trafficking.

"So I've heard," said Rivera without further explanation. He described some of the information he learned about Hebert and Kattke, saying the Mafia connection was a new one on him. Rivera said:

*They claim to be patriotic Americans, but there is more to it. They get themselves embroiled in foreign political matters. Jamaica's one example. I don't believe a word my informant tells me!*

This was a strange remark for an FBI agent to make about an informant.

Why waste one's time and possibly jeopardize an investigation? Rivera shrugged his shoulders and told Taus he does what he is instructed to do, "You can speak to my supervisor if you like." First Taus felt he would continue questioning Rivera. "Can you tell me about their personal finances?"

Leaning back in his chair and folding his hands behind his head, Rivera said,

*Good question! At first my informant claimed to be employed part time, then he was out of a job; but all the while, he claimed to be involved with a patriotic organization, the National Freedom Institute. I found no records of any such group, but that's not unusual. What is unusual is the fantastic trips he takes around the world when he say he doesn't have two nickels to rub together. These sojourns are done for no other reason than his professed belief in stopping communism."*

"Would you give me his name," Taus requested. Up to this point the informant had not been named by Rivera. He already had been told about Walls' informant. It would be an even exchange. "Sure," Rivera had no problem, but he reminded Taus and Walls to keep it confidential.

*George Hebert. He's constantly contacting me, telling me everything he's doing, a typical misinformation ploy. My supervisor tells me what to do. Hebert comes to us saying he's been to Jamaica. While strolling on it beaches, he meets a Jamaican who wants to flee from the island because the new Prime Minister, Michael Manley, is a communist. So Hebert takes an expensive vacation, gets involved with a foreign stranger, comes back to New York and starts helping the anti-Manley Jamaicans here. Sounds unbelievable!"*

“It is unbelievable,” Taus pointed out. He was a bigot at Penn Military College where we were cadets. He’s never associated with any blacks.”

Rivera’s steady smile faded as he continued to tell of Hebert’s self-acknowledged exploits.

*Hebert contacted a neighbor of his, Kevin Kattke, who just happens to be in the Army Reserves and is an intelligence branch officer. Then, the repairman that Kattke hires from a phone book decides to join the ‘adventurers’ in their quest to free Jamaica of communist influences! This guy’s just an independent roofing contractor. His name is Roy Harris. There are other people connected to Hebert besides Kattke and Harris.*

Rivera stopped short of providing other names, probably figuring he had given out enough information.

“Dan Priscu,” Taus noted as Walls frowned and bit his lip. Walls then nodded toward Rivera who seemed startled. “Is Priscu your informant? This thing needs to be better coordinated.” Rivera meant that Walls’ case needed to be handled by the Cuban squad.

The case needed to be coordinated, but the sad reality of U.S. Intelligence and Counter-Intelligence was the lack of cooperation and coordination between intelligence agencies. The case needed the attention of three FBI supervisors, two from the FCI and one the Criminal Divisions. That meant bringing in the SAC of the Soviet Satellite Division and his boss the Assistant Director of the FBINYO, as well as the SAC of BQMRA, where the criminal squad had a case. Rivera, Walls and Taus realized this after Priscu’s name was mentioned. In unison the three rolled their eyes and gave a look of despair.

Their thoughts were that things would not go very far without informing their bosses at this point. That would complicate their investigations with additional meetings, reports and cautions. “Too many cooks will spoil the brew,” remarked Taus.

Taus suggested to Rivera that they both speak to Rivera’s supervisor as a start. The Cuban squad wasted no time after Taus explained his case. “Let’s see if MacGordy (SAC of the Soviet Satellite Division) can see you now.”

Rivera’s supervisor wanted to remove Walls and Taus from the case.

SAC MacGordy was a former U.S. Marine Corps officer and approachable and his recent heart operation had made him even more so. After another explanation from Taus and Rivera, where Walls nodded his confirmation of their story, MacGordy agreed there was much more to Kattke, Hebert and Priscu’s backgrounds. MacGordy said:

*They are CIA agents, plain and simple. Given his military background, Kattke was probably an NSA officer. Hebert is some CIA bastard who got his appointment on his father’s coattails. Priscu’s got to be the Station Chief. Let’s go take a look at their files.*

With MacGordy in the lead, the group marched out of his office and to the confidential informant files unit. After paging through Priscu’s file, MacGordy said, “Another bogus file. Probably all misinformation. Damn the CIA!” His experience with the CIA in the past were disappointing. “The CIA and the NSA have taken a chapter from the Bureau’s own book. They

don't tell us what they are doing, and when they do, it's always half-truths or half-lies if you prefer."

Failing to understand, Walls said, "I don't understand why we all cannot work together." MacGordy responded:

*Look, we monitor these people too, until we are told to stop. It's not just foreign diplomats and intelligence officers. Usually these damn cases go on forever, unless we have an informant working inside. Even with that, we can be short-circuited by FBIHQs. I know how you men feel about the CIA in this case. We'll play along with their game. Remember it's better to keep our friends close and our enemies even closer."*

Taus wondered whether MacGordy meant the enemies to be foreign Intelligence officers or CIA agents. Expressing his concern over Walls' informant, MacGordy said:

*It figures, CIA had another one of its secret teams together and we've been watching them only because they asked us. In effect, they are covering their asses by notifying us. We wouldn't get far in obtaining their financial records," MacGordy pined. He knew there would be further obstacles from higher levels, preventing a "full-field investigation."*

MacGordy indicated there was a bigger connection. His gut feeling, based upon the information supplied was the CIA secret team was conducting illegal business dealings through fraudulent financial transactions. They would be protected by White House intervention.

MacGordy spoke with some uncertainty. Perhaps he had seen enough of these operations. "Someone's got to tackle them. It looks like you've been designated Taus, at least under these circumstances. Who's the AUSA you're working with on the Mafia case?"

Freeh's name rung a bell with MacGordy; he knew Freeh was a former FBI agent and asked Taus to seek his advice. Taus responded, "That's the problem. Freeh is up to his ears in alligators and doesn't want to trip over the CIA's business. That's what he's told me."

The situation was unresolved. MacGordy suggested that Taus simply wait for additional developments. "Don't worry, the CIA will make a mess of things."

Often the most important lessons are not covered in the FBI's Manual of Instructions. Actually, there were more deep-seated problems. Professional rivalries were not the problem contributing to interagency distrust. There were political considerations. When the heads of intelligence services are political appointees, the agencies will accomplish the bidding of the White House politicians. Special political interest would exploit and mismanage even the most professional service.

That's the reason the FBI's first Director, Hoover, made sure he could trust his own men. He hired Mormons because their religious beliefs made them truthful people. There were few Mormons working for the CIA. Sadly though, Hoover and his predecessors did not teach FBI agents about these problems. No part of the FBI Academy's curriculum taught new agents about political interference, ulterior motives or special interest. The FBI taught agents other things, but failed to teach them the facts of life. The FBI



Academy also failed to cover the workings of the other U.S. and foreign Intelligence services. SAC MacGordy suggested having lunch to further discuss these issues.

“The National Security Council considered their mission to be so important that not even the FBI could be trusted; and worse, the FBI could be an interference. The CIA no longer merely collected information. It was creating information or rather misinformation due to its greater use of covert and clandestine operations. With this cloak of secrecy, CIA officials and those they supported were above the law.

MacGordy continued his comments.:

*CIA agents denied their association with “the company.” It’s CIA’s intention to distance themselves from their own agents and operations because things could go bad. We call it “plausible deniability.” The only reason for this concept is because they are breaking U.S. laws.*

*The CIA had tried to distant themselves from their secret teams by referring to them as privateers or patriotic groups. Americans have always been told whatever the government does, especially when they employ covert and clandestine operations, that it is for the protection of the country. That it is in the country’s national security interests.*

Taus had heard a similar speech before from Army Major Goulay in Washington back in 1967, Colonel Singlaub in Vietnam in 1968, General Sturm in New York in 1971, and from Nestor Sanchez in Central America back in 1973.

MacGordy remarked, “Presidential candidates for both the Democratic and Republican parties are approved by this secret tribunal of sorts. Often exceptionally competent and charismatic men are selected from outside of this royal close-knit society to manage their agendas. These outsiders become the executors for the elitists. They run the national economy at the elitists’ directions.” Lunch had ended. MacGordy’s face was pale. The three case agents were silent. Walls and Rivera had never heard this story before.

Taus knew the special interests of this powerful group ought to be stopped by the government’s system of checks and balances, but the system was corrupted too. Within the legislative and executive branches were congressional charters and U.S. attorney general’s guidelines that have been promulgated for the legalization of all intelligence activities. With the various administrations, the White House had continually undermined any rules and regulations. The White House often operated in collusion with the CIA directly and through the National Security Council to circumvent any obstinate current laws, until such laws can be rescinded or amended.

There have been times when the White House has become a target for the Power Elite. This occurred when the president decided to make his own decisions contrary to the desires of this Secret Elite. When national leaders do not cooperate with this Secret Elite, they suffer the consequences.

Back in MacGordy’s office, he planted another thought in the case agents minds. “For some reason, the CIA boys are concentrating on activities affecting the Romanian and Hungarian squad.” MacGordy turned to Walls. “Figure the CIA must be thinking that we have given your squad’s

mission a lower priority, so maybe they feel more comfortable. But that alone does not account for their increased involvement with these countries.

I will speak to your (Wall's) supervisor when he gets back from leave."

The SAC's comments reflected the sad state of affairs in the Bureau. The FBI was always playing cat-and-mouse and catch-up with the CIA. The investigative trail left behind by the CIA was littered with false leads and misinformation. In 1984, Taus would be assigned to the Romanian/Hungarian FCI squad and take over Walls' investigation of Dan Priscu. The K-team would increasingly reveal itself and its operations until a few months prior to the revelations of November 1986 in the Beirut, Lebanon newspaper, "Al-Shiraa."

America's problems with drugs was mentioned by MacGordy. "To think those bastards would engage in selling out their country!" MacGordy swung his desk chair around, placed his right hand over his heart and gazed out of his 25<sup>th</sup> floor window overlooking the Hudson River in the distance. A Naval warship was slowly cruising up the Hudson. MacGordy's eyes seemed to focus on it and the crew proudly lining the ship's rails.

"You're a military man, Rich." MacGordy changed the subject or so it seemed to Taus who replied, "Served two tours in Vietnam, Skipper. And I'm a captain in the Army Reserves." MacGordy swung his chair back and stood up. "Then captain, do your duty!" See if you can get these bastards. I'll give you whatever you need." He looked at Walls and said, "You will be helping him too."

Everyone nodded at MacGordy's serious tone. He was a real patriot. His right hand was still across his chest. It was a portent of another heart attack.

Since both Rivera and Walls were instructed by MacGordy to assist Taus with any files he needed, Taus suggested they return to the CIFU section on the 26<sup>th</sup> floor.

The CIFU file on Dan Priscu provided another critical link in the complicated puzzle Taus faced. Carefully reading the serials, Taus discovered that Priscu's value to the FBI wavered over the past 20 years. Despite the fact the CIA had allegedly dispensed with him in 1953, Priscu seemed to always find a way to have his file reopened during critical times.

Taus' investigation in Freeport was developing the connection between the financial activities of the Freeport CIA Station and the Mafia. Drug-trafficking, money-laundering and financial frauds were all tied in to the CIA and the Mafia. Taus knew about the drug connections. He also knew that profits were laundered. But, Taus was unsure how they accomplished moving large sums of money and the reasons for it. Were their unauthorized operations that the CIA undertook, such as the Contra resupply efforts? Or were these financial gains simply to enrich the CIA members? Nearly jumping out of Priscu's file of misinformation was one grain of truth: Priscu's relationship to Steven Samos, a Hungarian.

Another interesting facet came during lunch the next day, in a Chinatown I. Walls insisted that Taus join him along with another member from Walls' squad. Owen Murray handled Hungarian FCI cases and also liked Chinese food. The full impact of the luncheon conversation would not be-

come apparent until late in 1984, and still much later in 1986, when Murray's case would be directly connected to the Iran Contra Arms Initiative Affair.

FBI agents monitor the activities of diplomats, intelligence officers and foreign governments' business offices, usually referred to as their "commercial offices." Since New York City contained both the United Nations and many of the foreign countries embassies, most communications relating to business activities also passed through New York. The FBI New York office was constantly informed on their activities through a number of intelligence gathering sources, including other FBI Field Offices. Such was the case when the FBI Oklahoma City Field Office notified the FBI New York office about a business venture between the Hungarian trading company called Technoimpex and an Oklahoma business called Northwest Industries that dealt in machine tool sales.

### **Oliver North Blocking FBI Investigation**

The Oklahoma City FBI agent who sent the lead to Owen Murray was Edwin Enright, working for Oklahoma City's SAC Oliver "Buck" Revell. Revell later became an assistant director at FBI headquarters in Washington. Revell stymied the Freeport investigation and other Irangate and Iraqgate investigations. During the time that Revell was in charge of the Oklahoma City office, Oliver North had approached him at the Oklahoma City office to stall and minimize the FBI field investigation.

As a side note to the Hungarian case, it brought a large transfer of FBI agents from the criminal to the FCI Divisions in October 1984. It was the "Red October" written about by another deep-cover CIA agent, Tom Clancy, in "The Hunt For Red October." Clancy's unbridled access to classified documents and his CIA-sanctioned books with their in-depth analysis and background left little doubt that more than a cooperative arrangement exists between Clancy and the CIA and that Clancy was a CIA asset.

Following lunch with Walls and Murray, Taus walked to the nearby U.S. attorney's office across the street from the Javits Federal Office Building, to discuss the problems with AUSA Louie Freeh. Freeh's office was covered with computer printouts and vinyl binders, and he showed impatience with what Taus was telling him. Taus persisted, telling him about the connections he discovered from the FCI files.

Freeh responded, "This sounds like a fairy tale; what do you know about the CIA getting involved with the Mafia? I'm going after the Mafia, not the CIA." Taus wondered if Freeh had a case of tunnel vision or was trying to side track his Freeport developments. That U.S. attorney's office was known for playing political football with many cases as well as some of the federal judges in that district.

Taus found another Hungarian FCI file on Samos, that indicated Priscu's association with Samos, stemming from the Drexel Company, the forerunner to CIA's Castle Securities in Freeport. Samos dealt with Priscu setting up other corporate entities in Central America.

The CIFU supervisor was unwilling to permit Taus to review the Samos file, but a quick call to MacGordy solved the problem. The information con-

tained in Samos' file came from the FBI Miami Field Office either as leads to be investigated or information supplied to the FBI New York office. Samos' file was incomplete, but there was enough to see the relationship that he was doing business with several drug dealers in the Miami area.

Several of Samos' business associates tried to secure loans from a New York bank in 1981. One associate was a known high-level Mafioso named Mario Renda. The case agent should have coordinated Samos' Mafia contacts with information in the Criminal Division.

Taus was not aware of Samos' association with the CIA, but Samos' connection to Priscu's secret team was significant. Samos would later show up in the Irangate scandal. Samos and Priscu's operations both involved creating shell or phony corporations along with trading in fraudulent securities.

Taus knew Priscu had other connections to Mafia associates on a higher level than the five organized crime families operating in New York City.

The fact that Freeh ignored Taus' Freeport leads, despite the sufficiency of the evidence, suggested that political forces were at work trying to channel the Pizza Connection case.

"Tell me exactly how you know the CIA is involved." Freeh asked as he slouched back in his chair. Taus told him about the fraudulent financial transactions and the links to offshore banking institutions as a way of laundering large sums of drug profits. Taus had Freeh's full attention now, as a computer printout slowly cascaded off his desk. Freeh asked Taus, "Tell me what you know about the CIA's interest in all this. I'm going after the Mafia."

It seemed more like an order to Taus. Initially Freeh tried to dismiss Taus' investigation. Now he wanted to know everything. Taus felt Freeh was holding back. He knew more than he had told his FBI investigators.

The Pizza Connection Case involved an international investigation. CIA informants were used. In particular, Tomasso Buscetta, a Mafia kingpin was extradited from Brazil to testify against Gaetano "Don Tanino" Badalamenti, who was the former head of the Sicilian Mafia commission.

FBI agents Charlie Rooney and Carmine Russo did not inform Taus or any other investigating agent on the Pizza case that the CIA was involved. The CIA pretended to be merely assisting the FBI overseas. But the CIA had an ulterior purpose for assisting the FBI. The CIA had influenced how the case would be handled after it broke into the news media from the 1980 reports of the Pennsylvania Crime Commission.

The CIA had something important to hide. They could not stop the FBI investigation triggered by a ground swell of reports and information from other law enforcement agencies. But CIA could define it, by supplying phony informants and misinformation, and suppressing any FBI investigation into CIA involvement.

Taus felt that Freeh had known all along about the CIA involvement in the Pizza Connection case. Buscetta was a Mafia turncoat and a CIA informant. Badalamenti was retired, but he was still set-up by the CIA. There was no doubt that most of those convicted in the Pizza case were involved in such matters as drug trafficking and money-laundering. However, the reason

the government took them out had more to do with some serious competition that the Sicilian faction was causing the international drug trade conducted by the CIA. This explained why the CIA informants were handled with such great care and why so much secrecy surrounded the investigation. Except for Rooney and Russo, none of the other FBI agents assigned to the case were aware of the CIA involvement.

It was unknown whether Rooney or Russo thought they were maintaining secrecy for a legitimate government operation or knew they were conducting an unlawful investigation with the CIA. A review of the Pizza Connection case trial transcript did not disclose much about the CIA's involvement. Enough was there to have an investigator wonder why these matters were not handled solely by the FBI's Legal Attaché in Rome. The easiest conclusion was that these two agents were over their heads in an investigation being directed by higher government officials.

Rooney and Russo's predecessors, other FBI agents, had achieved only marginal results with indictments and prosecutions in many of the same cases involving the same Mafia elements. Suddenly, this all dramatically changed with these new investigators. The Pizza Connection trial was described by the defendants' attorneys as a "three-ring circus." (See Shana Alexander's *The Pizza Connection; Lawyers, Money, Drugs, Mafia.*)

In the Pizza Connection trial, author Shana Alexander provided an accurate commentary based on the trial record. The three-ring circus consisted of 22 separate defendants and their attorneys packed together in a federal district courtroom in the Southern District of New York. It was a mega-trial, the longest running criminal trial in a federal court.

The twenty-two Mafia defendants were accused of a RICO conspiracy: a narcotics conspiracy; a continuing criminal enterprise in narcotics, banking violations; failure to file reports in international currency transactions, failure to file currency transaction reports, false statements and banking conspiracy. These criminal counts dealt with a \$1.65 billion heroin smuggling and money laundering organization that crossed international boundaries from the drug-producing countries in the Near East to Sicily, Europe and into the United States, Canada and Brazil.

The trial record showed that the lead prosecutor, AUSA Richard Martin, was repeatedly accused of lying by the defense lawyers. Martin told author Alexander that she was unlikely to write a fair book about them. Given such an assumption, it was ironic that the government then failed to cooperate with the author to refute such allegations of bias and prejudice. The only fair and accurate thing about the trial was the account of it written by Alexander.

The government had mounted an impossible trial for the jury to understand. It was too large and complex, too long and costly. It lasted seventeen months and cost the American Taxpayers over \$50 million. When the trial ended, it had not even slowed down the flow of drugs into the United States. The reverse happened: there was more heroin and cocaine in America. If this

Sicilian faction had been primarily responsible for the U.S. drug supply, there should have been a decrease, rather than an increase, in drugs coming into the United States.

The CIA has always maintained that their faults are always publicized while their accomplishments go unheralded. CIA claims it is necessary to preserve their clandestine operations and any resultant harm from the exposure of their operations. Since the Vietnam War, the CIA has come under blistering attacks that it engaged in drug trafficking. This would have been an excellent opportunity to show the public their good side. If such was correct, then the CIA should have reported or taken credit for their assistance in the Pizza case.

CIA was hiding behind a mask of deceit, deception and criminal operations. Initially perhaps, the CIA found itself with a den-of-thieves having originated from the former OSS operations where “the ends justified the means,” and where such operations often involved illegal activities. With this legacy from its World War II forerunner, the cast of characters or officials and agents remained the same, using the same criminal techniques. The covert “leopards,” agents and operatives, employed by the CIA had not been able to change their spots. No longer was the legitimate law enforcement activities of the FBI overseas. The CIA took over that function of the Bureau when FBI Director Hoover gave up the Intelligence responsibilities abroad to the fledging CIA in the late 1940s.

“There has been a failure to provide the necessary statutes to conduct Intelligence operations within a constitutional framework. In a free society. Presidents had been excessive and sometimes self-defeating in their use of covert operations, while inadequate legislative attention has been given to intelligence budgets. The fundamental issue was to balance the requirements for secrecy with those of American democracy.” (See John Prados’ *Presidents’ Secret Wars*.)

When the CIA tried to publicize their actions, they did so very clumsily while maintaining their concept of “Plausible Deniability.” One of these events happened on December 4, 1992, when “*The Washington City Paper*” published an article entitled, “The K-Team” written by Ken Cummins.

The article was an attempt to characterize the “privatization” of American intelligence operations. The CIA spoke out of both sides of its mouth, never having their agents on the K-team identify themselves as CIA, while stressing their involvement in many successful international operations. It is ludicrous to believe that this secret team, known as the K-team, was merely free-lance covert operators. Their operations in Argentina, Great Britain, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and other places took them into high level government offices. Among the K-team’s contacts were various foreign prime ministers, foreign politicians, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State (Elliot Abrams), the National Security Council, the CIA and an Iraqi delegation in New York City.

One conclusion to draw from that article is that the K-team acted as agents for the government committing unlawful and criminal acts.

During the early 1980s, FBI Special Agents Joseph Pistone and Ed Roth worked for the Mafia in an undercover assignment. For five years, Pistone went by the alias of Donnie Brasco and ingratiated himself with Mafia Soldier Benjamin “Lefty Guns” Ruggiero and other Mafiosi. Five years was a long time for an undercover operation, especially one geared towards arresting street-level toughs and breaking-up their operations. Some of those illegal operations were conceived by and developed by the two undercover FBI agents!

No one in the higher echelon of the Mafia was indicted or arrested; only the street-level Mafiosi, criminals who could easily be replaced. Just how much good did Pistone and Roth accomplish? The Bureau said that it brought them out of their undercover assignments because the Mafia wanted Pistone to kill someone. It took both the Mafia and the FBI five-years for this alleged “contract killing” to happen.

If the Mafia questioned the two undercover FBI agents’ integrity, or rather loyalty by the mob, then one would think a test of such faithfulness would have occurred in the first year. Nonetheless, as far as the FBI was concerned, there were some long-term accomplishments.

FBI officials claimed one success was developing information that led to successful convictions in the infamous Pizza Connection Case and other illegal street operations. The Pizza Connection case did eliminate the CIA’s drug-trafficking competition by the renegade Sicilian Mafia faction. However, after that case and the imprisonment of more than 20 mobsters, drugs were even more available on the streets, as were other criminal activities.

The FBI failed in stopping the Mafia and stopping the flow of drugs. An objective appraisal of the undercover left much to be desired, but the Bureau succeeded in having the public believe it was doing its job.

At best, the operation was poorly planned for the results intended, or it was of dubious value in the first place; and at worst, the operation was a subterfuge, either designed to show Americans that the FBI was working, making arrest, or the FBI was putting away “renegade criminals” who failed to cooperate with the higher echelon Mafia. Sadly, this last statement can be proved in two more cases where FBI agents were working for the Mafia.

### **Undercover Agents in Mafia Yielding Low Level Criminals**

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## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

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### Joint Narcotics Task Force

Rumors started flying around the FBI's Brooklyn-Queens MRA that the Bonanno organized crime cases would be consolidated and transferred to the Manhattan FBI office. Agents complained that all the good cases were being taken away from them. This was not true as they would soon, so ruefully, be informed. They would be transferred too, a fate much worse than losing their good cases. It meant a much longer daily commute into Manhattan from Long Island.

A squad conference was called by SSA Manny Gonzalez, who announced the formation of a Joint Narcotics Task Force (JNTF) to handle all aspects of the Mafia drug cases. The task force would be located at the FBI's Manhattan office. The new squad would combine six agents from Manny's squad and most of SSA Lou Schiliro's, another BQMRA organized crime squad, which was investigating the same matters. The newly formed squad would work with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), Customs Service, Immigration & Naturalization (INS) and the New York City Police Department (NYCPD).

"Does this mean we will lose our hard worked cases too?" asked Roger Suey, who did not care for working Mafia matters. He was assigned to the FBI New York office after a confrontation with the SAC of the Los Angeles Field Office. Suey was Chinese-American and referred to the Mafia cases as "Italian FCI investigations."

"No," Gonzalez said, "You will not be losing your cases. That's the good news. The bad news is that most of you will be transferred into Manhattan along with your cases." Everyone grimaced as the dreaded long commute would take two hours every day.

Amid the groans, agent Beverly Ratcliff asked: "What does this mean for me?" Beverly would not be affected by these events. Gonzalez never assigned her a heavy case. She was used as a decoy much of the time. Being a black woman, Ratcliff was much too out-of-place to work in the predominantly white Italian neighborhoods, home to the La Cosa Nostra (LCN) families.

Gonzalez continued, "Now calm down everyone. Lou Schiliro's squad

is also headed into the New York office. This Thursday we will have a meeting with the ADIC. He understands the inconveniences you will be facing traveling into Manhattan everyday and wants you to understand the importance of doing it, and he's willing to make some concessions." Nearly half the squad was reassigned.

At the Thursday conference, Assistant Director Tom Sheer appeared sympathetic but adamant. "You can schedule your own times to conduct your investigations, just coordinate things. Everyone is assigned a car. We'll do everything possible to assist you. This is a major effort and it has the attention of the vice-president's office; it will be called "The Pizza Connection Case."

There really were not any concessions the ADIC could make to the reassigned agents. They all had squad cars assigned to them at BQMRA. They conducted their investigations in the same fashion. No pay incentive were offered.

ADIC Thomas L Sheer was a former captain in the U.S. Marine Corps who served in Vietnam. His concern for his agents was genuine. He attended the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis. Although he was an assistant director, his orders were mandated by the more powerful assistant directors at FBI headquarters in Washington. Sheer's objections to Washington headquarters concerning hardships faced by New York agents fell on deaf ears.

Sheer reached the highest position a former serviceman ever had in the Bureau. He lacked power to make new policy and changes, as these were made in Washington. The constant battles with the Bureau hierarchy caused Sheer to resign several years later.

After the ADIC's Thursday meeting, agent Suey said, "Lou Schiliro will be no pleasure to work for!" Suey saw himself as going from bad to worse ever since his disciplinary transfer from Los Angeles. He tried to find some humor in it, even at his own expense, and quipped, "At least in Manhattan, the Mafia is nearer to my brothers in Chinatown."

The humor was lost on the squad. Fredinand Fernandez was a second-generation Cuban from Miami and he angrily muttered something in Spanish. It took a moment for the Italian-speaking agent, Carmine Russo, to translate Freddie's comments. Then Russo's face flushed red by what he had understood. Fernandez was a disciplinary transfer from the FBI's Miami Field Office. The worst assignment seemed to be in New York, and that was a good way to punish an agent.

Life on Schiliro's squad was not pleasant. There was the clique from Schiliro's old squad that controlled everything, including resources and equipment. The six agents from Gonzalez's squad were stepchildren, except for Carmine Russo. Since no one from Schiliro's old squad spoke Italian with any fluency, Russo was able to survive along with his lackey, Charlie Rooney.

At that time, another Naval Academy graduate formed a new Gambino organized crime squad at the BQMRA. Bruce Mouw had an opposite personality as compared to Tom Sheer, though both attended Annapolis. The Bonanno and Gambino families were deeply involved with the Sicilian fac-

tion doing the drug importation and distribution. Both the Gambinos and the Bonannos families were split from the Sicilian faction. Therefore, BQMRA still had continuing investigations to cover concerning the two families on Long Island. The supervising agent at BQMRA did not care for Schiliro's style so, by bureau standards; Schiliro was the right man to be reassigned to the Manhattan office.

Most FBI supervisors patterned themselves after Hoover and Elliot Ness. Few had read anything about Hoover or Ness' real lifestyles. If they had, they might have been discouraged. Elliot Ness committed suicide and Hoover had a strange relationship with Clyde Tolson, his number two man in the FBI. However, most supervisors wore the traditional three-piece suit and normally kept their vests on when seated at their desks. The clique that catered to Schiliro copied his mannerisms right down to his clothing.

The correct apparel on Schiliro's squad was an open sport shirt with a thin pullover V-neck sweater, allowing a gold neck chain and some chest hairs to be visible. Tightly fitted slacks with no rear pockets and loafers completed the ensemble. The Schiliro uniform contributed to his selection by the old-fashioned supervising agent to head up the new Manhattan JNTF.

Schiliro's agents followed his dress code. His clones always avoided the odd shifts and extraneous duties. Their file reviews were short and their caseloads small. The six agents from Gonzalez' old squad were always picked for various unpleasant duties. Though Suey dressed like the Schiliro crew, he was not accepted. Perhaps something in his personnel file made Schiliro dislike him, or maybe it was too early in the Bureau to accept the integration of minority agents.

The JNTF was in name only. Coordination with other federal agencies and the New York City Police Department was done by telephone. The only advantage was the nearer proximity in Manhattan to those agencies' New York headquarters.

Taus was a "brick-agent" whose major cases were clumped together with Schiliro's workload. Schiliro constantly diverted Taus' investigative efforts, which Taus initially accepted because of his training as an Army officer following orders. Taus reasoned that the supervisor knew the overall requirements and could see the big picture. It was soon apparent that the inner circle was not performing in a fair manner; they had Schiliro parceling out their investigative leads to Gonzalez' orphans on the squad which accounted for the transfers.

The Casamento Brothers case required a task force by itself. A single agent working this case could ill afford diverting his attention to other matters and this would come to a head.

A low-echelon mobster walked into BQMRA and surrendered himself for a promise of immunity from criminal prosecution. The mobster was connected to one of Schiliro's cases. An arrest statistic, regardless of the rank or the crime of the perpetrator, would look good. One of Schiliro's boys was told to pick up the mobster at the BQMRA and bring him into Manhattan for an interview and processing.

An informant told Taus that an important meeting between Mafiosi in

Taus' case was scheduled to take place the following day. The Casamento brothers and a high level drug-trafficker would be at that meeting. One of Schiliro's relief agents told Taus, "We need you to go over to BQMRA and assist our agent Rocco with an arrest." Taus explained that he had to be present for a planned surveillance on another case. Since the mobster at BQMRA was a minor figure, Taus insisted his own schedule should remain intact. It was 1983 and two years had already passed without an indictment in Taus' undercover case in Freeport.

"With over 125 FBI agents assigned to BQMRA, why can't they assist Rocco and help escort him to the NYO? I'm sure some of them will be heading to Manhattan today in any case."

Schiliro's Relief was unyielding, "Our squad agents handle these arrest. I told you to go over there. We don't want any agents from another squad involved in our cases." This was another example of interoffice, if not inter-squad, jealousies that hindered FBI investigations.

Taus explained, "I understand we are all working for the same FBI, that has the same mission. Doesn't it make sense to use a BQMRA agent in this matter?"

"Rocco's there and he waiting for someone. Are you going over there?"

The Relief would not listen to reason. Taus was being unfairly burdened, distracting him from a major investigation. The simple fact was the willing perpetrator could and would have taken the subway, all by himself, to the FBI's New York office as instructed by the so-called arresting agent.

"Rocco's there because he's a member of the Brooklyn-Queens Athletic Club and he works out everyday on Bureau time. I have forgone any exercise regimens to do my cases. Now something important is happening in my work and I get no assistance myself."

"Fine, don't go. I'll find someone else," the Relief snapped at Taus. A bad feeling settled in Taus' gut. He knew his case was more important and deserved attention.

The next day after the incidence with the BQMRA arrest, Taus was informed he had been reassigned to work an important political case, the National Law Guild.

Cases were investigated based upon political decisions. Emphasis was given by the upper management to pursue or hold in abeyance certain cases. Equal violations of law were treated differently depending upon the people involved and the political consequences. Hoover was notorious for manipulating his federal mandate.

After Hoover's death, the Bureau was severely scrutinized by the formerly subjugated members of Congress. They vowed to keep the FBI under control. President Nixon knew that and had used his own agency, the National Security Council's operatives, such as "Nixon's Plumbers" of the Watergate scandal fame. They were entrusted with his delicate investigations and operations. Nixon tried to appoint his own man to head the Bureau but Congress fought his nomination, fearing a return to the "inquisition" under a new Hoover.

At that time with less than 7,000 agents worldwide, the Bureau had to

be selective in considering what investigations its limited manpower pool should pursue. Within the FBI, the consideration was always which cases would enhance the Bureau's image, not those necessarily deemed critical or vital to national security interests. The FBI felt its own image was vital to national security interests.

There was no denying the drug upheaval of the 1960s and 1970s was affecting the national security interests of the United States. Yet it was not until 1980 that a Joint Narcotics Task Force was initiated. Only then did the FBI assume a joint responsibility in drug cases with DEA. And it was during that time period that an FBI supervisor was appointed Director of the DEA, having taken the FBI 20-years to investigate the drug problem in American society.

Part of the problem was admitted by the Bureau. There was too much work to be done investigating drug trafficking. Bureau officials felt that drug cases were messy business and would only tarnish the Bureau's image. However, the public clamor for a solution finally resulted in the creation of the Drug Enforcement Administration on July 1, 1973. DEA merged four previously established drug enforcement agencies and their functions: the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, the Office of Drug Abuse Law Enforcement, the Office of National Narcotics Intelligence and the Bureau of Customs' Enforcement Section on Narcotics Regulations.

At a much lower level, Schiliro was deciding which drug cases to follow, based upon what he was told by his superiors in the chain of command. Taus saw the charades.

### **The National Law Guild**

Through the Freedom of Information Act, the National Law Guild had requested numerous files from the FBI as authorized by a federal court-ordered subpoena. The Bureau realized that an enormous amount of man hours would be required to "purify" information before it could be turned over to the Law Guild. With the usual Bureau parameters, FBI Field Offices were told to send some of their agents to the FBI New York office where the files existed and would be reviewed. There were hundreds of files on the Guild and those agents who displeased their supervisors were quickly detailed to this tedious assignment.

Several roomfuls of agents sat down to pour over every piece of paper in each file dealing with the subject requested by the Guild. Any information not related to the subject's name would be deleted or redacted from the mass of assembled files collected over the years.

The Bureau had several excuses to offer for these deletions or omissions. First, the information dealt with other subjects not requested. Second, the information might have a damaging effect upon U.S. national security. And third, the requested information was still under investigation.

Each paper or document in a file was serialized and known by its serial number. An example of a serial, before it was reviewed appears as follows:

At 8:00 in the morning of August 5, 1952, HAROLD ROSENBERG departed 112 West Street, Brooklyn, NY and met FRANK DUGAN at LOBELL'S COFFEE SHOP, 195 West Street, Brooklyn, NY. An enve-

lope was delivered to DUGAN who gave ROSENBERG a shopping bag with the name, MACY'S written across it.

After an FBI agent reviewed and redacted the serial, and before photocopying it, the serial would appear as follows:

At [redacted] in the [redacted] of [redacted], HAROLD ROSENBERG departed [redacted] and met [redacted]. At [redacted], An [redacted] was delivered to [redacted] who gave ROSENBERG a [redacted] with the name, [redacted] written across it."

This was done in the interests of national security using FBI investigators who were actually being administratively punished without a proper hearing.

In the FBI it took fifty agents and a host of support clerks three months to labor through the paper maze. In the end, each agent received a congratulatory letter from the FBI Director William Webster. Hardly appropriate for the time wasted. Some agents returned to their Field Offices, disheartened and disillusioned by the whole experience. Certainly, the National Law Guild could claim no victory for the purged documents they received.

With Taus' time served in purgatory, he was transferred to where the FBI needed him, another Bonanno organized crime squad in the FBI New York office Criminal Division. The squad supervisor had asked for an experienced agent.

Supervising Special Agent R. Lindley DeVecchio was a womanizer. His curly blond hair resembled Harpo Marx, but he was handsome and attractive to the opposite sex. His relationships seldom lasted more than a few weeks. Agents on the squad warned Taus not to become interested in any of his lady friends. Taus' interest was resurrecting the Freeport investigation rather than DeVecchio's projects.

### **Angelo Ruggiero Surveillance**

In late 1983, Taus was reassigned to the Bonanno organized crime family squad in the FBI New York office under DeVecchio. Though some agents preferred FCI work, the FBI prided itself on the aggressiveness and results of its attack upon criminal activities. The Bureau had gained its reputation by investigating and arresting the notorious mobsters from the Depression Era. Special care was taken to assign capable and diligent agents to the Criminal Division. ADIC Thomas L. Sheer was aware of Taus' undercover investigation in the pizza and cheese cases on Long Island.

Taus' Freeport case needed more attention; there was not enough time in a day for Taus to do everything that his cases required. DeVecchio's Bonanno squad presented Taus with the same commute problems he had encountered while on Gonzalez' Bonanno squad in the Brooklyn-Queens MRA.

In Queens, Taus was closer to his Freeport leads. DeVecchio knew of the problem and assigned Taus to an electronic surveillance on Long Island. His squad was asked to assist the Gambino squad's investigation of Mafia "soldier" Angelo Ruggiero. He lived less than 12 minutes from Freeport in Cedarhurst. An electronic surveillance of Ruggiero was initiated in March 1982, giving Taus the opportunity to examine Ruggiero who appeared dur-

ing earlier surveillance at the Cremosa Cheese Company in Freeport.

The Gambino squad needed agents to fill in for the three 8-hour, around the clock, shifts. The red-eye shift began at 10 p.m. and lasted until 8 a.m. It turned out to be more than eight hours, giving a briefing upon arrival and another prior to departure, plus the audio monitoring tapes had to be changed. This justified the overtime (auo). However, all of those preliminary actions could be done in a matter of minutes since agents were anxious to get off their shifts and go home. The monitoring agents were not the case agent and some were reluctantly assigned to the surveillance.

The FBI "plant" was located near JFK International Airport in an industrial park. A partially vacant one-story factory building was used for the surveillance equipment and agent outpost. The factory was near Ruggiero's house that bristled with listening devices, telephone taps and outside surveillance cameras. They were installed by the FBI's technical section when no one was at home. Ruggiero was heavily involved with drug trafficking. This fact further confirmed Taus' suspicions about the CIA's involvement in drugs here in the United States.

Ironically, for all the rumors spread about this mobster, he was well liked. He was an older man, suffering from cancer. The relentless pursuit by the FBI and his eventual arrest in 1983 contributed to his death some years later. Though Ruggiero was reputed to be at odds with Paul Castellano, the Godfather, many of his Mafia associates mourned his death. The "feds" had nagged him to death!" mobsters claimed. By the time Ruggiero discovered his house was bugged, sufficient incriminating evidence had been collected.

DeVecchio suggested the late night shifts to Taus, knowing Taus could work the Freeport case during the day if he were that enthusiastic. There was a cot provided at the factory for agents to use. The factory still had some industrial equipment inside. There were other commercial buildings adjacent to it. Within the factory, the manager's office was converted into an electronics station with two television monitors for the cameras trained on Ruggiero's house, two Revlox tape-recorders and other technical equipment.

The office boasted all the amenities agents knew they would need for a long-term operation: a refrigerator, bed with daily fresh linen, sofa, chair and desk. The FBI's Gambino squad liked to do things with some comfort. An agent could sleep, but not for more than 10-15 minutes at a time, surveillance equipment had to be monitored for any unusual activities and logbook entries had to be annotated. Still in all, the bed was there for a reason.

DeVecchio's words rang true, "You'll have time to run the Freeport operation during the day." Although FBI agents worked an eight-hour day, there was a routine provision for a certain amount of overtime. Beyond that overtime, special Bureau permission was required. It would be hard to justify working without sleeping so the FBI found a way around it. The Bureau had to show an assignment for Taus. The Freeport investigation was stepping on CIA toes. Their Freeport K-team had been under investigation for several years.

The fears of the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence (DDCI), James Jesus Angleton, was that CIA had a mole within its ranks. Some senior FBI

agents suspected the CIA had its own brand of moles within the Bureau. There were just too many FBI cases that were compromised or where the CIA got the upper hand in the investigation.

The Pizza Connection case concerning the Sicilian Mafia's drug-trafficking activities had involved the assistance, if not the instigation, of the CIA. Two key Mafiosi figures, who were extradited from overseas to the United States, Tomasso Buscetta and Gaetano Badalamenti, were the alleged kingpins in the Pizza case.

The Bureau was aware of illegal operations in Freeport since the 1970s. Taus had connected the many Mafia figures with drug-trafficking operations and connections to the CIA by 1981. It would not be until 1985 that the CIA discovered the Freeport Sports Club was an FBI undercover operation. That occurred because a second "sports club" undercover operation was being developed against United Nations personnel. The CIA moles within the FBIHQs became aware of this second and very similar operation to the structure in the Freeport Sports Club.

No matter how much sleep Taus got during the 6 months that he was assigned to the Cedarhurst surveillance, he was still tired the next day. There were nightly practices at six Freeport school gymnasiums, plus late afternoon and weekend practices and games. The Freeport Club grew beyond expectations, so did the results of the investigation targeted against the CIA team in Freeport. There was time to follow the leads being generated in Freeport. Two such leads came directly from CIA agents.

#### **A Freeport Sports Club Lead**

There was more time to recruit club sponsors during the day and cover FBI leads as well. The Freeport Sports Club flourished and operated "in the black." Members wanted the club's programs extended into other sporting areas, such as football, baseball, basketball, etc. The Village of Freeport had a new Village Recreation Center. Mayor Dorothy Storm convened a meeting with her recreation officials and officers of the Freeport Sports Club. The Village Recreation Center fielded teams in all sports. Its large facilities provided many recreational programs. The Freeport Sports Club was asked to assist the municipally funded center and compliment its programs. There were officers in the Freeport Sports Club that wanted its programs expanded.

Taus narrowed the Club's involvement. He was not running a sports program primarily; he was an FBI agent conducting an investigation. Taus' time was limited. Results were coming from his efforts. Two such results came unexpectedly,

One night at a Freeport school gymnasium, Taus was in the midst of an instructional soccer clinic for parents when George Hebert entered the building. Hebert was a member of the CIA's secret team in Freeport. He had come to the gym along with his friend, David Studer, another CIA agent who had his children enrolled in the Club's soccer program. (This initial meeting is covered in "CIA links in the Freeport Soccer Club" elsewhere in these pages.) There would be subsequent meetings with Hebert. They were all part of an overt CIA probe to discover what an FBI agent was doing run-



ning a large sports program.

In one of many meetings between Hebert and Taus, they met at a Freeport pizzeria located on Sunrise Highway. This pizzeria was a little different than a regular pizza shop. It had only a few tables, but it boasted a maitre-d who wore a black suit. This time Hebert insisted upon going to the pizzeria for a chat. It was an unlikely place to discuss business. Hebert was trying to see Taus' reaction. Taus had seen similar pizzerias. The maitre-d was a drug pusher. Hebert spoke about their old cadet days.

Pennsylvania Military College (PMC) changed its name to Widener University in 1970 as the college expanded. Originally established in 1821, it was the second oldest military college in the United States. PMC had a long and rich history of service to this nation. But it also graduated many CIA officials and agents. A corporation called Kroll Associates is a CIA proprietary company with a five-man executive board, all are PMC alumnus.

These business executives were CIA agents. Kroll Associates engaged in corporate security and the prevention of terrorist acts, among other clandestine activities.

### **October Surprise**

The newly elected Vice-president George Bush gave a speech at Widener University during the October 19, 1980, weekend. In my book, *Defrauding America*, based upon hundreds of hours of interrogations of several CIA assets, I report what they described in detail about Bush's quick trip to Paris to sign a deal with Iranians that delayed the release of American hostages held in Iran and also provided Iran large quantities of military weapons. This trick upon the American people was to insure that the Reagan-Bush team was elected to replace President Jimmy Carter. It was called the October Surprise.

Hebert was careful as he turned the conversation to Taus' FBI assignments. He knew about Taus' Mafia cases, but was still uncertain about any investigations into CIA activities in Freeport. Hebert was also pussyfooting about the exact nature of his job at the CIA firm, Castle Securities. He claimed he handled financial accounts, rattling off several known CIA proprietary companies. When a pizza was delivered to their table, Hebert winked at the maitre-d and told Taus "This country is so great that an immigrant can make a lot of money in a pizzeria."

"Unless a pizzeria is in an ideal location, no one will make a lot of money. This pizzeria certainly is not situated in the best location. It's making money from other means." Taus did not elaborate, but Hebert knew exactly what Taus meant.

At that point, Hebert became nervous. Taus noted the time. He had to be at the Cedarhurst plant before 10:00 P.M. for the continuing FBI surveillance on Mafia Soldier Angelo Ruggiero. In his stumbling, Hebert asked Taus if he was going to work. Taus never mentioned anything about working night shifts. It was Hebert's way of telling Taus that the CIA was aware of his FBI schedule.

During the course of the interview, FBI agents can be quite blunt. Taus asked Hebert how he knew about the night shift. Hebert gathered his

thoughts and said it was obvious since Taus coached and worked the Freeport program during the afternoons.

#### **FBI Infiltrated by CIA Moles**

Hebert's knowledge confirmed the FBI was infiltrated by agents working for the CIA. At the time, Taus felt safe in acknowledging the night shift, it would maintain the cover that Taus was actually concentrating on the narrower Angelo Ruggiero case.

Since the CIA is pro-active in intelligence gathering, it would not expend its efforts in conducting a "counter-intelligence probe," such as an investigation into Taus' activities. Rather, the CIA would rely upon someone else in an organization to obtain critical information. After all, the CIA was much too busy with its own criminal operations. Taus knew it had to be a senior FBI agent who had access to the various confidential files at the FBINYO. Just how much FBI information was given to Hebert. Taus had to probe him.

To reinforce the Freeport undercover operation, Taus left Hebert with a thought. He told Hebert about his Vietnam War experiences and his desire to help youngsters and their families who could not afford a sports program.

Taus asked him if his company wanted to sponsor a team. Hebert said he would split the \$6 pizza bill. Hebert's frugality also gave him away. There was little doubt that Hebert was a government employee!

At least a year prior to meeting Hebert, Taus had enrolled David Studer's children in the Freeport Sports Club. Studer was Hebert's boss at Castle Securities. Studer was also a little more dutiful than most parents, volunteering at times as an indoor coach. In doing so, Studer had better access to Taus. At the same time, Taus' operation was proving successful as Studer unwittingly confirmed many things. Often his presence or absence was sufficient to confirm other CIA meetings. His 8-year old son often told Taus his father was away on business and provided some details too.

Given the magnitude of the Club's operations, Studer felt Taus' interests were only in the sports program. When Studer was unavailable, his wife would take the children to practice.

On one occasion the Studer children were dropped off at the school gym. When Mr. Studer did not come along with them, Taus knew he was engaged in some CIA activity. Studer's son, Michael, was very proud of his father and boasted to Taus, providing enough information, often telling where his father had gone. "Dad's an accountant," little Michael would say. "He has a bunch of soldiers working for him.

They are also handymen. Daddy's making these long trips to Washington and Florida. Once he took me down to Panama and some other places down there." Michael's information was never exactly accurate, but close enough. The soldier that worked for Studer were Hispanic men, Contras from Nicaragua who came to Freeport, posing as handymen. Taus further investigation showed that these Contras negotiated drug deals with various Hispanic communities, most notably the drug-pushers from the Dominican Republic in the Bronx. (See "Sanctioned Dominican Drug Trafficking.")

After one night's soccer practice, everyone had left the gym except the

two Studer children. Taus asked them when their mother would arrive. Michael said friends would be picking them up soon. Within minutes, three Hispanic men entered the gym asking in broken English, for the children. Before allowing the strangers to take the children, Taus insisted he call Mrs. Studer at home. A babysitter answered and said the family knew the men. Michael had already explained to Taus that these were “some of the soldiers that worked for Dad.”

Taus apologized to the men, but decided to get some information from them as well. “You’re from Nicaragua. I can tell by your accents,” Taus guessed, he could not distinguish accents.

“Si Señor, Presidente!” responded the apparent honcho of the trio. “I’m from Managua, but my amigos are from Honduras.” As the trio walked over to a plumbing supply truck, Taus followed, asking them about their business. “We work all over, but we are not good plumbers. That truck would later be identified as the vehicle used in a Bronx drug deal with the Dominicans.

Taus knew he had one last chance to get some answers. He asked the men if they ever met General Somoza. The honcho erupted, “Si, El Generalissimo is a great hombre! We are members of his National Guard.” Taus needed to ask no further questions. The trio were soldiers indeed as little Michael had said. They were wearing US-issued military boots and a few pieces of military fatigue uniforms.

Over the years, the Village of Freeport had grown in its Hispanic population. Freeport had an industrial park where there was employment opportunities for low-skilled workers. Often Hispanic men stood around the street corners in the east-central part where Castle Securities was located. They were all reasonably dressed, well-fed, with money in their pockets.

Taus asked his police officer friends in the Freeport Police Department if they knew anything about these men. The Police said as long as they do not break any laws, that the Freeport Police were instructed to leave them alone. They are the U.S. INS’ responsibility. Had Freeport become some kind of “rest & recreation center” for the Contras?

There were few answers for Taus. None of the men’s names came up in the FBI indices. The plumbing truck’s plates were registered to a non-existent company located at 80 Bedell Street in Freeport, the old company address for Drexel which changed its name in the early 1980s to Castle Securities.



### Some Other CIA Crimes

**T**he Cayman Islands in the Caribbean and the Isle of Jersey near England offered sanctuary for many forms of illegal financial transactions and money laundering. Among the available banks for such purposes were Castle Bank & Trust in the Bahamas and Sandsend Financial Consultants on the Isle of Jersey. Worldwide there were other financial firms to handle ill-gotten gains. Where one did not exist, the CIA created it.

This was the case in Australia where the Nugan Hand Bank was established for handling profits from the Golden Triangle drug trafficking from Southeast Asia. Its operation covered other aspects including weapons transfers and sales. When Nugan Hand started to collapse, another company was formed by the name of Bishop Baldwin Rewald Dillingham & Wong (BBRDW), which was suitably located in Hawaii. The failure of the Savings & Loan Thrift industries brought about even more financial institutions that could be used by the CIA. Some were simply bilked of their monies while others were instrumental in accomplishing financial frauds such as money laundering for the drug-trade. (My books, *Disavow*, *Defrauding America*, and *Explosive Secrets of Covert CIA Operations*, describes these operations.)

There were still other financial enterprises established for illegally manipulating finances. One was Castle Securities, located in New York State, which was the offshoot of Castle Bank and Trust Company in the Cayman Islands. Another was the Great American Savings Bank (Great American).

The FBI, the IRS, and other investigative agencies usually never investigated these gross financial irregularities. The lack of enforcement and prosecution were attributable to the influence of government officials and politicians.

There were many impromptu meetings between Hebert and Taus. They always occurred because of Hebert's insistence, and they always seemed to happen when Taus or some other investigator was prying into Castle's business. Hebert had outlined Castle Securities' relationship to Castle Bank & Trust Company during one such meeting. In Hebert's zeal to find out where the several FBI investigations into Castle Securities were going, he provided

Taus with answers as he searched for further information. "What is it this time, George," Taus pretended to know more than Hebert thought. It worked to disarm Hebert and gain some insights into Castle, short of phone taps and surveillance devices.

Hebert also pretended and acted nonchalantly, calling Taus' office and asking Taus to see him at lunch in Freeport the next day. Lunch with Hebert was at the Eastbay Greek Diner in Freeport, across the adjacent parking lot from Castle's offices.

"What's Rivera doing these days?" asked George before ordering the hot roast beef sandwich. He was concerned about FBI agent Carmine "Cookie" Rivera's investigation, which was being controlled at a higher level. Rivera already had informally told Taus to shut down the Freeport case. Taus felt Hebert was not concerned about Rivera's case, but rather what Taus was doing.

"I suppose 'Cookie' can't figure out what an investment firm is doing in Freeport," Taus replied, wanting to know that also: "You know George, we are not anxious to trip over your own work here. Perhaps if you gave me a better idea, I could tell Cookie and the guys to give you all a hand."

George replied, "Actually Dan and Dave (referring to Dan Priscu and David Studer) would prefer letting the company do its own thing without anyone looking over our shoulders."

"Okay George, you and the guys are my friends, just let me understand what's going on so I can find a way to divert any investigations."

If Castle were not engaged in some illegal or unlawful activities, Hebert would not have to ask for the FBI to ignore Castle. Hebert could either take Taus into his confidence or continue in the dark about the various FBI investigations. Hebert chose the former, stating:

*Castle Securities is a real investment firm. Just as I've told you, we handle clients and their investment portfolios.*

So much for the front, which was true enough, but Castle did much more, and George quickly added after seeing Taus with a perplexed and angry look.

*We are a vital part of this country's national security interests." Hebert told about Castle's origins. "We are a spin-off of Castle Bank & Trust Company located in the Cayman Islands. We aren't so constrained in our financial actions by dealing with an offshore financial institution. It helps our investors and our programs. Castle Bank is one of many financial companies that we deal with around the world. Have you heard of Nugan Hand Bank in Australia?"*

Taus could only nod his head negatively. George would not elaborate, and Taus, at this time, thought Hebert's reference to Nugan Hand was too remote.

*We have companies in Europe and we handle our financial arrangements in much the same matter as we do with firms in the Cayman Islands. The Isle of Jersey near England has many associates who assist us with our European and Asian deals." Again Hebert avoided any details.*

The connections mentioned by Hebert were more far-reaching than Taus had thought. No wonder Rivera was taking a hard look at Castle Securities' operations. That accounted for the FBI's Cuban squad's interest in the Freeport company; there were also ties to Latin America.

Perhaps Hebert felt he had given too much information to Taus already. Taus did not want to press him further. The offshore banks would account for the drug-trafficking profits and money-laundering operations, which the FBI had long ago known about in relation to Mafia finances. Many FBI cases involving the Mafia traced their connections to associates who worked with these unregulated offshore firms.

Castle Bank & Trust Company had offices on Grand Cayman Island and in Nassau, the Bahamas. The Grand Cayman Island had more than 550 banks with over \$400 billion in offshore deposits in 1991. Over 22,000 companies were registered in the Cayman Islands. Those firms were in nearly every kind of enterprise, from finance, real estate, insurance, shipping, and almost any other financially related business.

Also, of the world's fifty largest banks, forty-six had licenses to operate in the Caymans. Authors Jonathan Beaty and S.C. Gwynne describe the freewheeling banking and financial industry in the Cayman Islands in their book *The Outlaw Bank*:

The Cayman Islands are a tax haven of the first order. There is no personal or corporate income tax, no inheritance or estate tax, and no tax disclosure treaty with the United States. The Caymans' severe secrecy laws effectively prevent any tax or law enforcement authorities from prying into accounts. "When the IRS comes around, all you have to do is show them the wire transfer of your funds from the United States to the Caymans," sniffed a Florida tax attorney. "That's pretty much the end of the line for taxes, because the money can't be touched by the IRS."

The elaborate system of secrecy is maintained and enforced by something called the Caymans Protection Board, which controls citizenship, visas and work permits. This is critical since most of the accountants, lawyers, judges and police are not Caymanians and need work permits to continue making money in paradise. Planes regularly come and go carrying cash from Latin America, and boats, over which there is no control at all, can come and go as they please.

To understand how the Caymans work (and for that matter, most 'offshore' financial institutions), there is the concept called 'booking.' Booking is a spatial concept, having to do with the actual 'location' of the money. Let say a bank in the U.S. makes a credit card loan in the state of New York. For tax or other reasons, the bank decides to book or locate the loan in North Dakota. This is done by the stroke of a pen. The bank simply decides that is where the loan will be. The same can be done with deposits, and the concept can be just as easily transferred offshore. Most large banks have similar arrangements. Of the 548 registered banks in the Cayman Islands, only 68 have actual offices and staff there.

Despite all the secrecy and hidden agendas of criminal elements within society who control these financial institutions, the problem presented to the

American Public also comes from its own law enforcement authorities. A strong example of this deterrent to financial fraud is the U.S. government agencies responsible for reporting and acting upon violations of law.

### **Iraqi Arms**

The money received by the Isle of Jersey was used to purchase arms and military supplies for Iraq. The money trail is found in the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, a case entitled *Federal Home Loan Bank Board vs. Sandsend Financial Consultants, Ltd* (docket number 88-2991).

Bank Cantrade Switzerland Limited was a subsidiary of Union Bank of Switzerland with a branch located on the Isle of Jersey. Robert Maxwell, an officer at First National Bank of Maryland, worked on moving funds for a CIA front called Associated Traders. In December 1984, a CIA official at Associated Traders told Maxwell "to transfer \$5.4 million to Bank Cantrade. The money went from a CIA account in the Cayman Islands, to Banco Sudmeris in Panama, to Union Bank of Switzerland, and then to Bank Cantrade."

The Florida State Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) report stated that Lawrence Freeman used Bank Cantrade on the Isle of Jersey for deposits from the drug-trafficking profits of Jack DeVoe.

Without being given subpoena powers, Taus was unable to delve into this web of companies and characters. The relationships, associations and business deals that these individuals engaged in were far from coincidental. Repeatedly, the names of the same financial institutions surfaced connected with known Mafioso figures and corrupt politicians, along with shadowy CIA personnel.



## CHAPTER TWENTY

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### WedTech, Castle, and CIA

**T**wo of the many companies involved in covert CIA activities were WedTech and Castle Securities, both of which were in close proximity to Manhattan. WedTech was a military contractor located in the South Bronx borough of New York City. Since 1981, New York Senator Alphonse D'Amato engaged in a pay-to-play deal with campaign contributors, according to Mark Green, D'Amato's Democratic opponent for the senatorial race.

On Long Island, Sal Imbergio was running for Mayor in the Village of Freeport in 1981. Imbergio was a member of the infamous K-team, the secret CIA proprietary involved in various secret financial matters in the Iran-gate and Iraqgate scandals and other financial scams.

The FBI's New York Field Office had two of its main investigative divisions working on covert CIA operations in Freeport that constituted federal crimes. Neither the Criminal Division or the Foreign Counter-Intelligence Division were aware of each other's case, partly due to compartmentalization, jealousy, and lack of aggressiveness in both the divisions.

A chance discovery by Taus during a surveillance on a Mafia industry in Freeport started bringing the information obtained by the two divisions together. This occurred while Taus was working out of the FBI's Brooklyn-Queens Metropolitan Resident Agency office (BQMRA). Although located in Queens, some 30 minutes away from the lower Manhattan office, the separation could account for the lack of coordination on both cases. The Manhattan office and the satellites in Brooklyn and New Rochelle had separate organized crime squads pursuing Mafiosi members of the same family who were located in the different boroughs and counties.

To overcome both the internal problems within the FBI in New York and the external problems confronted when different law enforcement agencies work on the same criminal matter, the FBI developed a Joint Narcotics Task Force (JNTF) in 1981 to handle the drug-trafficking aspects. It would be organized and operated from the FBI office in lower Manhattan, where a similar bank robbery task force had been established to handle the rash of bank robbers that emerged in the late 1970s.

WedTech was a small machine plant located near the Major Deagan

Highway where barricaded and abandoned buildings overlooked the Hudson River. WedTech emerged as a major Pentagon contractor within a few short years. Forces that were instrumental in WedTech's ascension to power were New York Congressman D'Amato and the CIA's Drexel Company in Freeport.

When the FBI started its investigation into the pizza and cheese industries and organized crime influence, Taus and other agents were assigned to what would become The Pizza Connection Case. By 1981, the FBI Manhattan office JNTF II was organized and Taus was assigned undercover while conducting his investigations on Long Island. That year, Taus established the Freeport Sports Club in an attempt to probe Drexel Company and its CIA criminal behavior.

Located in an old colonial house near a depressed business section in the integrated village of Freeport, Drexel was invisible to anyone from the financial community in New York City. Not until 1984 would Drexel take on the name of a major Cayman Island bank and trust company, Castle, and move to a larger and more secure office in a rather new, but abandoned Chase Manhattan Bank branch in Freeport. Neither Drexel nor WedTech had the capital to negotiate their rise to power and influence, but the CIA did. Like so many government operations, the CIA provided the initial funding and resources.

When the Reagan Administration came to power, both WedTech and Drexel expanded their government contracts and operations. WedTech obtained lucrative defense contracts, paying off political and governmental officials. Drexel, renamed Castle Securities in 1984, dealt in services, financial manipulations, securities scams, arms exchanges, and drug trafficking.

Paul Roman (alias), a Romanian national with high scholastic degrees and technical skills, quickly landed a position with the expanding military contractor, WedTech. Roman became suspicious of the activities at WedTech in 1984, suspecting there were numerous CIA people at WedTech, making it look like a major CIA operation.

FBI agents assigned to the Foreign Counter Intelligence Squads often check upon working immigrants from communist countries, especially when the Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) send a communication to the FBI office. Upon receipt of such notice, FBI agents investigate. Usually these cases involved nothing more than a visit to the subject's residence. Rarely would an FBI agent go to their work site, avoiding complications for the employee and concern from the employer. But when Taus called Roman at his home, Roman wanted to be interviewed at his WedTech jobsite.

Taus had heard rumors about WedTech, but paid little attention to the sticky investigation about local government corruption and New York political figures. Taus was already overloaded with his casework. The CIA station in Freeport offered him enough investigative work. Rather than give this seemingly routine lead to another squad member, Taus wanted to see if Roman had any knowledge about some weapons shipments from Romania to Central America.

It would be a long shot, but there were few leads to confirm the information Taus received from George Hebert, a member of the Freeport

mation Taus received from George Hebert, a member of the Freeport CIA team. Despite Roman's work credentials Taus felt he might be working for the Romanian Intelligence Service, the Securitate, considering that Roman was employed with a U.S. defense contractor.

Entering WedTech, Taus found a beehive of activities with men in dark suits and white shirts, running back and forth with ledger papers and books in their arms. Approached by two men, Taus flashed his FBI credentials, which made the employees stutter in response to Taus' request to speak to the boss. An obese person took Taus into an office, where Taus said he simply wanted to interview Roman on a routine matter. After some confusion, another employee brought Roman to the office.

Although Roman did not resist, he appeared nervous and unprepared to answer questions. He claimed to be only an electrical engineer. The sweat on Roman's face and his trembling hands showed Taus he was much more concerned about other matters than his work visa or immigrant status.

Broad topical questions are more easily answered than specific or detailed inquiries, especially when the person may be lying. Such wide-ranging questions allow the interviewer to establish a casual relationship before homing in on real concerns. Also, the answers given to general questions can be very productive in soliciting information not asked by the interviewer.

"What else is happening here, Mr. Roman? You did not contact my office for a minor reason?" Taus asked. "I am concerned about my position here in the United States," responded Roman. "I want to apply for a permanent resident alien status. I would like to become an American citizen."

"So what's to stop that?" asked Taus who knew Roman was hiding something. Taus felt that the Romanian Securitate had thoroughly briefed him prior to his arrival in the United States. Taus' time could be productive if he could recruit Roman as a double agent.

As Roman continued to struggle with an explanation about becoming an American citizen, he indicated to Taus that he wanted to talk elsewhere. Roman had made his point by bringing the FBI down to WedTech to witness the investigation. Roman felt the FBI would provide him support if he revealed his mission. Roman knew WedTech was under investigation. His Romanian intelligence contacts in Manhattan had warned him about a political investigation into his firm's military contracts.

In the small interview room, Roman answered Taus' question about cooperating with the Bureau by simply stretching his hands out, palms up as if starting a benediction and saying, "You must be aware of the activity around here! We cannot speak freely here."

It was only through rumors in the FBI New York office that Taus had any idea about the investigation of WedTech. Roman would gladly supply the FBI with accurate inside information. More importantly for Taus, he could possibly tie in the CIA's operations out of Freeport.

Usually a foreign national from a communist country would be looked over in a cursory matter unless there were other reasons to pursue a full-field investigation. By Roman's behavior and qualifications, Taus knew he

probably had another informant with vital information. They both agreed to meet later that evening at a restaurant in Queens.

At 7 p.m. Roman entered the Zarbar Restaurant on Northern Boulevard and saw Taus seated at a table in the back. From an earlier case that Taus had while on a BQMRA criminal squad, Taus had gained the friendship of the Yugoslavia owner of the restaurant.

Back in 1979, Mihail Radovic called the FBI office to report threats he had received from Serbian nationals who wanted to firebomb his establishment since some of his Yugoslavian patrons came from Croatia. Old ethnic hatreds still existed in their new country. Taus responded at that time, informing Radovic that the FBI could not act as security guards and that Radovic should inform the New York City police about the threats.

Radovic was suspicious of the police; he implored the FBI to help, and brought out his family seeking some compassion from Taus. Radovic got what he needed, Taus made sure the restaurant was frequented often by FBI agents who casually identified themselves to the other customers. Taus' fellow agents did not mind visiting Radovic, whose Yugoslavian meals came at a greatly discounted price for federal agents.

With assurances from Taus, Roman told about his background and his position at WedTech. Roman slowly revealed his intelligence tasking in exchange for Taus' cooperation. Taus informed him to remain in his present positions with WedTech and continue to report his activities to the Romanian Embassy at 38<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan.

The Freeport CIA operation was well known to Roman. He noted that they had approached the Romanian commercial offices, also located in the same building on 38<sup>th</sup> Street. The Freeport CIA station chief, Dan Priscu, was posing as an American businessman who wanted to import Romanian bottled water among other products. It was a cover for the weapons shipments from Romania to Central America.

Taus interviewed Priscu at Castle Securities in Freeport concerning trade with Romanian, during which Priscu showed Taus a blue bottle of Romanian water he wanted to sell in the US. At that time, Priscu was concerned about Taus' activities in the Freeport Sports Club. Taus' FBI status and the CIA's unlawful activities naturally made Priscu concerned.

"They are distancing themselves from any involvement in illegal operations," claimed Roman. However, their activities violated U.S. laws and the

CIA charter that forbids domestic intelligence operations. Roman had a clearer knowledge of U.S. Intelligence functions than did most FBI agents.

He would provide even more information about Castle in the future.

By May 1988, a federal criminal case was conducted in Manhattan's federal courthouse under the RICO statute, naming seven political defendants involved with WedTech. The CIA was being protected—but not some of the politicians.

### **Bribes to Members of Congress for Government Contracts**

WedTech paid millions of dollars to members of Congress to obtain favorable government contracts during the Reagan Administration. U.S. Attorney General Edwin Meese protected the White House involvement.

Prominent in the WedTech operation was WedTech lawyer, Robert Wallach, helping the operation obtain contracts with the Defense Department.

Some of Meese's associates went to work for WedTech: Lyn Nofziger, White House aide during the Reagan Administration, was convicted in 1988 of illegal lobbying. Others indicted and went to prison included Congressman Mario Biaggi and his law partner, Bernard G. Ehrlich, who was the Commanding General of the 42d Infantry Division of the New York Army National Guard, and four other defendants. With continuing political favors, one of the most notorious bribe takers, Senator Alphonse D'Amato, escaped prosecution. As the senator from New York State, he selected the U.S. attorney who prosecuted the WedTech case!



## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

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### Joint CIA and Mafia Criminal Activities

There were two echelons of the Mafia, a street-level or more publicly known organized crime families and members and the more secretive, more powerful elitists at higher levels, which possessed control over metropolitan area godfathers. In a similar fashion, there were two levels in the CIA; the conscientious hard working agents who abided by the law, and those in the more powerful positions that controlled covert operations that were above the law.

In the 1970s and early 1980s, the lower echelon of the New York Mafia hierarchy consisted of the boss of bosses, Paul Castellano, the “Godfather” of the five New York City organized crime families: the Gambino, Bonanno, Genovese, Lucchese and Colombo. Taus claims there was a more powerful High Commission in Albany that controlled the New York State Mafia.

Castellano lived in a middle class Staten Island community and in many ways was a cautious businessman. Under Castellano’s reign, there was a general prosperity and peace among the five families. John Gotti, the head of the Gambino family, wanted to take over Castellano’s role, double-crossing the High Commission.

Gotti and other Mafioso were dissatisfied with Castellano’s rule. There were many problems under Castellano’s stewardship. There were immense profits to be made which he was reluctant to allow his men to pursue. The reason for the ban was because those areas were controlled or conflicted with other powerful political, business and government interests. Further, Castellano suffered from health problems and was facing forthcoming criminal indictments. These legal actions were designed to limit Castellano’s power, not eliminate it. There was the age-old drive for power among the younger Mafiosi leaders, most prominently was that of John Gotti.

On December 16, 1985, in his quest for power, John Gotti arranged for Castellano to be murdered, triggering repercussions at the highest levels. Castellano’s first cousin was Vito Castellano who worked directly for several New York State governors. Vito knew the very rich and powerful and held a variety of top-level state positions at different times in the past. Among his appointed titles were the New York State Commissioner of

Commerce and the State Adjutant General of the New York National Guard. At Vito's level, the real power elitists exercised control over important affairs. Whenever an FBI investigation developed criminal leads into this level, the investigation was stopped.

Given the violent nature of the street-level Mafia and its toughs, a man like Paul Castellano ruled more by his influential connections than by fear. Something Gotti overlooked when he decided he could take over the leadership of the five New York families.

Unhappy with the sanctioned rubout and the unauthorized installation of Gotti, the high level Mafia Commission and its friends in both the federal and state governments worked out a plan to remove Gotti. The Racketeer-Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) statute was invoked.

The RICO statute was developed in John F. Kennedy's Administration by his attorney general brother, Robert Kennedy, and a little known Justice Department attorney, G. Robert Blakely, who drafted the new statute.

Blakely was a Professor of Law at the University of Notre Dame School of Law in 1965. Taus was one of his law students. Blakely rose to power under the Republican administrations of Reagan and Bush. His expertise was needed to handle the 1980s prosecutions of two RICO cases: The Pizza Connection investigation and John Gotti's indictment.

The Pizza Connection case stemmed from the Mafia's new involvement in international drug trafficking where the retail distributors became the pizza and cheese industries in the United States and Canada. The investigation into the pizza and cheese industries was started by the Pennsylvania Crime Commission which documented the Mafia's involvement in its extensive report. The release of the report left the FBI no choice but to investigate the interstate sale and distribution of narcotics. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) was still racked by corruption, incompetence and mismanagement, and was partly stymied by the drug trafficking implicating people in the CIA and other government entities.

Eventually, a Joint Narcotics Task Force (JNTF) was assembled, led by the FBI, to coordinate investigations and control them to protect the involvement of government personnel. The FBI-directed JNTF brought RICO indictments against the Sicilian faction. At the DEA, an FBI supervisor was placed in charge of their agency to insure that government involvement in drug trafficking was covered up.

The Sicilian Mafia was competing with the U.S. government controlled drug trade directed by the covert operations section of the CIA. Two Sicilian leaders were arrested and brought them to the United States for prosecution, along with their American Mafiosi associates.

There were other drug-trafficking entrepreneurs who remained untouchable. The Columbia drug cartels were one example. Cooperation with the CIA insured their illegal operation continued. If any problem existed, the U.S. would quickly eliminate them.

When Noriega cooperated with the Reagan-Bush administrations and the CIA in drug smuggling, a cordial working relationship existed between him and the Reagan administration. Vice-President George Bush invited



Noriega to his Virginia home and Bush was Noriega's guest in Panama. But when Noriega became uncooperative, President George Bush decided to eliminate Noriega in 1990 and invade Panama, Noriega survived because he fled to the refuge of the Vatican Embassy in Panama. The invasion killed hundreds of Panamanians. Noriega was eventually seized and flown to the United States, where he was tried and convicted of drug trafficking. The federal judge controlled the trial so that there was no disclosure of CIA drug trafficking and the involvement of both the Reagan and Bush Administrations.

These events were occurring during the Iran Contra Arms Initiative Affair, Irangate. Without congressional appropriations, funding had to be generated to support the Contra effort and a myriad of other unlawful operations. Drug trafficking was one of the operations used for funding. My books, *Drugging America* and *Defrauding America* go into great detail about the involvement of CIA and other government personnel in drug smuggling into the United States.

With its huge profits, drug-traffickers had to launder and invest their ill-gotten gains. A financial expert and OSS veteran took charge of the CIA under Reagan's Presidency. William Casey was formerly the Chairman of the Securities & Exchange Commission. He was also the head of a major Wall Street investment firm. Using both his areas of expertise, Casey engaged in covert operations. It was inevitable that investigations were started against the CIA and Mafia based upon leads and revelations in these clandestine activities.

However, these investigations were usually directed against the lower level criminal Mafiosi. Occasionally, a blundering CIA agent left a criminal trail. When that happened or when the Mafia investigation led to higher officials, the case was usually stymied, delayed or halted by the U.S. Justice Department or other state officials.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

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### FBI Mole and Organized Crime Conference

**A**fter five years working with the Mafia, pretending to be one of them, FBI Agent Joseph Pistone finally surfaced from his undercover assignment. Towards the last days, Pistone was invited to join them as a soldier by “Lefty Guns” Ruggiero, having earned Mafia recognition. Pistone had set-up a moneymaking operation in Florida where everything he touched turned to gold for the mob. From beach cabanas to gambling activities, Pistone and his undercover colleague, FBI Agent Ed Roth (alias), worked together to gain the confidence of the Mafia. Pistone was known as “Donnie Brasco.”

The FBI claimed it was taking both agents out of their cover because the mob had asked Pistone to kill someone. But it may have been that both agents became mobsters simply by living and working the mobster lifestyle itself. I have talked to other agents, one being with the DEA, who eventually copied the drug smuggling habits of the criminals he was sworn to halt. As I describe in *Drugging America*, he explained how law enforcement officers often copy the way of life of those they are pursuing.

The Mafia was making big money from the efforts of the two undercover agents and the FBI was learning about mob operations. Unlike other FBI agents, Pistone led a flamboyant life with the Mafia, which he would miss.

When it came time for the criminal trial in New York City, the FBI made secretive arrangements for Pistone’s safety, placing him on Governor’s Island, the former U.S. Coast Guard Base in Manhattan’s southern harbor. Rotating shifts of FBI agents, acting as bodyguards, protected him while he was debriefed and prepared for the prosecution.

#### **Mafia Contract on Lives of Pistone and Roth**

The Mafia placed a contract on the lives of Pistone and Roth. To stop the contracts, FBI case agents, including Taus, contacted their Mafia subjects to inform them the FBI would not tolerate harm to one of their agents, and any such action would result in severe retaliations. SSA Joseph O’Brien and his assistant, Andy Kurins, visited Castellano’s Staten Island home to issue a personal warning on the Mafia contract. During this same period,

Taus paid visits to his Mafia subjects to provide them with the same message. For many Mafiosi figures, it was their first encounter with FBI agents monitoring their daily activities.

Vincent Asaro was a third-generation American tough connected to the Bonanno and Gambino families, who operated a nearly deserted social club on 101<sup>st</sup> Street and Liberty Avenue in Queens. It was under surveillance for several months from the second floor of a bank building across the street. Cameras and a parabolic microphone, that looked like a World War II “Bazooka,” probed their street side conversations.

Asaro was small in stature and the spitting image of movie actor Al Pacino. Usually he was surrounded by several over-aged and stocky bodyguards or associates. The FBI went in force to relay the edict that Pistone and Roth not be harmed.

With four other agents, Taus approached Asaro, who was standing outside his social club late one morning. After Taus identified himself as an FBI agent, Asaro gave him a puzzled look and fumed to his associates, telling them to wait for him. If there was something the FBI would say causing him a loss of face, Asaro did not need his bodyguards hearing it.

With a similar tact, Taus directed his assistant agents to wait at the corner while he and Asaro walked along the sidewalk and talked. Taus described the situation about the mob contract. Asaro’s face showed concern, although he claimed he was unaware of the situation, Taus was frank, telling him he did know; otherwise he would not be in control of his crew. And, if anything happened to Pistone or Roth, Asaro would pay dearly. “We have left you alone for some time now,” Taus noted, not mentioning that the FBI had tried to indict Asaro.

“You are holding me accountable for something I don’t even know about?” asked Asaro. “Exactly,” responded Taus, “If anything happens, you are accountable. It’s in your best interest to let your friends know our position.”

### **FBI Agent Sabotaged the Stakeout**

The results of these confrontations effected some investigations. Now mobsters knew who was on the FBI radio and were possible targets in FBI investigations. Shortly thereafter, Taus’ second-story bank “plant” was blown. One member of Asaro’s crew spotted a careless female FBI agent who poked a long lens surveillance camera from an upper window in the bank. Taus stated to me that female agent was a close friend of FBI Supervisory Agent DeVecchio—who was protected the Mafia—and it was possible that DeVecchio had her deliberately become visible to warn Asaro about the stakeout.

Asaro moved his operations to another location, a real estate office several blocks away. The office was opposite another known mob operation, a “chop-shop” where stolen vehicles were chopped-up for parts. The gang remained under surveillance from a bell tower of a local Catholic church, at least until winter arrived. It was a dismal assignment for any agent, but the only available location. Earplugs became a standard issue item until the Catholic monsignor was persuaded to tell his congregation a period of si-

lence would be observed for several months. If Asaro gave generously to the church, he was rewarded by some divine intervention. The surveillance was eventually terminated since no activities were observed.

During this period, the Bureau chief from the Intelligence Analysis Unit of the Criminal Division's Organized Crime Section at FBI headquarters was conducting conferences around the country. Given their lengthy Bureau titles, the conference would be equally long and dreaded by working case agents. These conferences were supposedly designed to bring field agents up-to-date on the latest Mafia information as the Bureau prepared the RICO prosecution based upon the Pizza Connection investigation.

These seminars were regional to accommodate all interested agents. The FBI's Northeast Regional Conference took place at a local motel in Cranford, New Jersey. Over 350 agents from Maine to Maryland would attend. The conference was mandatory; otherwise few would have attended. The guest speakers included the chief of the Organized Crime Intelligence Unit and the two undercover agents, Pistone and Roth. Most working agents knew about the work of these two agents and wanted to hear their story. Otherwise, if only the bureau chief was speaking, there would have been a record number of sick days taken.

This was an opportunity for the bureau chief to impress the men who worked in the field with his analytical ability and storehouse of Mafia knowledge. For the chief, he could also show his boss, an assistant director, his own importance at FBI headquarters and the justification for his position.

Taus said the bureau chief's delivery was irritating, spending considerable time on statistical analysis. One of the older and senior agents asked the chief what does all the statistics mean, to which the chief proceeded with his conclusions. "First, organized crime is diminishing. From FBI records, the known Mafiosi have been arrested or put out of business. There are fewer of them than at any time in U.S. history. These mobsters are doing less business and committing fewer crimes. The threat posed by them is no longer as serious." The Chief selectively pointed at several bar graphs on his charts when a voice resounded from the impatient and noisy audience.

A seasoned FBI agent from Baltimore who had been involved in a mob related shootout blasted the chief, much to everyone's surprise and delight: *Have you taken leave of your senses, man? Your statistics are insane! They are based upon names of old mobsters who no longer occupy key positions. After the FBI waged a 40-year war against these wise guys, it's no wonder most are in prison or dead by now. Where in your statistical charts are the new members of the LCN? The Mafiosi we meet on the street? You don't have anything on these guys because we are still trying to identify them. The Baltimore Police Department knows more Mafia figures than we do! To say the FBI has won the war, is the greatest overstatement I've ever heard!*

A New York agent spoke out in agreement. During a visit to the New York State police organized crime unit in Albany, Taus saw numerous Mafia figures that were not known to the FBI. Major Police Departments and their

local affiliates had more officers working the streets who could easily talk to the mobsters. This was not true of the college-educated FBI agent who spent most of his time writing reports. Even without the 3-piece suit, the FBI agent was conspicuous in the streets just by his mannerisms. Yet, the Bureau was not open to information supplied by these police agencies. One fear was the information could be incorrect. Perhaps the larger fear was the Bureau wanted to take the credit. Police agencies disliked the one-way flow of information when dealing with the FBI, so they often left the Bureau in the dark. After listening to the naïve politically appointed young bureau chief, the older brick agents reacted in mass.

Since J. Edgar Hoover's time, there was a denial that the Mafia *even* existed, while it spread its influence into every aspect of American life. The Mafia identified by the chief were all lower echelon street-toughs and their sanctioned godfathers.

The Bureau did not have enough agents to handle the investigations that should have been accomplished. The agents that came to Cranford wanted real facts, not the fluff supplied to the Bureau. "What the hell do you mean, we have eliminated the mob!" Several other similar comments erupted from the discontented audience. A heated discourse ensued from the podium as the heckling brick agents told the bureau chief his records were inaccurate and incomplete.

The discovery made by Taus, about the vast amount of information the New York State police organized crime section possessed, corresponded to the wealth of information available from other police agencies. The 1980 Pennsylvania Crime Commission Report on the Pizza and Cheese Industries had far greater details on Mafia locations and figures than what the FBI Field Offices knew about the Sicilian faction.

There were many FBI Field Offices that did a good job, but often FBIHQ perused only the reports they wanted too. Inside the Field Offices, information was so compartmentalized that agents on the same squads were unaware of what their fellow squad members were doing. The notion that such information was sensitive actually restricted the investigative efforts and accomplishments.

Treated like children, the FBI agents at the conference started acting like rebellious adolescents. Beer hall cheers filled the air, along with robust applause from the disagreeable and frustrated audience who lauded their members' comments.

The young bureau chief was stunned by the mutinous reaction. Seated on the stage with him were Joe Pistone and Ed Roth. Finally, Roth stood up and walked to the front edge of the stage where the chief stood speechless. Roth, a very well respected agent, asked for quiet, which quickly followed, as the agents wanted to hear his take on the matter.

Roth's exploits in penetrating the Mafia were well known. The Bonanno family had placed a contract on him and Pistone. They had infiltrated the Mafia further than any other law enforcement officer had done previously. The great embarrassment for the Mafia was that a Bonanno Capo had stood up for the two undercover agents and were going to make them soldiers in

the Mafia.

As Roth took the podium, the bureau chief retreated. Reaching for the chief's chrome pointer. Roth rapped it on a chart to get everyone's attention, bending it out of shape. "Okay fellows," Roth announced as he whacked the chart again, adding to the bend in the pointer. "Let's settle down here. I didn't come here for the drinks."

Possessing the features of a movie Mafia chieftain, Roth had a crushed boxer's nose, rugged features, and an attention-getting voice. He was a street savvy agent with a slight gut and large forearms. He agreed with the brick agents in the audience, but politely admonished the bureau chief.

For five years Roth and Pistone worked, played and even thought like the mobsters they were investigating. They finally surfaced from their undercover roles because the bureau felt they had been exposed for too long. It had been an alien way of life for FBI agents, but they seemed to enjoy it.

The two had been successful leading a double life and did not break under the strain. The Bureau wanted to know what was happening. There was little strain upon the two men. It became a way of life they happily adapted too, enjoying the adventure, the good life and their work much more than ordinary FBI agents. They had no commute to work, no nagging wives or belligerent supervisors, no deadlines to meet, and no bills or taxes to worry about. Their administrative duties were handled by assistant case agents.

Taus understood their feelings. As a career Army officer, Taus detested the dull routine of the peacetime military. Though war is terrible, there is a certain air of adventure, a challenge to be met and overcome, and excitement in the unknown, valor to be displayed, victories to be achieved, a cause to fight for and a purpose to live. These elements were missing in a garrison Army and in a training environment. Roth and Pistone enjoyed the frontlines too.

Any mistake could have placed both Roth and Pistone's lives in jeopardy. However, they did flourish in their undercover work, enjoying the freedom in leading a sanctioned criminal existence and knowing that they could remove themselves at any time too. Compared to an alcoholic, they were intoxicated by a lifestyle more exciting than they had ever experienced. Like the famous writer, teacher and philosopher, Joseph Campbell, had noted about the courageous American soldiers in Vietnam, "They were truly alive as they braved the unknown perils." Life was much more meaningful when death was close at hand.

Hearing Roth's stories, one knew he enjoyed the work and the play. He performed his tasks for the Mafia and needled them when he did a good job.

Psychologists who interviewed and examined the two undercover agents described both as having fully submerged themselves into their Mafia roles. They had adopted the new lifestyle as their own. It became part of their psyche. From another viewpoint, people taken as hostages can become sympathetic towards their captors. It happens after a long captivity as the hostages share the common experiences with their oppressors. This occurred in the infamous Patricia Hearst case when she was kidnapped by a group called the Symbionese Liberation Army (Feb. 4, 1974). Despite her captivity, she vol-

untarily participated in the groups bank robbery, having sided with their aims and objectives. This phenomenon does not occur if the hostages are mistreated; Roth and Pistone were not mistreated by the Mafia.

The seasoned brick agents listened to Roth's tales like a bunch of tenderfoot Boy Scouts around a campfire at night. In his late forties, Roth's black hairline was receding and graying like an outgoing tide uncovering the submerged shore below. His prominent pugilistic nose budged out below his heavy eyebrows. Roth had a bartender's face and personality. He would listen to one's story before giving some sage advice.

Pistone also joined in Roth's story telling, acting like a comedy team, and embellishing each one's tale. They went into their initial involvement with the Mafia. "It was simple enough. We had a moneymaking scheme that we introduced through an informant to Benjamin 'Lefty Guns' Ruggiero. We had several schemes, assisted and financed by the Bureau. From a gambler's point of view, we were using other people's money. If we didn't roll a seven, we just rolled the dice until one appeared. The winning propositions were presented to Ruggiero and he was given a piece of the action, making him very happy." Roth and Pistone used their brains to get ahead while Lefty Guns used his brawn.

"Ruggiero was a Sicilian and a Southpaw," Pistone said after sipping a highball and leading on the podium. Lefty-Guns held many pistols. He admitted to shooting and killing 42 men in his lifetime. For his ruthlessness alone, he became a made-member of the LCN. It was that alone, since Lefty's formal education was short and his thirst for knowledge was limited." Pistone's investigative skills appeared as he physically described Ruggiero, "He stood 5'7" tall and has black hair slicked back by Vitalis and Olive Oil." The audience laughed.

"The guy's black-hearted. He doesn't look like much, but he's a real killer." Pistone took the smiles off the faces in the audience.

Adding some more humor, Pistone told another tale, "There were a lot of deals we made money on for Lefty. He really liked us. The other guys liked us too. They saw the 'moola' we were making for Lefty. One of our businesses was a motel on the beach with cabanas, the works! We showed Lefty the blueprints. He said he like red, white and green, not blue. In Lefty's words, 'So that when we should build it, not to use the blue color on the paper.' He had no humor. Like the time we were in Upstate New York. Lefty had never seen the Great Lakes. So I took him to the shores of Lake Ontario. The huge water body's waves crashed into the beach and the far shore was out of sight beyond the horizon. As Lefty beheld the lake, he was quite awed and said, 'This ain't no fucking lake, it's a damn ocean!'"

Finishing his drink, while the agents howled at Pistone's story. Roth gave another episode. "Then there was the time we had him fly down to Tampa Bay to check the motel operation. He's deadly afraid of flying. So he starts picking on us shortly before the trip, over the telephone, saying, 'You know I don't like flying. Those machines are too heavy to stay in the air. But book me first-class, understand! I need room on those planes. I don't want to sit next to no jerks, understand!'"



“Sure boss,” we said, “No problem.” Then Pistone goes and books Lefty with the tourist group in second class. At Tampa Bay Airport, we await his arrival, knowing he’ll be pissed when he gets off. Joe and I are both laughing before the plane lands. But we promised each other to keep a straight face and act surprised if Lefty complains about the trip.”

“Lefty gets off the plane with a face as white as a ghost. And he is pissed! He sees Joe and me right away. We go over to him and seeing his serious look, we start laughing. He asks what’s so funny. I say, ‘Nothing’s funny. We’re just smiling. We’re happy to see you.’ Lefty says, ‘What a fucking trip! They put me in second class. I argued with the stupid stewardess who said my ticket was for second class.’”

“‘Nay, that not right. Lefty,’ I told him. Lefty kept on talking, ‘One of them Indian Arab guys, you know, with a towel wrapped around his head sat next to me and kept talking to me. He tells me it’s his first trip to Florida. I tell him I don’t want to talk. He looks out the window and talks about the view. I tell him again to leave me alone. He asks me if I want to read a book. I tell him to shut up. Then he asks me to get up so he can take a leak. I look him in the eye for the first time and tell him I am going to kill him. He stayed seated and didn’t say another word for the rest of the flight. And, I’m taking a train back to New York.’”

Pistone and Roth still looked very tan and dressed like their mobster associates. Pistone had a gold Rolex watch on his left wrist and a large diamond ring. His right-hand pinkie had another larger gold ring on it. The first three buttons on his orange shirt were undone, revealing a large gold neck chain, half buried in his chest hairs. Taus thought the psychologists were right. Pistone and Roth really had joined the other side, at least unconsciously. Would they readjust to a normal agent’s life?

Both men would stay undercover, changing their lifestyles for a third time. The Mafia had contracts placed on them. Lefty Guns also had a contract placed on him by the Mafia. He had been taken in by FBI agents. The Mafia could not reach Lefty for the time being. He was safely incarcerated in federal prison pending his trial.

Throughout the entire time, the bureau chief sat and meekly listened. Roth wore himself out with the tales and the drinks. He wiped sweat off his face and said he would continue the stories at the open bar, provided the listeners paid for his drinks. Then he turned to the bureau chief, obediently bowing as if to excuse himself from the stage.

“Well, thank you Joe and Ed,” the chief tried to regain some control from an audience that was alienated from the start. So he drew no concluding remarks, except to say, “If you can’t fight them, join them. Joe, Ed, I’ll buy you that first drink at the bar.”

Half the agents raced out of the conference room into rush hour traffic for their long trips back home. The others who were staying for the night, accepted the bar invitation. Taus approached the Baltimore agent who was the first to criticize the bureau chief’s figures and charts.

John Harris (alias) was in his late forties and lived in Baltimore’s suburbs. Taus told him about the New York investigations into the Bonanno and

Gambino OC families and the Pizza Connection case. Taus noted the CIA involvement, "How does the CIA fit into any of this?"

"That's a damn good question!" Harris answered. "When you get to the higher Mafiosi, our investigations seem to stall-out. There's something happening which we aren't privy too."

### **Political Agenda in Most FBI Cases and CIA Cover-Up in Others**

"What do you mean?" asked Taus. Harris took Taus aside, away from the crowded bar and said, "There's a political agenda in most of these cases. That's why we handle some cases and take a pass on others. To my way of thinking, Lefty Guns was too violent for the Mafia's upper crust, so the powerbrokers sicked Pistone on him. That's probably why his undercover case went so smoothly. I think you're right. The CIA knows what we are doing. They've stalled and stopped other FBI investigations. Hell, we've got only some 6500 agents while the CIA has 20,000. Look at our pitiful equipment, revolvers instead of automatics, no hand-held intercoms, or mobile phones, bucars with over 100,000 miles on them. How can we pursue the criminal element in their newer muscle cars?" Harris' litany went on and on.

"The CIA's involvement?" Taus asked again. Harris nodded, saying "When they get involved, I take another case and think of putting in my 20-years retirement."

Someone caught Harris' eye as he took Taus' arm and led him across the auditorium. "Let me introduce you to a guy who might be able to tell you more. This is Bob Williams (alias) from Chicago." Harris introduced Taus to the 50-year old Williams.

"You mean from Buffalo, don't you?" Williams spoke as he shook Taus' hand. "It took me 20-years to get back to Buffalo from Chicago. Now what can I do for you two?"

### **CIA Interference in FBI Investigation of Criminal Activities**

Asking Williams about the higher echelons of organized crime, Taus addressed the interference caused by the CIA. Williams growled, "Don't get me started!" He ordered drinks for the group from a waiter. Williams was a decent fellow, the unselfish agent was usually the guy who had nothing but still was nice enough to pay for the drinks. The stingy agents were also the unproductive ones.

Harris and Williams were good men. They were workers and trustworthy. They were also boozers who welcomed this respite. Taus was having a hard time keeping pace. "Just what is it you are after my friend," slurred Williams in his Polish-Chicago accent.

Rattling off several names from his New York Pizza Connection case, Taus watched as Harris and Williams nodded their heads as to whether they heard the Mafia names in the past. When Taus mentioned Carlos Lauricello, Williams stopped nodding and asked about him.

As Taus spoke about drug trafficking and the CIA's connection to a firm in Freeport, Williams could contain himself no longer. He polished off his drink and spouted a deluge of facts on Carlos. In Williams' semi-inebriated state, he was providing information on Carlos Marcello, an infamous New Orleans and Texan Mafioso godfather who was connected to the assassina-

tion of President John F. Kennedy.

Taus was never a conspiracy theory lover. He wanted just the facts. So he quickly moved Williams onto the question of how Carlos was picked up by this Chicago Field Office agent if he was in New Orleans and Texas.

Williams knew something about the Kennedy assassination. The feelings among knowledgeable FBI agents was that the CIA was involved and interfered with the FBI's investigation. This CIA interference led many agents to suspect CIA personnel as being responsible for dispatching the President from the grassy knoll area adjacent to the Presidential car route.

Though Williams was talking about a different Carlos, the information he was supplying was still significant to Taus' case. "Carlos had connections in Chicago and New York, my friend," Williams remarked, "and even slugged a friend of mine back in 1970. He went to jail for that." The long day, the trip to New Jersey and the drinks started taking their toll.

Though Taus finally realized Williams' information was on Marcello and not Lauricello, he knew it was informative. Williams commented, "Marcello boasted about owning the Chicago Teamsters, so we got a little more aggressive with him. Your New York City Police Department found Marcello having dinner in Queens with the Gambino, Genovese and Colombo crime families and Keith Trafficante from the Florida mob. It was back around 1967 or so."

That was a chilling time for Taus. In 1967, he was on-orders for Vietnam. He pictured defending his country so that wise guys enjoyed their profits while he was flying combat missions in the jungles. Taus asked, "What about Marcello's CIA ties?"

"Wealthy men like these mobsters have political connections, plain and simple, my friend. They use the government and the government uses them."

Having provided some details on Taus' Freeport case, he looked where all the money went, how it was laundered and spent. Taus noted the Freeport case also involved fraudulent financial matters.

"Friend, these guys ain't stupid. They get the best accountants and attorneys and put their money into other legitimate businesses. It's difficult enough tracking their criminal activities without being a CPA, going over endlessly with their financial records." Williams knew the FBI's limitations and his own. "Besides," he said, "A lot of their money is placed in banks outside this country." When Williams spun a list of Caribbean banks, he caught Taus' attention by mentioning Castle Bank & Trust, located in Nassau, the Bahamas. This bank has deep CIA and Mafia connections. The name "Castle" would be adopted in late 1984 by the Drexel Company that was being operated as a CIA proprietary company and a CIA station in Freeport, Long Island.

### **Dual Battle on Criminal Activities**

FBI organized crime investigations fought a two-front battle, one against the Mafia and the other against a sinister and corrupt government. It was not just dirty or bipartisan political motives that affected FBI cases. As the prominence of the figures rose in FBI investigations, so did the obsta-

cles. Hurdles were put into place by skillful and connected defense attorneys, political friends, lobbyists, government insiders having positions as judges and prosecutors, as well as high-ranking law enforcement officials.

### **Pizza Connection Drug Cases and the CIA**

The Pizza Connection case easily traced itself to CIA involvement. Official information on what should have been available was missing. The CIA's overseas operations should have produced some materials concerning the Mafia's international criminal activities. A close inspection of most high-level Mafiosi cases revealed CIA connections such as the Castle Bank receiving funds from the Florida, Chicago and New York LCN families.

Williams' conversation trailed off with a story about the CIA's activities in Haiti back in 1967. He said the Bonanno OC family had ties to a gambling casino there in the mid-1960s, "I'm sure you'll find both CIA and Mafia people laying down in the same beds in Haiti, my friend."

On December 4, 1992, The *Washington City* paper published the article entitled "The K-Team." It told about the CIA secret team's involvement in Haitian politics in 1986 when they provided the White House with erroneous information that Haitian President-For-Life Duvalier had been removed from power. The article went on to say the White House relied upon the K-team's information. Why would the White House rely upon information from members of this secret team, instead of their own U.S. Departments and agencies, unless the K-team was CIA or CIA-connected?

Employing their goal of "plausible deniability," CIA had structured itself using "rogues warriors" and privateers. In the case of the K-team, how did these men support themselves and their families? How did they manage to develop information unavailable to governments with unlimited resources?

A misguided perception was that the K-team acted as operatives, assets, or business agents for the CIA. Under such an assumption, they legally retained a principal-agency relationship whereby the principal is responsible for their actions.

When the resources and manpower of the FBI could not keep abreast of matters, how did these middle-class Americans, the K-team handle international affairs?

The connections between the Mafia and the CIA were there. Other FBI agents at the Cranford conference were aware of it from their cases. No longer could Taus dismiss it as just a strange coincidence. And no longer would the Mafia and CIA connections be referred to as a conspiracy theory.

It was a conspiracy in fact.

### **The Supervisory Special Agent**

The lack of trust in human nature created organizations such as the FBI. Within these organizations distrust permeates the structure. FBI agents did not trust their supervisors. There was no guarantees that a supervisor's word was his bond. Promises made one day were often broken on the next day. Generally, it was safer to tell a half-truth, avoiding the full implications of the truth and accusations of prevarication.

Unabashedly, supervisory palliation was an acquired skill, worthy of

emulating if one desired recognition. There was an outright distrust and scorn for brick agents and support personnel by the managing supervisors,

Agents seeking administrative advancement either conformed to the accepted line or adopted a I. Many qualified agents refuse to seek promotions rather than compromise their own value systems. Decent people did become supervisors. Administrative advancement was not based upon a merit system.

If a brick agent wanted to be promoted, he asked to be a "Relief Supervisor" first. If he demonstrated he could do the Bureau's bidding, he could be selected for promotion provided a supervisory slot was available. The decent supervisors often found themselves compromising their own ethics.

The change was noticed by the subordinates.

Many agents took the promotion strictly for an increase in salary. They were not mercenaries, the Bureau simply did not pay enough to make ends meet in a large city. For many new supervisors, this was their first position as a leader. The Bureau did not teach leadership like the Armed Services.

Assumptions were falsely made that a person who was promoted to supervisor was also a leader. Sadly, this was not true. The Bureau mistakenly believed poor supervisors did not understand FBI priorities. So FBIHQ instituted a "Management-By-Objectives" (MBO) program. Rather than curing the lack of leadership traits, it exacerbated the situation. Supervisors ranked their subordinates' welfare and morale at an even lower step, and placed emphasis on Bureau goals.

There was no arguing with a supervisor who made a bad decision. They were protected by upper management, which had made many poor decisions. Rarely would a bad decision be revoked. Quietly, senior management might caution an unwise supervisor. Management was often guilty of improprieties and would seek support from its supervisors. "Birds of a feather flock together."

It was perplexing at times to tell who were the supervisors. They carried no special insignia or badge of office. Unless one recognized a person by face, one could not tell if that person were a supervisor. The Bureau Chief at the Northeast Regional OC Conference was no exception.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

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### **K-Team, Iraq, and Grenada**

In mid-December 1983, Taus had an opportunity to observe the CIA's K-team conducting foreign business, as he began surveillance early one Sunday morning. If it wasn't soccer games, it was Army Reserve games. Taus, holding the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, worked one monthly weekend drill at the 77<sup>th</sup> Army Command located at Fort Totten in Bayside, Queens Borough. With Christmas and the holiday season approaching, the fall soccer season had ended and there were no Army drills to attend under the new year. It was a good opportunity to see what the K-team members did with their Sundays in Freeport. David Studer, a K-team member, rarely attended his children's games.

On that Sunday morning, the Studer household in North Freeport appeared quiet. Taus traveled across town to Hebert's house in South Freeport, arriving there just in time to see Hebert leaving with two other K-team members. It was difficult following them at a distance into New York City. Taus' bucar, a 4-door silver-blue Dodge Diplomat sedan, was an easy mark to spot. Its black wall tires and extra antenna betrayed the otherwise plain appearance.

That's the way the Bureau did business. Instead of stark looking detective squad cars, the Bureau could have acquired different models. By the early 1980s, the Joint Narcotics Task Force (JNTF) squad started confiscating luxury drug-dealers' cars, which were not practical for agents to use. The Bureau balked at paying high repair bills for a Mercedes-Benz or a BMW Sports Coupe.

The K-team was relaxed that Sunday as they drove into the city. Even when Taus ran several red lights to catch up to them, they paid no attention. The team pulled into a Kinney's parking garage while Taus pulled over to the opposite curve and waited their exit.

The team looked like the 1980s version of The Three Stooges, as they wandered out from the garage, trying to put on their winter topcoats. They continued down the street to the Grand Hyatt Hotel and entered its restaurant. Seated at a table were three other unknown subjects: an Englishman and two Middle Eastern or Arabic-looking men. They were all dressed in

dark business suits. The six men ordered breakfast.

The maitre`d observed Taus discretely watching the group. He came over and offered Taus a table. The headwaiter had seen others behaving similarly, usually detectives or private investigators. While Taus stood behind some potted plants the waiter asked him if he cared for breakfast. Taus nodded and the waiter had a chair and a table placed behind the plant. Taus handed a \$5 bill to the curious Maitre`d, which prompted a smile from him and a question, "Detective?"

"No, I'm just a private eye trying to figure out what those six men are doing." There was no way Taus would develop any information unless he recruited assistance from the probing maitre`d who was in a position to gain some. "Do you know their names?"

"Monsieur that would be impolite of me to give you the names of our customers unless it was for some official law enforcement purpose. Taus knew he was simply asking for a bigger tip, so Taus produced a \$20 bill which only made the Maitre`d pause for while. There was no recourse, Taus produced his FBI credentials. Along with the \$20 bill it was enough to have the maitre`d whisper, "I will get you their names from the register."

The maitre-d proceeded to the hotel desk registrar and returned with two names, a Doctor Imad Hage and a Fadil Al-Marsoumi. He could not identify the others. Taus now knew all but one, the Englishman. Again the long stare from the maitre`d. Another \$10 bill from Taus. It was becoming a very expensive breakfast.

It did not take long for some of the six men to notice Taus and the maitre`d. Taus informed the maitre`d, "It looks like the Englishman has spotted me."

The maitre-d swung into action and walked over to the six men and engaged them in conversation. Within a few moments he returned to Taus' position as the groups seemed to have lost any interest in him. "I told them you are the hotel detective and to pay you no mind." Taus thanked the maitre`d.

The following Monday was supposed to be Taus' regular day off. If an agent worked a weekend or holiday instead of his regular workday he could take the following day off, listing it as a regular day off (RDO). Instead, Taus found himself at the FBI office searching indices for information on the two names.

Hage and Al-Marsoumi were eventually traced to the Iraqi FBI squad where Taus' FBI Academy classmate worked. Agent Wayne Zaideman acknowledged the names but needed his supervisor's permission to assist Taus. Again the ineffective compartmentalization limited any efficient investigations.

According to Zaideman, his boss, Branigan, was not on friendly terms with him. Many other agents felt Zaideman's boss was anti-Semitic, and Zaideman was a devote Jew. Branigan looked like Phil Donohue, the TV talk show host. Branigan was much more obnoxious than the television personality. He refused Taus' request to search the confidential files for Hage and Al-Marsoumi.



During this period, Taus was assigned to R. Lindley DeVecchio's Bannano Organized Crime squad. Taus briefed DeVecchio, who suggested he call FBI headquarters to resolve the matter. "Just don't tell headquarters you asked me first. You are on your own. I don't want the SAC to blame me for your going over our heads."

There was one man in Washington who could help Taus. SSA Manny Gonzalez had been assigned to the Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR), conducting investigations for Congress. Gonzalez responded that the case was a real hot potato with complications that included the CIA and NSC.

"We put too much time and found too many criminal violations to let this secret team slide now, Manny!" Taus implored Gonzalez to help. "What's the matter with the Bureau? We have numerous reasons to prosecute these people. It's a case worth pursuing."

The first problem for Gonzalez was his position, now outside of the FBI. He had handed in his badge and credentials when he took the temporary assignment to OPR. Then there were unspecified political considerations. "Look, Rich, there are other concerns at work here. Maybe you can work around these leads. Concentrate on the Mafia."

Since Taus received no help, he again asked his friend Zaideman, saying he should be interested in these characters who were involved in Iraqi affairs. Zaideman agreed and checked the files. He told his supervisor it was connected to his own cases.

The next day, Zaideman met Taus for lunch. Though working for the FBI on official investigations, both men felt they had to act secretly to avoid the wrath of Supervisory Agent Branighan. Zaideman did not trust the Bureau, which had established a separate secretive file on many of its agents, including Zaideman. That file contained information on him and his wife concerning a trip to Israel on a tourist junket.

This secret discussion of matters relating to the agency's responsibilities was the same that I encountered in the FAA. Wurtley Rudd, a senior FAA safety agent, and I, had to leave the office when discussing safety problems needing attention.

At lunch, Zaideman produced an index card listing Fadil Al-Marsoumi as Iraqi's biggest private weapons broker. Another index card existed for Dr. Imad Hage but little information was provided. Hage carried Iraqi credentials and was often seen with an English businessman by the name of Anthony Nigel, who ran a secretive operation on the Isle of Jersey, off England's shore. The Isle was not under English laws. Nigel was a middleman involved in financial deals that included weapons sales and transfers.

An article addressing that Sunday meeting appeared in *U.S. News & World Report* (October 26, 1991) titled, "The Gunrunner From Macy's." A similar story appeared in *The Washington City Paper* (December 4, 1992) titled, "The K-Team."

Gonzalez called Taus' desk (December 1983) on a coded telephone scrambler, stating, "They are Iraqi arms dealers who want weapons and financing." Referring to the U.S. government, Gonzalez added, "We are inter-

ested in assisting them through the CIA and NSC. There are some secret arrangements that I think violate federal laws and some dubious international treaty commitments. You had better back off on this one.”

As if to justify Taus’ hard work and a rather expensive Sunday breakfast, he told Gonzalez: “But they are also involved in drug-trafficking; and it is with the Mafia!”

Gonzalez was silent as he gathered his thoughts. He did not want to believe government officials were committing crimes of this magnitude. Taus patiently waited for his response that was heard as a high-pitched squawk due to the defective scrambling equipment. A few more futile attempts to reconnect with the encoding scrambler failed. Taus then contacted Gonzalez on the regular phones:

*Look Manny, I know we cannot speak about these things over this line, but look at the position you have here. You are investigating prominent people in government who have committed some alleged crimes.*

Gonzalez agreed and asked for time to assess the situation.

*Do what you think is right. You often told me about your military training as an officer. Use those skills and ethics. I’ll try and help you, but give me time.*

Gonzalez stated he would be in touch with Taus later. That call never came.

The deep-seated mistrust between federal agencies was not unknown to Taus. In some ways, one could not blame the many other federal agencies that sought information from the FBI. Most had previously cooperated with Bureau investigations, supplying information to the FBI, and then when they asked the FBI for information, they were told that the only information they could release were security checks. Of particular rivalry and animosity was the relationship between the FBI and CIA.

From Taus’ initial days on the Asian FCI squad, he had learned that whenever CIA agents visited the New York office, FBI agents were instructed to remove all paperwork and files from their desks. Usually these meetings, between CIA personnel and the FBI, took place in the supervisor’s office cubicle. Taus would later comment, “We gave up nothing to them, or so we thought. But the CIA already had insiders in the FBI that accessed our most secretive files.”

Taus had found FBI files dating back to 1949. One file was on Dan Priscu, the Freeport CIA station chief, that appeared to be CIA-supplied misinformation accumulated by the FBI over 50 years ago.

### **The National Security Council**

While the chairmanship of the National Security Council (NSC) acted directly for the president, the director of the CIA (DCI) controlled all the so-called independent intelligence agencies. These included the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), the National Security Agency (NSA), the FBI and others. Under Ronald Reagan, the president’s Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB) was recreated, after it had been eliminated by President Jimmy Carter. This committee encouraged covert operations.

Reagan also installed a more secretive National Security Planning Group (NSPG) within the structure of the NSC. Members of the NSPG in-

cluded the Vice-President, former CIA Director George Bush, the NSC Advisor, and whatever prominent political aides were needed.

The involvement of Ronald Reagan in the various conspiracies was not recognized by the public, and when Reagan was shown to be involved, he had a way of denying involvement. A *Time* article (October 28, 1991) had the title, "Reagan Knew Everything." Oliver North confirmed these facts and began telling the truth—and half truths.

The very foundations of why Reagan "knew everything" could be discovered by an examination of the newly named NSC Committee called the "208 Committee." Every week, this committee met in the old Executive Office Building, reviewing CIA proposals for covert operations. They met in Room 208, hence the name of the committee. All operations were approved by the NSPG. President Reagan had to know of these proposals since he had to approve each one.

Committees and groups would not hamper President Reagan or his DCI, William Casey. When no law fit, one was enacted or amended by Executive Orders. Covert operations were redefined as "special activities" under Executive Order 12333, dated December 4, 1981.



## CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

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### CIA and Grenada Invasion

**T**he FBI New York Office was aware of the planned invasion of Grenada. George Hebert alerted the FCI Division in advance. In 1983, Taus was working in the Criminal Division on the Bonanno Organized Crime Family squad, supervised by DeVecchio who was more concerned about his own personal image than the FBI's. Most of Taus' leads were on Long Island, and DeVecchio knew about the Freeport operation that was becoming less important as the Pizza Connection case proceeded to trial. To divert Taus' attention, he gave Taus some promising Mafia cases in Manhattan.

One concerned Al Embarrago, aka Al Walker, who managed to escape the dragnet that captured many of his associates in the Pizza case. Embarrago was in his late sixties and still exerted a powerful influence on the newspapers' unions. He was seen and photographed by the FBI at the Bonanno social club, known as The Motion Lounge, in Greenpoint, Queens. That surveillance occurred when "Lefty-Guns" Ruggiero's crew from Pistone case, aka "Donnie Brasco," met at that location.

Considering that Embarrago lived and worked in Manhattan, Taus wondered what business brought him to the Greenpoint hangout. Embarrago listed his home address as an abandoned building in Chinatown, according to the previous FBI agent assigned to the case, who didn't do much of an investigation. Embarrago held a prominent position with the *New York Post* and was a mover and a shaker at the newspaper, and had survived many labor purges. His Mafia connections kept him and the *New York Post* in business. Taus interviewed him and found an elderly gentleman who was quite cordial despite his sinister associates and criminal activities.

As Taus questioned him concerning the Pizza case, Embarrago became attentive and evasive, supplying no information. Throwing him a curved ball, Taus asked, "When was the last time you had any contact with CIA personnel?"

After that question, Embarrago spoke more freely. He quickly discovered that Taus would say nothing further about the CIA, except that there were CIA connections to the Mafia under investigation. Embarrago did not

look too surprised as he nodded and posed a question which sounded more like a statement, "Do you know how important those people are?"

When Taus replied, "They are not so important that I can't get them indicted for criminal violations." Embarrago said Taus had misunderstood his meaning.

*Those connections to the CIA are on a different plane than we are, sir. They are today's 'untouchables.' We, that is, the five crime families and the FBI struggle. We, that is, organized crime and the FBI try to out-fox each other, but the real bosses pull the strings."*

It was clear Embarrago meant some higher power, a different echelon of criminal activities. This elite Mafia was termed the real untouchables because of their political and government connections. Embarrago did not provide any details, but he continued to philosophically pursue the idea. Taus knew he could provide much more information. However, Embarrago was an old warhorse in this contest and hardened by time and age.

The meeting had the effect of sending Taus back to the FCI Division agents for an update on their sources. Kevin Kattke, a lead member of the K-team, had been identified due to his association with Hebert from the Jamaican case on the FBI Cuban squad. A surprisingly early development in the Irangate scandal showed Kattke was connected to the political protests on Long Island against the Ayatollah Khomeini rule in Iran. Ronald Reagan had been elected President in late 1980, the American hostages were suddenly released, and it was thought, a new era would begin with Iran.

Within a year, Kattke and Hebert were again island hopping in the Caribbean. These fellows claimed to be working sporadically at their middle-class occupations, living in the working class community of Freeport, raising their families. Yet, they were hobnobbing with the political elitists of Latin America. The K-teamers possessed some hidden finances to engage in such vacation travels. One of their recent trips in the early 1980s took them to the little island of Grenada.

CIA's efforts to destabilize the Grenadian government involved an illegal break-in at the Grenadian Mission to the United Nations. It was then that Taus met Hebert face-to-face as Hebert solicited help from the FBI. According to Hebert's story, he had met some former Grenadian officials. He asked Kattke for help since Kattke knew people in the CIA and NSC. This was curious since Kattke said he was only an Army Reservist. Even stranger was Hebert's feeble attempt to distance himself from the CIA.

Oliver North's book, *Guts and Glory*, described how Kattke was solicited for his plan to oust the communist oriented leader of Grenada, Maurice Bishop, and to install a pro-American government. It was noted that Kattke had studied for several years working to circumvent the U.S. Neutrality Act.

Newspaper reports implied that the government was relying upon a penny-stockbroker, George Hebert; a maintenance custodian at a Macy's Department Store, Kevin Kattke; a roofing contractor, Roy Harris; a used-car salesman, Salvatore Imbergio, and others to handle responsibilities reserved for the Departments of State, Commerce, Defense and Justice, not to mention the U.S. Diplomatic Corps and the intelligence services, as it re-

lated to conditions on Grenada. Taus felt the K-team evolved from CIA and NSC collaboration.

Manny Gonzalez, Taus' former FBI supervisor, had volunteered for a two-year congressional assignment in the Washington Office of Professional Responsibility. (In 1993, Manuel Gonzalez became the first Hispanic FBI Assistant Director, appointed by the new FBI Director Louis Freeh. Gonzalez' work on the Pizza Connection Case in the 1980s with then AUSA Freeh, helped to secure his position. Immediately after Gonzalez's promotion, Taus contacted him while imprisoned, for assistance. Gonzalez promised to help. Within a week, Gonzalez died of cancer at the age of 50.)

One K-team member, Sal Imburgio, ran for Mayor of Freeport in 1981, and that event precipitated the formation of the Freeport Sports Club, giving the FBI the ability to discover more information about the CIA's Freeport operations. However, higher people in the FBI blocked any meaningful use of the information gathered.

Imburgio stated in the same K-team article "What we were able to gather and feedback, bolstered the confidence of the (invasion) planners in Washington."

From this article, the American public was led to believe that the K-team's overseas excursions developed intelligence materials that the vast resources of the U.S. government could not obtain.

The article continued: "Acting on the advice of a Kattke memo to the National Security Council that the safety of American medical students in Grenada be used as a pretext and justification for an invasion of Grenada, North sent Kattke to the medical school's administrative offices on Long Island (to secure a student list) and persuade the school to order the students home and take control after the invasion." The fact was that the Saint George University School of Medicine's administrative offices felt the students on Grenada were quite safe.

As previously mentioned, Hebert and Kattke broke into the Grenadian UN Mission on October 23, 1983, after which Hebert called the FBI New York office to prevent New York police from arresting them. At that time, Taus was not assigned to the K-team case; it was still Walls' case. Since Taus and Walls were working together on FCI matters and the Freeport case, Hebert asked Taus for help. Taus obliged, along with other agents.

Taus found their overseas ventures corresponded with their absences from Freeport, in 1985 Taus was able to conduct the Fort Lauderdale surveillance that further defined the actual activities of the K-team.

Saint George University's administrative offices were in Bayshore, Long Island, and it became a subsequent business location for Castle Securities, the K-team's Enterprise operation in the late 1980s.





## Enterprise Operation at Fort Lauderdale Airport

It was never stated whether Taus' *expertise* was needed or if he was just a fill-in to assist another squad with an arrest. If Taus was not asked to participate, an arrest might not have occurred. Nor would an unrelated opportunity develop which would disclose important information in the Freeport investigation. There would be trips to Florida for a trial of the subject who Taus arrested.

### DeVecchio Taking Taus Away From Colombo Mafia Activities

Another and stronger possibility for donating Taus' service was DeVecchio's desire to take Taus away from his other cases, which involved the drug-trafficking activities of DeVecchio's informant, Gregory Scarpa, a Colombo Mafia Capo. [In 1996, DeVecchio retired from the FBI and faced court appearances for improprieties during his dealings with Scarpa. The influence of this Mafia capo flourished while Scarpa was an informant for DeVecchio. The FBI was doing Scarpa favors through DeVecchio by removing Scarpa's competition from rival mobsters. This was done by providing the names of government informants to Scarpa, who would then murder the informants!]

### My Personal Contacts With Gregory Scarpa, Jr.

I had received letters from Gregory Scarpa, Jr. in early 2005, where he gave me details about how FBI agents, including DeVecchio, gave his father the names of government informants, and that his father would then murder the people. I describe this information in the second edition of *Drugging America* and the fourth edition of *Defrauding America*.

FBI Agent Herman Wang approached Taus' desk on the DeVecchio's organized crime squad. "I understand you are Rich Taus and will be assisting us with an arrest tomorrow." Wang was friendly enough but his disposition only aggravated Taus since he said Taus would have to place his cases on the back burner again. Wang came from another squad that worked on FCI and criminal cases when the need arose for his Chinese language skill and his oriental background. The case agent who recruited Wang was Charlie Rooney. All three agents were familiar with Queens, where an informant said the wanted fugitive was located.

Rooney worked on the Pizza Connection case. Aside from their educational backgrounds, Rooney had some of Freeh's tendencies, one of which was covering minuscule details. In 1978, Rooney was sent to investigate the killing of U.S. Congressman Ryan and the Reverend Jones' cult and their mass suicides in Guyana, South America. Rooney was married to a former FBI clerk who found herself competing with the FBI files Rooney brought home every night; he was a workaholic.

An informant gave Rooney the location of a young Chinese gang leader wanted for murder, extortion and kidnapping. The gang extorted Chinese businesses from New York to Florida. Six FBI agents went to a brownstone apartment building in Queens early the next morning. Their subject was in a third-story apartment with some 20 other illegal immigrants, one of whom gave himself up. It was unclear what motivated the informant, whether it was the reward or the unsatisfactory living conditions in the crowded apartment.

Five agents knocked and then rushed through the front door, while Taus waited outside and watched the window fire escape. The person being sought excited the window and raced down the fire escape wearing only his dungarees. Taus rushed over to the sidewalk as the subject reached the second story. Taus had his weapon drawn, being especially alert since during the prior briefing agents were warned that the subject held a black belt in karate.

Taus identified himself as the subject saw Taus waiting for him on the sidewalk. Taus called on his radio that he had caught the subject. Wang, Rooney, and Roger Suey came running down the stairs to assist.

Since Taus was the arresting officer, he would be traveling to Fort Lauderdale, where the federal district court had jurisdiction over the criminal charges, including extortion and kidnapping.

At the time, Taus was unaware of another significance aspect of the case. It provided him an opportunity to pursue his Freeport leads at Fort Lauderdale where the CIA's Enterprise was operating aircraft for the Contra's resupply efforts and trafficking in drugs. In 1984 and 1985, while waiting to testify as the arresting officer at the trial, Taus made several official trips to Florida.

#### **Hebert's Background**

According to Taus, Hebert never attained any cadet rank at Pennsylvania Military College because Hebert verbally inflated everything he did, he was outspoken, but lacked a keen mind. Twenty-years after his graduation, Hebert wanted to mix with celebrities, describing, and hence inflating, the minor roles he played in some very questionable and illegal affairs.

A meeting between Hebert and Taus happened one night in October 1984 at a Freeport school gymnasium. It was triggered by Taus' assignment to the Romanian-Hungarian FCI squad. The squad unknowingly used the CIA Station Chief, Dan Priscu, as an FBI informant. In reality, Priscu supplied the Bureau with misinformation for more than 30-years. Taus discovered that Priscu's file was bogus and filled with erroneous information. On the FCI squad, Roderick Walls had unwittingly worked Priscu's informant

file, never realizing that he was dealing with a CIA secret team until Taus notified him about the Mafia connections.

Federal prosecutors, Mafia figures and their defense attorneys knew of Taus' work in the Pizza Connection case and the investigation into Mafia drug trafficking. At the time of the Pizza case and subsequent Mafia trials, few FBI agents knew of the CIA's involvement. When FBI files were submitted to the U.S. attorney's office, certain sections were redacted or eliminated in their entirety to eliminate any reference to the CIA. These included the files concerning the Cremosa Cheese Company in Freeport and references to members and locations of the CIA's K-team, also in Freeport. Taus' supervisors told him not to be concerned since those areas involved highly sensitive national security matters and were being incorporated into other FCI files in another investigation.

Despite Taus' top-secret security clearance, he was never told what FCI case contained that information. Taus felt that his assignment to FCI rather than the Criminal Division and his relentless probe into the CIA's K-team operations had serious ramifications and that he was being silenced by the transfer. The CIA and the NSC asked FBI headquarters what the Bureau was doing in pursuing their activities. FBI Assistant Director Buck Revell stalled many of the FBI investigations into these illegal CIA operations, including Taus' Freeport case.

After Hebert's encounter with Taus during the night soccer game, Hebert contacted Taus at the FBI New York office. Hebert tripped over his word as he spoke on the phone, indicating an unusual nervousness. On October 23, 1983, the previous year, Hebert had called Taus asking for assistance involving the K-team's abortive break-in at the Grenadian Mission to the United Nations. Hebert had apparently been instructed by Station Chief Priscu to find out what Taus knew about the secret team's activities and how the FBI would use that information. All during their operations, the K-team had kept the Bureau at bay with its shenanigans. A simple call from CIA to the National Security Council staff office in the old Executive Building near the White House set off bells. Executive pressures appeared to be subsequently applied to FBI Director William Sessions.

It was an NSC staffer who telephoned Bureau officials to cease their investigations, which accounted for the decade-long investigation into the K-team's illegal operations without any productive results.

"It's necessary we meet," Hebert spoke seriously. He was trying to show his boss he could handle a simple FBI investigation. He would use his former acquaintance with Taus from their old military academy days, not realizing that Taus had found him an incompetent cadet. However, Taus played along with his request because it could further develop Taus' FBI Freeport case. They agreed to meet at the Freeport East Bay Diner adjacent to the K-team's parking lot at Castle Securities.

It took fifteen minutes for Hebert to maneuver into any sensible conversation. Whenever Taus thought he would tell about his CIA duties, Hebert rambled off into other areas. Taus knew how to settle Hebert down to the real business, which Hebert was not equipped to handle.

Taus said, "Let's order lunch, George. We have much to cover." Taus then proceeded to ask him about his wartime experiences. Hebert had never received a commission or served his country and became defensive. When Taus changed the subject to his present work, Hebert became more relaxed, and provided more information. Hebert felt that Taus could provide him with FBI information on the CIA's Freeport operation. Slowly, Hebert started shedding more light upon the CIA's international activities, hoping that Taus would reciprocate. "They're not doing business locally you know. Our company is engaged worldwide for all Americans," Hebert boasted.

"That we know, George. How can I assist you guys?" Hebert was stunned when Taus acknowledged facts Hebert thought were unknown to the FBI. He assumed Taus knew even more. This was a situation of giving a little information to gain more. It prompted Hebert's comments about the activities that Taus claimed he was familiar with. But Taus deliberately downplayed their importance.

Hebert reacted and was quick to correct him, telling more details to prove the Enterprise was productive and useful. Herbert said:

*Freeport is the center in a vast network of CIA stations handling the worldwide web of resources. Equipment, profits and investments directly connected to our covert activities in many foreign countries, both friendly and hostile ones.*

In an attempt to deflect Taus' earlier probe of his military service, Herbert launched into his present patriotic duties. Initially, he spoke about the junk bond business many Wall Street firms were conducting, especially at Drexel Burnham Lambert, from which their former company name, Drexel, was derived. The CIA had found a lucrative enterprise with fraudulent financial transactions and businesses to carry out secretive dealings. When President Reagan deregulated the Savings & Loans Industries, CIA became involved in many marginally secured loans. Hebert stated this great work was being done to extend U.S. influence around the globe. Herbert laughed as he said:

*Hell, we save these Third World countries from themselves. Look at the mess we rescued in Grenada. Great Britain is indebted to us for the Falkland Islands victory. If we don't go to the aid of these countries and supply them with money, arms and equipment, they would all perish. If they are not fighting each other, we'll go down there and start than up.*

Taus asked him what he meant. "Listen Rich, we'll supply both sides in a war; otherwise we'll all be out of jobs."

"No, you guys are good, but I don't think you are that involved now." Taus was asking him to tell more, to brag on with some supporting facts, to pin-point the operations. Taus knew only a little about the K-team's plans. Hebert obliged with the following statement: "Next week, I'm going to Florida, to work with people from the National Security Council in Washington. We see these guys often on international matters. One's a Marine Corps Officer and I'll be meeting him In Fort Lauderdale. He outranks you."

Hebert had a nasty habit of belittling an opponent. Oliver North, a Lieutenant Colonel, did outrank Taus, who was an Army Reserve Major. But military ranks had nothing to do with the FBI's investigation into the CIA's

criminal operations.

“How do you know that,” Taus asked. Hebert said that his immediate boss at Castle Securities was Kevin Kattke, an Army Reserve officer at Fort Totten, New York. Kattke was in the Army’s Intelligence Branch.

The location of the National Security Agency was at Fort Meade, Maryland, where the Army Intelligence Branch also worked. There was a vast pool of manpower and resources that the CIA could draw upon for their investigations. Hebert was showing how this jigsaw puzzle fit together, providing Taus with new pieces as he bragged about himself. Taus kept the coffee coming and his compliments to feed Hebert’s growing ego. It flushed out more details about the K-team’s business in Florida. Hebert continued.

*We have a large operation down there at the Fort Lauderdale Airport. We keep our democratic friends in Central America supplied with whatever they need to wage a war against rebel communist forces. That’s how my men here in Freeport support our people down there. We get them money, make the right investments, and do the paperwork, some trading. You know what I mean.*

Hebert saw Taus nodding his head, but Taus knew only a little. Attaching a philosophical view to their criminal operations, Hebert said:

*We pour down supplies to keep the democratic people fighting and alive. Your Army Reserve units [broadly referring to all USAR units] are backing the freedom fighters to overthrow the communist in Nicaragua.*

“Good,” Taus remarked. “So the drug trade will help us in the long run?” Hebert nodded as he gulped down a cold cup of coffee. Taus still needed more details about the drug-trafficking operation.

“Got to hand it to the CIA. The DEA’s been working their asses ragged chasing drug-dealers. Hope you take all their business away from them, George.” Taus’ comments were meant to see exactly what the CIA’s relationship was to DEA. Did it deliberately hinder DEA’s investigations?

The drug business was viewed as a profitable market, which Hebert claimed, affected only the lower classes. He described the trade as a way to recoup government welfare payments from those who abused the privileges in receiving them. Though Hebert did not realize it, he was doing his country a service for the first time as Taus started documenting the illegal activities of the CIA. Hebert continued:

*You know we don’t stop DEA from arresting drug-dealers. We don’t need any free-competition to interfere with our important business.*

Perhaps this explained why the Drug Enforcement Administration was so ineffective in combating the drug problems in the 1970s and 1980s. When DEA came across the various CIA drug-trafficking activities, DEA was derailed, stalled or stymied in their cases.

When they left the diner, Hebert told Taus he would be in contact again. Taus felt that Hebert would be checking with his station chief to decide upon the next course of action.

### **Southern Air Transport**

“The Worldwide Web of Resources” that Hebert told Taus about included many CIA proprietary companies. Intimately involved in the Irangate

scandal was Southern Air Transport (SAT) at Fort Lauderdale Airport in Florida. By 1987, SAT was a very solid air cargo company. Profitable government contracts enlarged its fleet from three aircrafts in 1983 to 17 Lockheed L-100s (the civilian version of the USAF's C-130 Hercules) and 6 Boeing 707s, plus smaller planes, including a Fair-child C-123K cargo aircraft. SAT had 540 employees of which 96 were pilots in 1986. It also experienced two serious crashes in its history. The first and most dramatic crash occurred on October 4, 1986. That crash would have serious overtones for the Reagan Administration. Official investigations into the crash would be unlawfully stalled to avoid disclosures of the CIA & NSC's illegal operations.

"We are 'copied' for informational purposes from the Miami Office-of-Origin," said SA Owen Murray to Taus, adding that most of the FBI Miami field office's efforts simply consisted of providing information to the FBINYO. Any investigative efforts made concerning the Technoimpex operation (an Hungarian trading company) came from the FBI Miami Field Office. The Miami office had a Resident Agency (RA) office at Fort Lauderdale that would cover any leads. Confidential informants reported air cargo shipments to the FBI's Fort Lauderdale Resident Agency.

Personal coordination was needed between the two FBI field offices.

When Taus suggested this to his squad supervisor, SSA Thomas Serby, Serby thought it was just another agent's scam to get a little warm weather vacation from the New York winter. Though Serby refused, he did allow Taus to discuss the investigation with the FBINYO's Assistant Director Tom Sheer. As a result of that discussion, arrangements were made for a Florida trip. The federal trial involving a Chinese gang leader, who Taus had arrested, was being held at the U.S. District Court house in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and came at a opportune time.

Although the federal prosecutor had a solid case of murder, extortion, and kidnapping against the Chinese defendants, it was felt that Taus should be available to testify at the trial. The FBI would normally have waited, rather than incurring the expense of sending Taus to Florida. In the first half of 1985, Taus made four trips to Fort Lauderdale without ever testifying in the criminal trial. It gave him the opportunity to coordinate his case with the Fore Lauderdale and the Miami FBI agents and do some legwork himself at the airport.

Neither the Miami nor Fort Lauderdale offices were pleased to see an agent from another office. But Taus had two friendly agents assigned to the Miami Office who assisted him. John Hanlon and Bob Dicker knew Taus from their days on the FBI Brooklyn-Queens MRA in the 1970s. Hanlon was the Assistant Special Agent-In-Charge (ASAC) of the BQMRA. He also supervised a small squad that included SA Bob Dicker, the squad's Relief-Supervisor, along with SAS Frank Monserrate and Richard Taus. Hanlon, Dicker and Monserrate all secured Bureau transfers to the Miami Office for different reasons.

Hanlon had a personal disagreement with the acting director of the FBI, Neil Welch, back in the late 1970s, which forced him to take a reduction in

grade. Hanlon opted for the warmer climate of Florida where he became just another “brick agent” after being censored by Welch.

Bob Dicker wanted to get away from his estranged and embittered wife and the lengthy legal battle that led to a divorce. Frank Monserrate married another BQMRA agent, Susan, and both wanted to live in a warmer place.

They all had seniority, a fact taken into consideration when an agent requests a new office or assignment.

These transfers marked the importance that the Miami Office was taking within the Bureau. Its staffing had increased. Miami was the site of many criminal activities, especially drug-trafficking and money-laundering. Also, the large Cuban exile community was active with CIA clandestine operations. There were many willing Cuban exiles to employ in overthrowing other Latin American despots.

Even with a number of friendly agents in Miami, Taus would have to proceed alone if he wanted to accomplish anything. The assigned Miami case agent exhibited the same reluctance that Owen Murray showed when Taus first approached him. The investigation was deliberately being stalled by FBIHQ. Taus was told not to interfere with the investigation in Miami and especially not to interview anyone. When Taus finally managed to see the Miami case file on Southern Air Transport, it revealed that many leads were never covered or answered.

FCI matters mixed into criminal affairs. The Miami case agent knew better than to swim in unchartered waters. His case was a “ball of hot wax,” and like FBINYO Agent Murray, the Miami agent had a constant stream of CIA officials visiting him, monitoring his case. Nonetheless, Taus noted a recent lead in the Miami file dealing with unknown shipments and liaisons at the Fort Lauderdale Airport. Taus took a look for himself at the airport, but nothing constructive materialized until his fourth trip to Fort Lauderdale.

New York ADIC Tom Sheer was well aware of drug trafficking and money-laundering in Miami. As long as the federal trial against the Chinese gangster continued, Sheer would send Taus to Fort Lauderdale to continue his investigation, providing that Taus did not step on anyone’s toes.

Ideally, a temporary duty assignment would have been appropriate, but Miami and FBIHQ did not want an agent from another field office looking over Miami’s shoulders. Until something tangible resulted, Sheer could see sending Taus for a week at a time. However, when something substantial *did* occur in April 1985, Taus was called back to the FBINYO.

During the fourth trip, Taus was told about an arriving Southern Air Transport flight that was carrying cargo from Honduras. At a remote area of the Fort Lauderdale Airport, the L-100 was off-loaded and other crates were placed on board. It reminded Taus of the military cargo deliveries in Vietnam: large aluminum pallets stacked with wooden crates and olive drab canvas bags covered with yellow-webbed netting and protective plastic sheets. Whatever was arriving had armed guards accompanying it. The cargo was quickly moved off the tarmac and into a nearby windowless storage building.

Approaching one sentry, Taus saw he would get no further unless he showed some form of identification. Even though the Miami field office specifically told Taus not to identify himself as an FBI Agent, when the sentry asked him for ID, Taus quickly flashed the lower portion of his FBI credentials, saying he was with the CIA and was waiting the arrival of a second L-100. That statement caught the sentry by surprise; he was not told about another incoming flight. The misdirection worked. The sentry relaxed his stance, now more concerned about another flight and longer working hours than about Taus.

Starting a friendly conversation, Taus sympathized with the sentry, "I used to be with the U.S. Air Force as a security policeman; hated the long empty hours of walking around the taxiways and revetments. That's why I got involved in this business."

### **Oliver North and Secret SAT Flight**

Taus' subterfuge worked. The sentry was still curious about the second flight and noted, "Well, I suppose they just did not tell me about the second flight; after all the flights are secret." The sentry knew the key players if not their flight schedule. He pointed them out to Taus as they waited nearby. It appeared to be Oliver North in civilian clothes standing next to Adolfo Calero on the tarmac, some 100 yards away. The other cast of characters were unknown to Taus. It was enough information to give the Miami and New York Field Offices. When Miami was informed, they were displeased that Taus had taken a chance. It was their investigation, yet they did not know the subjects involved or the materials being transported. Or, they were not telling Taus.

### **ADIC Oliver "Buck" Revell**

After April 1985, ADIC Tom Sheer was unwilling to let Taus make another Florida trip, causing Taus to wonder if it was due to Miami's complaints. Taus thought that CAB records in Washington might reveal some information. After Taus explained that Civil Aeronautics Board flight records of Southern Air Transport might reveal information, Sheer authorized Taus' trip to Washington D.C.

Initially, Sheer suggested a lead be sent to the FBI Washington field office, but Taus quickly convinced him that no agent would shift through the voluminous records adequately enough to discern any irregularities that might exist. Since the investigation involved cases of another office, there would be no statistic to post for any exhaustive investigative efforts by the receiving office, resulting in ineffective investigation.

Reviewing the CAB records in Washington, Taus discovered many flights by SAT relating to the ongoing civil war in Angola, Africa. Aside from general information such as flight crewmembers, destinations, times and miscellaneous cargoes, there was nothing disclosed about the reasons for the flights or the actual cargo contents. The records only established that something involving the U.S. Government was being handled by SAT that by itself did not offer any business explanations for the flights.



Upon Taus' return from Washington, Sheer said that FBIHQs wanted him to concentrate his efforts only in the New York area. Sheer mentioned ADIC Buck Revell's name as the Bureau authority for that order.

Whenever a problem arose for NSC staffer Oliver North, North turned to Buck Revell's office at FBIHQs to handle matters. This was happening with Taus' investigation into SAT's operations at Fort Lauderdale. SAT was hauling arms to Iran and the Contras, a fact revealed by the Civil Aeronautics Board's records. Revell acted to block Taus' investigations that protected Oliver North, who had been told that an FBINYO agent was investigating North's Fort Lauderdale operation. Again and again, Taus' investigative efforts were delayed, stymied, or halted by the Bureau, until a fateful day in October 1986.

### **The Hasenfus Shoot Down**

During one of the secret flights flying guns to the Contras in Nicaragua, a Sandinista army patrol used a Soviet SA-7 "Grail" anti-aircraft missile supplied by Cuba to shoot down a SAT C-123K cargo plane. Both pilots, William Cooper and Wallace Sawyer, and a Contra radio operator, were killed in the crash. Eugene Hasenfus, the loadmaster on the plane, survived by jumping from the plane using his personal parachute. His subsequent capture by a Sandinista Army patrol was widely publicized in the world media and provided evidence of the U.S. involvement in undermining the Nicaraguan government.

The Sandinista government produced document from the downed aircraft, including the identification cards of the dead crewmembers. Hasenfus had his identification card from Southern Air Transport and another from the El Salvador military, listing him as a U.S. Advisor. Further, Hasenfus admitted he was working for the CIA.

### **Competing Factors in Iran-Contra Arms Sales: Richard Secord and Oliver North**

There seemed to be two competing factions for the arms sales within President Reagan's secret initiatives to the Iranians and the Contras; the tentacles of NSC's Richard Secord and Oliver North's Enterprise operations. Both men had the tremendous resources of the U.S. government behind their illegal business activities. Secord extorted huge profits from weapons sales to both the Iranians and the very forces he was supposed to be supporting, the Contras. This information came to light in March 1985 when General John Singlaub located an arms dealer who could obtain weapons manufactured in the Soviet Eastern Bloc.

Sources and operatives for the FBINYO's Hungarian & Romanian FCI squad notified their handlers about these secret negotiations. SA Owen Murray felt besieged, being hounded by his squad supervisor while attending endless meetings and interviews with his Hungarian operatives. To protect itself, the CIA made even more frequent visits to Murray's office seeking to discover whatever knowledge the FBI had on the CIA's unlawful arms sales.

The squad supervisor had to answer to his boss, the SAC of the FCI Soviet Satellite Division; the SAC answered to the Assistant Director in charge

of the FBINYO; and the ADIC answered to FBIHQ's ADIC Oliver "Buck" Revell. This bureaucracy hindered effective investigations.

North managed to quell FBI investigations by contacting Buck Revell, perhaps threateningly, advising Revell of President Reagan's instructions.

The strings of lackluster and powerless FBI directors who succeeded the temperamental Hoover only kept control with the CIA. It seemed that the people inside the CIA's Covert Operations Section "wagged the dog." FBI directors had become impotent. Hoover had given up responsibility and control of overseas intelligence to the CIA and there was little that the straight-laced directors who succeeded him could do. A duplicate government was operating outside the normal and duly appointed offices departments and agencies. FBI Directors were ignoring the illegal operations involving the CIA and those orchestrated by senior officials in Presidents Reagan and Bush cabinets.

Although North lied to Congress, the American public was led to believe that he acted for the greater interests of the United States. Secord and North manipulated government agencies and employees to their benefit. By invoking presidential approval, dedicated government people were sacrificed.

### **General Singlaub & The Hungarian Connection**

A former OSS veteran, Singlaub had voluntarily retired in 1978 from the Army after serving in World War II, Korea and Vietnam. During the Korean War, Singlaub was a CIA Deputy Chief-of-Station. In the Vietnam War, between 1966 to 1968, Singlaub commanded the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam's Special Operating Group (MACV-SOG).

During Taus' first tour of duty in Vietnam, he was assigned to the Armed Forces Courier Service (ARFCOS) and attached to the MACV Command. ARFCOS' worldwide classified delivery system was directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington D.C. Taus had met Singlaub on several occasions. On one occasion, Taus questioned whether classified deliveries were necessary given the heavier workload created during the Tet Offensive.

Singlaub was adamant that such deliveries were necessary, understanding that the ARFCOS Station, which Taus was assigned to, had already lost two Lieutenants. Singlaub was a dedicated soldier, but there was a downside to him. He was accused of profiteering during the CIA's drug-trafficking activities in Vietnam. Being a staunch anti-communist advocate, it is not inconceivable that Singlaub used whatever means he had at his disposal to secure the ends he wanted.

Singlaub's retirement was precipitated when he openly criticized President Jimmy Carter during congressional hearings over Carter's intentions to withdraw U.S. troops from Korea. That argument later proved to be correct when Carter changed his mind on the issue. Thereafter, Singlaub became a military consultant.

By 1980, Singlaub was recruiting military personnel to train the El Salvadoran Army and had briefed NSC staffer Oliver North on anti-guerrilla operations. Soon Singlaub became a consultant for North. He dealt with GeoMiliTech Consultants Corporation, which handled weapons shipments

to the Contras. Singlaub negotiated weapons sales to the Contras at a substantial savings over the North-Secord deal.

Early on, Singlaub became an indispensable part of North's Project Democracy, soliciting funds for the Contras. As Singlaub's leadership and power grew, a growing resentment was created between Singlaub and his rival fund-raisers, Secord and North.

Singlaub would later be blamed for the downing of the Hasenfus flight by Oliver North's Enterprise operation. U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Elliot Abrams, Oliver North and Nestor Sanchez (from the Pentagon's Central American Section), told the media that Singlaub organized the Hasenfus flight. Upon hearing of this ploy, Singlaub was infuriated and bitterly denied it.

The FBINYO's Hungarian FCI squad had been alerted in early 1985 that weapons sales and shipments would be originating from Hungary and going to Central America. In April 1985, the FBINYO's Cuban squad, which included the entire Caribbean area, reported that the Honduran government was upset about an East Asian shipment of weapons to the Contras that arrived at Tegucigalpa and was inspected by Honduran officials. Later in July, another shipment arrived. This time the shipment was from Hungary. In both cases, the Honduran Government was not concerned over any international restrictions. Rather it was upset at the U.S. because it had provided better weapons for the Contra than what was provided to the Honduran Army.

Flustered and nearly paralyzed by the information flowing across his desk, SA Murray asked Taus if he heard about any Romanian weapons shipments. When Murray brought up Singlaub's name, Taus informed Murray about his encounter in Vietnam with Singlaub. It seemed to loosen up Murray who then took Taus into his confidence, removing some of the stifling compartmentalization that was strangling their investigations. The details of the Hungarian Technoimpex firm's involvement with the Contra became apparent to Taus.

There was another reason Murray was candid with Taus. He needed Taus' aviation expertise. Murray knew Taus had been on secretive Latin American missions before he joined the FBI. He learned this from another FBI Agent who accompanied Taus on those flights: SA Greg Lawson. Now Taus was on Lawson's old FBI squad. Lawson had left the FBI during the mid-1970s to work for another government agency where his only duty was flying. Both agents were aware that the CIA was committing serious violations of U.S. laws.

Murray noted there were several ethnic groups at each other's throats among Taus' Romanian émigré community in the United States. World War II hatreds and alliances contributed their age-old animosities. There were several murders in Canada among the Romanians. Murray provided Taus an insight as he spoke about a Canadian firm in Toronto called Barcorp, which was a Hungarian machine tool trading company that imported Communist Eastern Bloc equipment.

Monitored by the CIA, Barcorp imported Eastern Bloc weapons. Technoimpex, the Hungarian trading company, had a plant near Mexico City. Murray told Taus, he believed the CIA was more entrenched in the Canadian firm, but as Canadian government pressures intensified, Mexico appeared safer for the CIA unlawful business operations.

The CIA was working with the Hungarians and wanted to make a profit, since there was a lucrative market for weapons in Latin America. "What about drug-trafficking," Taus asked. Murray covered his ears, stating he had enough problems to handle. "That's a job for your former criminal division agents to handle!"

"Our investigations are futile," Taus responded. "We were being stymied by FBIHQs, and the US attorney's offices refused to issue subpoenas. "The Bureau seems to be helping the CIA get away with their crimes," Taus added. Murray affirmed, "Some of us here are doing just that," while cautioning Taus, "Don't go to the Cuban squad for assistance!"

### **The Drug Suppliers**

The groundwork had been done some time ago for the drug trafficking operations. Two of the three main drug suppliers were cooperating with CIA authorities. Drugs flowed freely from Asia's Golden Triangle and from the Middle East's Golden Crescent. The CIA had numerous shell companies, proprietary airlines, ships and land transportation, to get products to market. CIA eliminated some of the competition, as demonstrated by the Pizza Connection cases involving the Sicilian Mafia faction. (The CIA had left it to the FBI to bring down this Mafia organization.)

The U.S. would support a counter-force to the cartel, propping up the besieged Columbian right-wing officials. The U.S. would also interdict their drug delivery routes, starting a civil war in the region. The war in Central America could be blamed on an old ideal used in Southeast Asia: the Domino Theory. It implied that struggling democracies would fall to communism, one after the other. A fact disputed by the continuing presence of communist Cuba in the Americas and the fall of Saigon in Southeast Asia.

The Contra War effort was directed and funded by the NSA and CIA. The ideals of freedom and democratic governments were never a CIA objective. Oligarchs controlled Central American countries.

For more than three decades (1970-2005), the CIA claimed that rogue groups of its operatives engaged in drug trafficking for their personal gains. Long lists of private and contract agents working for the CIA would be accused by the CIA of transporting and selling narcotics. It was not that simple. The huge amounts of drugs coming into the U.S. were sanctioned by a corrupt group inside the U.S. Government. If individual CIA contract agents and operatives did engage in such drug-trafficking, it was encouraged by the CIA, if for no other reason than to deflect attention away from the CIA's own larger scale operations.

When the CIA found it necessary, their own people would be arrested. Operatives and agents like Barry Seal, Terry Reed, and Jack Terrell were accused of such activities. Government investigators who tried to report the

truth, whether FBI, DEA, INS, or Customs, would be stopped one way or another.



## The Hunt For Red October

In October 1984, Taus was assigned to the Foreign Counter-intelligence Division (FCI) at the FBI's New York Field Office. His squad assignment involved handling Soviet Satellite Eastern Bloc countries, particularly Romania and Hungary. This assignment was one of many attributed to a major intelligence crisis involving East-West I. It was also based upon the increased interest in the leads generated by CIA activities in Freeport. An agent assigned to that squad had been mistakenly using the Freeport CIA station chief as an FBI informant, with the CIA supplying misinformation to the Bureau's FCI division.

### **David Taus, FBINYO Personnel Analyst**

"Hey Pop! You never told me you were being transferred to FCI." David Taus was hired by the FBI in 1983 to work as a support clerk in the New York Field Office. He quickly showed his talents and intelligence and was promoted to the position of a Personnel Analyst. David's new position required him to assess higher GS (government Service) grades to determine whether such positions were necessary.

Though he did not know the particulars of his father's Freeport case, David knew that Richard was working on an important case.

Friday night was a convenient time for Richard's FBI squad supervisor, SSA R. Lindley DeVecchio, to be away for the weekend. The Bureau usually waited for the weekends or holidays to spring surprises. Nonetheless, Richard called DeVecchio at his home and asked for an explanation.

DeVecchio muttered that it had something to do with the need for more experienced agents on the FCI Division. The truth was probably that the Freeport Castle Securities case was creating problems for the Bureau and some powerful politicians.

However, that transfer still allowed Taus to work the Freeport case since the Freeport CIA Chief of Station, Dan Priscu, was an FCI informant assigned to the squad where Taus would be assigned. The FBINYO two major divisions, Criminal and FCI, had separate cases on Castle Securities criminal and international activities.

FBI agent Roderick Walls had handled Dan Priscu as an informant on Romanian matters, not knowing that he was a CIA station chief. Priscu gave Walls false information that nullified several of the FBI's investigations.

Taus had discovered the CIA connection to Mafia associates, along with various criminal operations involving the CIA in Freeport. Because of the sensitive nature of the case the Bureau decided to transfer Taus' case from its Criminal Division to the FCI Division.

A large number of FBI agents were transferred from the Criminal Division to the FCI Division as the Bureau reacted to an international espionage caper accomplished by the Soviet Union. Restricted and classified U.S. and Japanese computer technology was being stolen.

Another agent on Taus' FCI squad was Owen Murray. By 1985, Murray was not convinced that Northwest Technologies and Toshiba had innocently or selfishly sold computer secrets to the Soviets. Murray was concerned that Oliver North was a U.S. Marine Corps officer and a new staffer with the NSC, and not familiar with Hungarian or Soviet espionage. Murray wondered why regular CIA agents, who normally handled Hungarian affairs, were not involved. Taus wanted to know why an NSC staffer would not truthfully identify himself to FBI Agent Edwin Enright, the FBI Oklahoma City Field Office agent who worked for SAC Oliver "Buck" Revell.

The FCI squad placed a higher priority on its Hungarian cases than upon its Romanian cases, although the objective of FCI agents was the same. Case information was not shared by agents on the same squad. The Hungarian and Romanian FCI squad was divided into two camps working their own cases. There was no explanation why these two Eastern Bloc countries were combined on one FCI squad. Six to eight agents were assigned to each country's cases. Seldom were there any conferences between the two groups, eliminating the opportunity to coordinate information.

During the few times that the two groups met, discussions never centered on any particular cases. Usually the squad supervisor reminded his agents of mundane office procedures, scheduled file reviews and other routine matters, such as the maintenance of Bureau cars, proper completion of the time and attendance cards. No single agent directed the investigations of either country's cases. When some direction was required, the supervisory special agent would call the case agent into his office cubicle and mutter in hushed tones. Further, the CIA provided the FBI with false information, while the State Department controlled any diplomatic activities. The Bureau was not free to arrest or expel offending foreign persons without approval of the State Department and the CIA.

The Hungarian government ran various trading companies. One was called Technoimpex; another was called Atlantlia, which sold imported Romanian food products. Both had their version of KGB spies posing as commercial officers.

In Canada, another Hungarian trading partner associated with Technoimpex was Barcorp of Toronto, Canada. By 1985, Technoimpex had expanded its operations across the U.S. southern border in Mexico. The company was called Cortec, S.A., located in Mexico City.



Whenever dual ownership exists with hostile foreign countries' businesses, a full field investigation is initiated by the FBI, and occasionally an alert FBI agent could sense CIA involvement in these firms. U.S. corporations doing business with these firms are often required by the government to cooperate in intelligence gathering. Such information is used by the FBI to neutralize any threat to national security, while the CIA uses information to engage in covert activities and hostile operations and the placement of CIA agents inside the company.

One reason for FBI agents not sharing information with other FBI agents was to keep CIA agents from learning about FBI information. FBI agents often work with CIA agents, and sharing information with another FBI agent could result in the CIA discovering FBI activities. FBI Agent Murray, for instance, worked Hungarian cases and often met with CIA agents in New York to discuss Technoimpex and its subsidiaries, Barcorp in Canada, and Cortec and Maquinaria International both in Mexico.

The FBI Oklahoma City Field Office had reported the activities of Technoimpex and was deceived by the CIA. In the same fashion, CIA agents in New York were deceptive and untruthful with FBI agents. CIA only wanted to know what the FBI knew without CIA information going the other way.

So little information was obtained by the FBI New York office that when Murray received a Technoimpex company catalog, which was offered to the public, Murray announced that he would simply make his FBI report based upon the statements in the company brochures.

Taus felt that his assignment to the FCI Division was an attempt to confine his investigation into illegal CIA activities. The Hungarian/Romanian squad was specifically selected because the Freeport CIA station chief was doing business with several cover firms from both countries involving illegal weapons shipments, drug trafficking and money laundering.

There was little doubt that Taus' transfer to the FCI division in October 1984 was due to his Freeport investigation uncovering CIA activities. Assignment to the FCI Division meant that Taus could be better monitored by others within the Bureau who were protective of CIA covert activities and those secretly sanctioned by White House politicians.

It became obvious to Taus that the FBI's FCI Division had been penetrated by CIA agents for the purpose of determining FBI knowledge of covert CIA activities. When Taus received his transfer to the FCI Division, he knew there would be little attention given to the Freeport case. This was partly because of the longer commute into Manhattan, a considerable distance from Freeport, Long Island.

There were several legitimate reasons used to justify Taus' transfer. Castle Security was also under investigation by the FCI Division as well as the BQMRA Criminal Division. Castle Securities President and CIA Station Chief, Dan Priscu, was an FBI FCI informant (or so the FBINYO thought). That alone would merit the case being transferred to the Manhattan office.

In early October 1984, Taus received a letter from the Department of the Army notifying him that he was scheduled for promotion to Lieutenant

Colonel. President Reagan had dramatically increased the budget of the Defense Department. This increase resulted in building up the Armed Forces.

The Army's letter stated that Taus must complete one last military program for his promotion, consisting of a one-year U.S. Army Command and General Staff College course. Reservists could finish the course in a 3-year period with 150 weekday night classes and three summer training periods with each one lasting two-weeks.

Despite the Bureau's reluctance to allow its personnel to participate in the Reserves, in 1983 the U.S. Comptroller-General issued a ruling stating that it was the law, thereby permitting participation. Taus took annual leave from his FBI job and reported to the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas on his own time and expense so as to complete the courses.

After Taus informed the school's commandant of the restrictions he was under as an FBI agent, the commandant allowed Taus to just take the tests and submit the required military term papers. It took Taus six days to do two years' work in the course. Upon completion, the commandant told him that he had finished the course in record time. By May 1986, Taus was promoted from Major to Lieutenant Colonel in the Army's Aviation Branch.

Taus, then Colonel, was assigned as a U.S. Army instructor for the Command and General Staff College courses being taught to other reservists at the U.S. Army Reserve Training Forces Command in New York City.

The final semester's studies in the course dealt with "Strategic Choke-Points in the World." The Persian Gulf was such a point, along with what the U.S. perceived as communist threats in Latin America. As Taus taught the course, he was privy to both sides, the Army's security role and the intelligence role that often instigated and precipitated various international crises for the United States.

It became clear to Taus that soldiers were being asked to sacrifice their lives for causes not related to national interests of the United States. Taus recognized that as the Communist North took over in Vietnam, in 1975, that it did not bring with it any greater threat to U.S. security.

In Taus' FBI position, privy to CIA and White House covert activities, he saw their actions as bringing on the next major crises and wars in the Middle East.

### **Performance and Informants**

The hot summer days in 1985 did not lessen the demands from Bureau Assistant Directors for more productivity by their agent personnel. The Reagan Administration was notorious for budget cutting. Every department head in Washington, except for Defense (DOD), CIA and NSC, was running scared. Congressional staffers needed more proof that the Bureau's requests for funding were not inflated. Pressure was being applied to recruit more informants, make more arrests and, overall, show better statistical results.

Another squad conference made the message abundantly clear, produce or lose your bureau car. It was not an idle threat to Taus. Then, he was not assigned a car. FBINYO agents living on Long Island had only a few bucars for their daily commutes to and from Manhattan. Using a bucar for an inves-

tigation was of secondary importance. Fortunately, some agents shared rides, for one day, their bucars might be taken away for an apparent infraction of Bureau policy.

If an agent's case was so important, then his supervisor would have assigned him a car. One could develop a decent case and ask for case funds to rent or lease a car. The alternate was to use public transportation.

Taus had just returned from taking annual leave. He spent two weeks on active duty with the U.S. Army Aviation Systems Command in St. Louis, Missouri. It was part of his Army Reserve commitment. Working on aviation contracts with the mighty aircraft corporations, then Major Taus was given a new car rental by the Army along with other accouterments to accomplish his duties. President Reagan made sure that national defense was a priority and that the people who serve were given the tools they needed to do the job. Returning to the FBINYO, Taus was disappointed he had to take annual leave to do his Reserve duties. Other federal agencies granted employees paid military leave.

"I have five informants already and no assigned car," gripped Taus. "Is this message meant for me?" Having listened to SSA Groves pontificate about getting more informants, Taus was sarcastic for good reason. Groves had bucars assigned to agents who had no informants. Taus would have pursued his demands for a vehicle, but he knew Groves was denying him the car because his Freeport investigation had unearthed a grave filled with skeletons traceable to the CIA, and now the FBI. It was all part of ADIC Oliver "Buck" Revell's intention to stymie Taus' investigation into the Iran-gate scandal.

It was also apparent to Groves that his demands were unfair as far as Taus was concerned, so Groves decided to back-off. "Get another informant and I'll get you a car. Rich." Groves was well aware Taus was already over-assigned. By tomorrow, I'll have another informant, but I really cannot handle these cases without a car.

The conference ended, filled with the normal recriminations and minor administrative announcements. SA Ron Walls asked Taus if he were going uptown, meaning the 92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y. The two had a fierce competition for bragging rights after their racquetball matches. "You heard what was said in there, Ron. I've got to get another informant. It's ridiculous trying to get around without a car."

Walls did not have to worry. He had a bucar and two informants. Walls was also a slave to his daily fitness workout. He wanted a match today and Taus held the month's bragging rights. Walls wanted a rematch. Besides, Taus looked tired, an easy prey for Walls.

"Tell you what I'm going to do," Walls could have been a used car salesman. "I'll give you Dan Priscu, my old informant. Your Freeport case may be resurrected. After all, you've been following this guy for so many years. It never made any sense to me why Groves did not reassign Priscu to you in the first place. Anyway, I moved to New Jersey. It's too much trouble trying to drive out to Long Island and meet this guy. I'm sure Groves will go along with the reassignment." (This was how Taus got Priscu as an infor-

mant back in 1985.)

### Castle Securities and the CIA

**I**t was time for a meeting with CIA Station Chief Dan Priscu. His FBI file looked authentic with letters dating back to 1953 from the CIA and other government agencies, including references to World War II, a biography and records that he was born in Wisconsin. One letter from the CIA claimed he was their operative for a time. Another CIA letter dismissed him, saying he was an unreliable informant.

Although the CIA comment on his reliability should have been sufficient to close his file, it was left open and, in fact, he was still supplying the Bureau with information for over two decades. A careful reading of his file showed his information was misleading. Priscu was giving the FBI misinformation that appeared to be authentic which FBI case agents were pleased to receive. Had the FBI gone directly to the CIA with some probing questions on Priscu, his I may have been exposed, as well as the reasons for his actions.

Given the usual jealousies between agencies, the FBI and CIA had always clashed. To complicate matters, CIA's covert operations often employed criminal elements and organizations, resulting in their own agents and activities becoming the subject of FBI investigations.

Initially, Taus thought Priscu and his Freeport operation would be disclosed to him by the CIA, or that Priscu would tell Taus that Castle was a CIA operation. This kind of explanation would cause legal problems since the CIA operation in Freeport consisted of illegal activities.

Taus received the case file on Priscu late in 1984, which Taus had reviewed earlier when the case was assigned to Roderick Walls. Now that Priscu was officially Taus' case, Priscu was worked as an FBI informant. Unlike Walls, Taus decided Priscu had to answer many questions. An interview was scheduled with Priscu while Taus met separately with some of Priscu's employees. George Hebert and David Studer were well acquainted with Taus prior to the planned interviews.

Castle Securities was located in a former Chase Manhattan Bank branch building built in the 1960s when there was sufficient personal banking business to justify it.

Before Taus was assigned to the Romanian/Hungarian FCI squad, Drexel Company had moved from its former location to nearby 60 Bedell Street. That former location was an old renovated colonial house that bordered the business section of Freeport. The entry to Drexel's offices was on the left side of the house. Some nearby residents thought Drexel was a law firm. Castle's new location on Merrick Road provided a higher visibility and greater safety due to the large bank vault left behind by Chase.

Few people approached Castle for any of their advertised business services; the advertising was limited to posters in the front windows describing, "Investments Services; Securities and Portfolio Management; Stocks and Bonds." Castle's name didn't even appear on the building. Venetian blinds prevented anyone from looking inside. It was a perfect cover for a CIA station.

Priscu's office occupied a partitioned area directly by the store's front window. Opaque Plexiglas and steel counters divided the lobby area, concealing the huge vault located in the rear. The structure was a single story building with a double height ceiling rising some 15 feet high. There was a large basement and vault downstairs for safety deposit boxes and other secured storage areas.

When occasional investors ventured into Castle they would be well treated. The CIA station did not want any dissatisfied customers who could create a scene. Anyone who did use Castle did not have enough big money to be swindled. Castle was dealing with millions through shell and dummy corporations and unsecured financial transactions and instruments. The few legitimate customers Castle had, only added to their cover.

Castle's parking lot was never filled; diner patrons from the adjacent restaurant used it. Castle's employees, its truck with a plumbing label, and several cars with hidden radio antennas, used the Castle parking lot. The ones with hidden antennas belonged to Priscu, Hebert, Studer and Kattke, although they were registered in other names. The charcoal colored truck was registered to a fictitious plumbing company and also had a sophisticated hidden antenna.

Taus arrived at the Freeport office to question Priscu. Priscu, at 5'8" tall, resembled a shorter version of the former deputy director of the CIA, James Jesus Angleton, who Taus met at CIA Headquarters in Langley in the mid-1970s. In his late sixties, Priscu was seated behind his desk, puffing on a curved tobacco pipe. His office had bookshelves exhibiting several bogus commercial products that Priscu used as a subterfuge for engaging in commerce with Soviet Eastern Bloc countries. Photographs and plaques filed the walls, and an American flag and its pole stood against the wall behind Priscu's desk.

Taus questioned Priscu about his business activities with Romania, to which Priscu falsely told Taus he was going into a bottled-water importation business with the Romanian government. A blue-colored liter soda bottle, with a label indicating it contained mountain water, sat on a table.

Priscu explained his proposed transactions with the Romanian authorities, and made reference to the desire for more business by the Romanian

Embassy and commercial offices on 38<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan.

Taus never discovered any telephonic communications from the FBI monitoring audiotapes between the Romanian Embassy and Castle. There were no discussions about any bottled water business according to the FBI Romanian translators. Taus knew three of the Romanian linguists hired as translators by the FBI New York office, who hated their former government, and never said there was any business between Castle and Romania.

Priscu bluffed his way through the interview, recounting his past life in Wisconsin and his service to the country in World War II. He had ample proof to show he was a war correspondent for the Allies. There were old photographs and yellowed newspaper clippings in picture frames on his office walls. Several pictures were of Edward R. Murrow, Robert Trout, a young Walter Cronkite and Dan Priscu, taken in London during the early 1940s. It was authentic from all appearances. Priscu was also a journalist.

His employer in those years was not the United Press or the Associated Press International, UPI, or API; his employer was the Office of Strategic Services, OSS, and the forerunner to the CIA.

The conversation was too cordial and going nowhere. Taus decided to prod Priscu, telling him his blue bottle Romanian water looked like Windex, a window cleaning solution. Priscu puffed more vigorously on his pipe, knowing Taus wanted to discuss Castle's real business. Priscu could not identify any of the Romania Embassy officials or any from the Romanian commercial office co-located in the same building. Further, Priscu's alleged knowledge of his parent's motherland was lacking. Taus asked him questions about Bucharest, the capital; its president, Nicolae Ceausescu, and even the Romas—the Romanian Gypsies.

Priscu was unfamiliar with the Arcul de Triumf, a noteworthy Bucharest monument that resembled Paris' Arc de Triomphe. Finally, when Priscu claimed he was a real Romanian-American, Taus said "Du-te dracului!" It prompted a smile from Priscu who also did not know any Romanian language. It meant, "Go to the devil!"

To relieve the pressure, Priscu asked Taus about Castle's associates, saying he understood Taus knew several members of Priscu's firm. George Hebert had informed Priscu a few years ago about his college acquaintance with Taus. Hebert and David Studer knew Taus from the Freeport Sports Club. Pressing his desk intercom, Priscu summoned Hebert and Studer. Taus acted surprised seeing them and said he did not know they worked for Castle.

Standing, Studer nervously dragged on his cigarette and shook hands with Taus, while Hebert grinned and wiped perspiration from his face, trying to get a word in edgewise. It was typical behavior from Hebert when he was hiding something. It received an apology from Priscu who said Hebert was overly enthusiastic and eager to begin new business dealings.

This was the George Hebert who Taus remembered from Pennsylvania Military College. As a cadet, Hebert did not fit into his gray uniform very well. For the four years at the Academy, Hebert never advanced in cadet rank and he had not changed after twenty years. He was still talkative, tell-

ing tales and exaggerating things.

Upon graduation from Pennsylvania Military College, a cadet receives a commission as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army and a college degree, but Hebert never joined the military and therefore never received a commission—which was the main purpose of spending four years enduring the rigors of a cadet.

When Taus asked him about his military experience, Hebert quickly changed the subject, saying he had some items to show Taus. He left the office to retrieve them. Meanwhile, Studer kept smoking and smiling. His relationship with Taus came from the enrollment of his two youngsters in the Freeport soccer program.

Priscu sat back as Hebert returned with an armful of company brochures. It was clear that Hebert had rehearsed the scene, handing Taus the brochures and explaining Castle's business. He spoke about the many corporate ventures that Castle had assembled. Most of the brochures were Castle's prospectus on corporations throughout the country, and virtually unknown entities. When Taus asked Hebert specifically about one company, Hebert was at a loss to describe the products or services it offered. Taus knew the brochures dealt with shell or dummy corporations, companies that existed only on paper with no stock value. They were designed to cover-up a paper trail.

It was 5:45 p.m. when Taus arrived at Castle and the conversations lasted until 9 p.m. Hebert had admitted Castle was heavily involved with the CIA, but only in an unofficial capacity. He placed a comic book into Taus' hands, which looked like a regular Superman comic magazine. But its message was quite different. It concerned the invasion of Grenada and the need for the United States to free the people of that island nation. Taus looked toward Priscu for an explanation.

Priscu said Hebert acquired it from a CIA printing company in Brooklyn. Hebert said the comics were distributed to Grenadines after the U.S. invasion. He told about engaging foreign diplomats and his contacts with foreign heads of states.

Alone, without another FBI agent, Taus decided not to press the issues. They were talking about violations of U.S. laws. There would be time enough in other interviews to cover such complicated matters. Taus returned to the narrower issues of trade with Romania. He knew they were aware of his investigation into Castle.

Since Taus had shifted gears, the CIA became increasingly concerned, since they were unsure about the direction of Taus' investigation. Priscu, Studer and Hebert were afraid Taus could be preparing for a federal indictment against Castle and its illegal operations.

It became Priscu's turn to change the direction of Taus' interrogation. Priscu commented on Castle's structure, "We're a diversified capital investment corporation. We create financial packages for small businesses, capitalize them, lend them money and so forth. We can arrange business transactions with many overseas companies."

His explanation fell short, Taus felt, far shorter than he initially realized.



Disturbing for Taus was the metamorphose of Priscu from a liberal journalist to a conservative corporation chairman. Taus remained dubious about this chameleon's story and questioned Priscu about his past career.

As Priscu responded, his true feelings emerged. "Son, I'm in my golden years of life now. I've done what I wanted to in this world. Luck has always followed me. Some things I've done, I'm not proud of. We all have some regrets. I admit my career goals have changed."

Taus had to agree with him, "I'd say so! From a liberal reporter to a right-wing entrepreneur." Priscu concurred, nodding his head and puffing his pipe.

Then Priscu mentioned, "The Second World War was a difficult period for me. History was written the way the Western Powers wanted. It always has been that way. The other sides have their own versions. Both the West and the East use propaganda to embellish their views."

Taus asked him about trips aboard, "I noted that you have visited East Germany after the war. In fact, on many occasions. May I ask you what business you had there?" Tensing slightly, Priscu drew several deep drags on his overheated pipe and explained as he exhaled, "I wanted to see all of Germany and get the other side's perception of history."

"What did you learn?" Taus persisted, wondering where Priscu's loyalties rested.

"Western history has a politically distorted view of the world compared to the facts shown by eastern countries."

"You mean East Germany and Russia?" Taus asked. "Yes, quite so," replied Priscu who supplied Taus with several examples.

"Your feelings run contrary to the successes you have had as an American citizen and businessman," Taus noted. "When did you make this transition from a reporter to the work you are doing today?"

"Over a period of time, starting after Senator Joseph McCarthy's communist purges in the early 1950s."

Hebert could be patient no longer as he sat. He had lit up a large cigar. Hebert turned to Studer and asked, "Weren't you in East Germany last week?" Studer was nervous as he smoked his cigarette.

The secretary entered Priscu's office, apologizing for the interruption. She went over to Studer to inform him that two men arrived. Then, Studer approached Priscu's desk and scribbled something on a desk pad. Priscu said, "I'll talk to you later."

While this occurred, Taus looked through the open office door and saw the two Hispanic men who had escorted Studer's children at the sports program. Taus asked Studer, "By the way, Mr. Studer who are those two fellows, the Black and the Hispanic? Aren't they the fellows who picked up your children at the gym?" Studer's eyes looked towards Priscu, then Studer replied, "They work for us, on the side."

"What type of side work," asked Taus? Another glance at Priscu by Studer, and a nod from Priscu, evidently permitted Studer to proceed with an explanation, "Oh, they just do some landscaping for a sideline business I have."

Deciding the responses were all contrived and that he had nothing to lose, Taus pursued Studer who was preparing to leave. "What landscaping business?" The truck your two men used had an electrical company sign on it along with electrical supplies inside. There is also a plumbing truck in your parking lot."

Trying to depart, Studer could only drag on his cigarette butt. He gritted his teeth, as he tasted the burning filter tip. "Yeah! Well, er...They do that too." Again Studer eyed Priscu for a cue.

They are all lying, thought Taus as he decided to show that he believed their stories. "Okay, I'm sorry for troubling you. Have a good evening, Dave."

When Studer departed, Hebert decided to open-up a little. "We also have extensive accounts and connections in Latin America." Hebert referred to the prospecti and pamphlets he had handed to Taus earlier.

Priscu again apologized for Hebert, saying Hebert was prone to exaggeration. "George is a super-patriot. He gets himself into some politically sensitive situations. Take what he says with a grain of salt."

Hebert grabbed some of the booklets that were on top of Priscu's desk. As he did, Priscu's old coffee cup was knocked over, spilling its cold contents on his desk. Hebert caught the falling cup only to succeed in drowning his newly lit cigar in the coffee. "Dammit, that was a real Cuban cigar!"

"Haste makes waste, George," advised Priscu who showed a paternal instinct for his subordinates. Always the investigator, Taus asked Hebert, "Where did you get the Cuban cigars?"

After mopping up the spill, Hebert spoke about Castle's worldwide interests. Priscu added a caution, "Now George, let's not get carried away and say things we'll change later." It was obvious that Hebert was too impulsive. "Don't worry, Dan. The FBI doesn't listen to me. Rich was my classmate from the Military Academy. He's the only one that listens."

It was interesting to note that Hebert had apparently spoken to other FBI agents. Taus wanted to know their names. Carmine Rivera and his boss," replied Hebert, with Priscu then interjecting. "George, they are simply keeping you out of trouble. You say too much."

"Oh come on! We cannot let the communists take over the Western Hemisphere too. I'm doing what every red-blooded American should do. If my country needs me, I'll go. "Where have you been?" Taus felt Hebert would shed more light on Castle's overseas empire.

"When?" Hebert had been many places. "I've gone to Central America. The same places you visited." Taus was shocked that Hebert had mentioned the trips in the presence of Priscu. The eye-to-eye contact between Hebert and Taus broke off as each realized a sensitive subject might have been exposed. It may have been intended as a casual remark. Again, Taus asked Hebert what countries he had visited and what was the nature of his business.

"The trips were part of our weapons transactions. Honduras, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Nicaragua." A cold glance from Priscu ended Hebert's recall. Looking at the booklets Hebert handed him, Taus asked about them.

Hebert noted, "These are the companies we create and capitalize. I just wanted to show you some prospectus which we prepare for new companies."

Scanning the literature, Taus noted one particular prospectus on Weaver International Arms Imports. It had pictures of the Chinese AK-47 assault rifles and other armaments. "This looks like heavy stuff," Taus said. "Tell me about this firm."

Hebert obliged, saying it was a worldwide retailer of firearms, importing mainly from Red China. He added that the company also manufactured its own line of weaponry.

"What was the purpose of these arms being sent to Central America? Are you arming a country's military or rebel forces?" Hebert was silent and searched for an answer from Priscu for the first time.

Taking his pipe out of his mouth, Priscu tapped it in his ashtray and said, "Well, you can ask Weaver's chief executive officer. His number is listed in the booklet. We don't tell our clients how to handle their day-to-day transactions."

The reply did not sit well with Taus. "If you prepare their financial papers and set-up their capital structure, then you are telling your clients what they can and cannot do."

The discussion was very delicate now. Taus knew Castle's business involved criminal operations and activities. Since both Priscu and Hebert were edgy and quiet, Taus decided it best to end his questions. It had been a long interview. Taus needed to speak to Rivera and his supervisor to see what they knew. As he shifted gears, Taus finished the meeting on a friendly basis. Priscu and Hebert were glad it was over.

The Annual Business Report for Weaver Arms Corporation for the year 1987 showed the company as a California corporation with corporate offices at 6265 Greenwich Drive, Suite 201, San Diego, California. The report stated that since its inception on November 8, 1982, the company has been engaged in the development of a series of semi-automatic and fully automatic weapons designed for domestic, police and military markets.



### Rivalries Between Intelligence Services

For more than two decades Karl Koecher's name would be associated with U.S. intelligence operations, and in most cases, only as a post-script. Koecher was a Czechoslovakian Intelligence Service officer who operated in New York City. The CIA claimed Koecher worked at their Langley Headquarters in McLean, Virginia. Koecher's name came up in several prominent and notorious investigations handled by Taus. Two cases involved informants: the CIA's Freeport K-team, linked with the Iran-Contra Arms Initiative Affair and the Iraqi-US agriculture loan scandal involving BCCI and the Middle Eastern and European drug-trafficking route.

There was a third foreign law enforcement case concerning the tragic deaths of two famous persons: Princes Diana and Dodi al-Fayed. A very sinister connection existed between the subjects in Taus' Freeport investigations during the 1980s, and Mohamed al-Fayed, the father of Emad El Din "Dodi" al-Fayed. Karl Koecher's name would appear in each case.

Soviet Satellite Eastern Bloc countries entered into the weapons shipments negotiated by the Iran Contra Arms Initiative. Among those countries were Hungary, Romania and Czechoslovakia. There were several other countries that assisted. These countries included such diverse places as Israel and Mexico. FBI agents handled cases involving these countries in the FBI's New York Field Office.

Different intelligence agencies within the United States failed to cooperate and harbored jealous feelings towards each other. One would think, there should have been better cooperation, at least within the same federal agency and especially within the FBI. Such was not the case.

Between compartmentalization, interdivisional jealousies and plain mismanagement, an FBI agent could be quite unaware of the investigations being conducted by his fellow squad agents. Making matters worse, half of the FBI squads handled two or more countries believed hostile to U.S. policies. The Supervisory Special Agent (SSA) in charge of the squad had to be diligent just to insure his squad was informed about their taskings.

Taus often said that the Bureau was technologically unsophisticated, and that those politicians in power never give the Bureau the funding it needed

to do its job properly. The CIA was light-years ahead in the utilization of high technology. Their funding came from a secretive congressional appropriation and more nefarious funding and donations. This was partially uncovered with the abortive investigations into the Irangate and Iraqgate scandals. The CIA's name surfaced repeatedly in the bilking of the U.S. Savings & Loans Association debacle. An endless and illicit flow of funds came into the CIA to support its overt and covert operations.

Meanwhile, FBI budget planners had to plead with members of Congress for additional monies for law enforcement investigations, some of it directed to corrupt politicians. Members of Congress didn't need the prying eyes of a sophisticated law enforcement agency looking into their conduct, particularly fund-raising, especially after the blackmail tactics employed against politicians by the late J. Edgar Hoover.

The Bureau was suffering from leadership problems and its own charter to enforce violations of federal laws. While the CIA used the resources of the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency and a host of other intelligence gathering organizations worldwide, the 56 FBI Field Offices had difficulty communicating with each other for technological reasons, along with internal jealousies and politics.

Competition between squads in one office became even more acute between FBI offices when they vied for Bureau approval. Bureau mismanagement was responsible for fostering these counter-productive efforts. Insofar as obtaining information from private organizations, companies, or other federal and state agencies, the FBI was using stone tablets and chisels while the CIA was on an Internet of its own creation. Karl Koecher would capitalize on the Bureau's problems.

### **Karl Koecher, Soviet Intelligence Officer**

Karl Koecher was an acquaintance of Taus in Manhattan. In 1985, Koecher was exchanged for a Jewish dissident at Checkpoint Charlie in West Berlin. The year before, he was arrested in Manhattan by special agents from the FBI's Foreign Counter Intelligence Division for ostensibly being a Soviet spy. The very fact he was exchanged in 1985 with the Soviets indicated his value to both sides. Taus wondered if Koecher was a double agent.

Taus had met Karl Koecher in 1980 when Taus first joined the 92<sup>nd</sup> Street YMHA located in Manhattan on Lexington Avenue at the corner of 92<sup>nd</sup> Street. The Jewish "Y" is more than just an athletic and youth hostel organization. It hosts some of the finest cultural and artistic shows in the City, having musical and dramatic performances by world renown singers, musicians, and other artists in its lavishly decorated theater.

Several times a week, Koecher frequented the 92<sup>nd</sup> "Y" working out on the weight equipment and running laps on the overhead track surrounding the men's basketball court. At 5'11" Koecher was sinewy, in his forties and sported a full mustache. He was very health conscious and put his time to good use at the gymnasium. He kept to himself and never bothered anyone.

The name given to a section of the Y was "The Businessmen's Health Club," and occupied half of the third floor with access to all the athletic fa-

cilities. The club within the Y had its own locker room, showers, saunas, steam room and lounge areas. With less than 50 members who frequented the club daily, it was easy to become acquainted with everyone. A variety of persons with different backgrounds came to the "Y" to keep in shape. Actors and comedians, including Peter Boyle and Jerry Stiller, businessmen, professionals, retirees and FBI agents worked out at the "Y."

The fact FBI agents used the YMHA was not surprising. Before the FBI relocated to downtown Manhattan in the newly constructed Jacob Javits Federal Office Building, the FBI office was located at 69<sup>th</sup> Street on the Eastside. The nearest gym or health club to the old FBI Office was at 92<sup>nd</sup> Street, and the "Y" offered the agents a discount. When the FBI moved downtown, some agents kept their memberships due to the discounted membership they received.

It was impossible for an FBI agent to disguise himself to a knowing eye at the "Y." The credential case and pistol were dead giveaways in the locker room. Often agents discussed their casual unclassified business; and, there was always the old retiree who greeted them with an expression such as "How's the G-Men doing today?"

It did not take long for Koecher and Taus to introduce themselves to each other. Soon pleasantries were exchanged every time they met. Both men discovered they had similar backgrounds, military officers and in the intelligence game. But each worked for a different country.

Koecher was known by the FBI's New York FCI division handling Soviet Eastern Bloc countries. He was sharp enough to know that his intelligence activities were being monitored and neutralized. But it was not an attempt on his part to gain information from an FBI agent that he found himself talking with Taus; it was just initiated by social courtesies. From those insignificant conversations, both men became more acquainted.

Unlike Taus, Koecher's military experience in the Czechoslovakian Army was only as a junior grade officer, never rising above the rank of captain, with no senior grade assignments. Koecher's subsequent promotions would be titular only; rewards for his intelligence work. In some ways, Soviet promotions paralleled the U.S. Armed Services for men in the NSA, DIA and CIA, but not for any reservists in the Bureau.

Going back to the days of J. Edgar Hoover's early reign in the Bureau, FBI agents had to be totally dedicated to him. That meant there would be no second masters. The Bureau became a refuge for sons of FBI agents who avoided the draft in World War II by becoming agents. As key federal employees, FBI agents were exempted from the draft. Ironically these draft-dodging agents would be called upon to seek out and arrest fugitives during World War Two whose only offense was doing the same: avoiding the draft.

Times and procedures had not changed under subsequent FBI directors. The lethargic and never-changing bureaucracy never accepted an agent who could serve two masters, even if the second one was his country. Agents who wanted to continue their participation in the military Reserves had to do so on their own time, and not let the Bureau, officially, find out about it. For many, exposure of being in the military Reserves or National Guard was not

the problem as long as it did not interfere with his FBI duties, and as long as the FBI supervisor could pretend he was unaware of such participation.

To go away on active duty for two weeks or a weekend military drill, an FBI agent, who was in the Reserves, had to take annual leave, charging the absence against his vacation days. Taus used his annual leave time for just such occasions. In doing so, he advanced in rank and military experience, leaving behind any glamour associated with a career in intelligence work.

There was no glamour or romance anyway for an FBI agent living on a meager income in an expensive city. Besides, foreign counter-intelligence work involved following subjects and neutralizing their activities. An FBI agent assigned to FCI matters was following his subject's schedule, not his own agenda.

By 1983, Koecher was finding himself in the same dilemma. He knew he was being tailed and monitored and became less productive for the Czechoslovakian Intelligence Service (STB) and its master, the Soviet Intelligence Agency (KGB).

Many foreign agents became fond of life in the United States with its consumer goods, wealth, freedom and overall lifestyle. As a result, many foreign agents defected. To stop this loss, Soviet and Eastern Bloc countries would not allow an agent's family to go overseas, effectively holding them as captives in their motherland. This was not a problem for Koecher whose wife was a frequent visitor to the Czechoslovakian Embassy in New York City. The couple had no children, but they both enjoyed living in America.

Koecher's story is told in author Ronald Kessler's 1988 book, "Spy vs. Spy: Stalking Soviet Spies In America." Karl and his wife were deliberately portrayed as "swingers" in the book, leading a sexually promiscuous social lifestyle.

Author Kessler's description did not fit Koecher. If he were amoral, why did he join an athletic club that was so clearly associated with the Jewish religion? There were many other athletic facilities in New York City, especially closer to the United Nations and other areas of Soviet interests. If he was so socially depraved, why was he so meticulous with his physical conditioning and appearance? The social lifestyle described by Kessler would have physically sapped Koecher's very strength. And, if he was such an infamous spy for the Soviets, why was he so careless, if indeed, he and his wife participated in sexual orgies? Calling attention to oneself is a sure way of being sent back to the motherland, as every spy knows. Koecher liked America too much for that.

So much so that he might have been "redoubled," working for the American CIA. (See "Definitions of Agent Terms," at the end of the book.). It started to become apparent in the early 1980s, when Koecher spoke about team sports, especially soccer. Members at the 92<sup>nd</sup> "Y" knew about Taus' participation in a community youth sports program. So did Koecher. It seemed to Taus that Koecher knew even more. Some conversations initiated by Koecher, brought up the subject of sources within sports organizations. Taus recalled one conversation with Koecher that dealt with Middle Eastern terrorist who stormed the 1972 Munich Olympics, killing eleven Jewish ath-



letes. A memorial plaque on a wall in the “Y” commemorates the tragedy.

By 1984, there was a new investigation being considered and planned against United Nations diplomats and their staffs. This new case could be in jeopardy if anyone with the UN knew that Taus was an FBI agent. The Bureau planned to set up a fake cover identity on Taus in the attempt to penetrate the UN. Part of the plan was to terminate the Freeport operation which had developed information about CIA criminal operations. High-ranking U.S. government officials decided to squash Taus’ Freeport case and this was a way to do so.

A redoubled agent, such as Koecher, was always suspect. Would he again betray his handlers for a price, or for his life? Koecher was too vulnerable and not in any diplomatic position to be of any great value to the United States. As a Soviet agent, he had been neutralized. He could be exposed and arrested by the U.S. And he could be extradited or exchanged with the Soviets for a popular communist dissident. It appropriately turned out to be a Jew.

Anatoly Shcharansky, the Jewish refusenik, would be the person who the West would receive as a swap for several Soviet spies. The personnel exchange would take place in West Berlin at the Glienicke Bridge. Taus wondered if the CIA managed to infiltrate a double agent into the KGB.

### **The CIA Lebanese-Syrian Drug Route**

One thing Taus did not need was another informant. Few FBI agents had more than one good informant and Taus had five, along with many other sources. He had too many important leads to cover from his Freeport investigation into criminal activities of the CIA station. Since the new informant was offering information about CIA drug-trafficking in the Middle East, there was an excellent chance of developing new leads. Taus could not refuse an interview. The informant wanted to meet Taus at the FBI New York office.

It was early in 1985 that Irina Desceau (alias) appeared at the FBI office asking to see Taus. At the age of 29, Irina was a recent Romanian émigré who wanted to provide the FBI with sensitive information about her former country. Romania was considered a lower-priority Soviet Satellite; and, with the defection in 1978 of Lieutenant General Ion Mihai Pacepa, the Romanian Intelligence Director of the Securitate, Romania, was not considered much of a threat to the U.S. However, this low-priority rating was deliberately misleading since the investigations into many CIA operations kept tracing their origins to Romania.

The CIA Chief of Station (COS) in Freeport, Dan Priscu, claimed to be of Romanian descent, which appeared to explain why Taus was handling the case from an FCI squad. Priscu headed up a second venture in East Bayshore, Long Island. There were two CIA offices where the members of the K-team conducted their business enterprises. Extensive records existed in FBI files on Dan Priscu, some dating back to 1953. Most were bogus, dummy files provided by the CIA to mislead FBI investigators.

The Romanian influence was everywhere in U.S. politics. Another major FBI case, entitled “WedTech,” dealt with an electronics firm in the South

Bronx, which had important U.S. defense contracts. WedTech was under heavy federal investigation because of criminal charges of bribery, extortion and corruption stemming from this obscure little firm suddenly receiving multi-million dollar deals. Involved in a kickback and payoff scheme were several political figures that included U.S. Senator Alphonse D'Amato, Congressman Mario Biaggi, and other White House contacts. These men provided the small firm with very lucrative business in a field which WedTech had no track record for such products. Taus was also called upon to investigate key Romanian figures associated with WedTech.

During 1984-1988, Taus was assigned to the Foreign Counter-Intelligence Division working Soviet Eastern Bloc satellite countries. Since the late 1970s, Priscu and his company, Castle Securities, known in the 70s as Drexel, were being monitored in separate criminal cases in the FBI New York office.

Irina would be welcomed for her interview, but the stage was set for her to go through an ordeal as she started providing very valuable information. Once Irina told Taus about a drug-trafficking route that was operated by the CIA, Taus notified his supervisor. This prompted a meeting between the Supervisory Special Agent-in-Charge (SAC) of the FCI division and Taus' supervisor.

After that meeting, Taus' supervisor insisted that Irina be polygraphed to determine if she was telling the truth. Despite the timeliness of Irina's information and her consent to be administered a lie-detector test, it took several weeks before the polygraph examination was scheduled.

Various excuses were offered to Taus concerning the unusual delays. "We simply don't have enough men to administer all the testing being asked of us." Or, "Our polygraph examiner is away on another case." FBI agent Doug Fencel had not done many tests but he was familiar with Taus. They both worked the Pizza Connection case a few years earlier.

### **Doctoring the Polygraph Examination**

After Taus' efforts to get the test, Irina was subjected to several days of grueling questioning while attached to the machine. Fencel refused to allow her any breaks, with morning and afternoon sessions lasting several hours each. Older FBI agents have a rule about good informants, "Never have them polygraphed." A sure way to discredit an otherwise credible informant is to have another FBI agent, though trained as a polygrapher, examine your informant. If an informant is believed, that is, if the testing shows he or she is truthful and something happens in the future, that polygrapher will pay the consequences. It is safer to show a person is lying or, at least report that "testing results were inclusive." That's what happened to Irina.

At times during the testing, Irina cried. The things she was providing the FBI were indeed sensitive, especially to her as she revealed her most personal details. There were times during the testing that Taus rebuked Fencel for his aggressive and uncompassionate manner. Fencel told Taus he had no choice. He was instructed to do the testing in such fashion.

When Irina spoke, Taus wondered if she was seeking a lover's revenge. As Irina wept, she told about her former boyfriend, Kosmo Vordros (SP?).

When she managed to control her emotions, Fencel continued the questioning. Vordros was an employee of the U.S. Embassy in Athens, Greece. He was in his mid-thirties. Irina stated that Vordros handled the CIA drug-trafficking activities in the Mediterranean-Near East-European area. Such a statement was quite disarming to Taus' senior supervisors, but not for Taus who already knew about CIA drug-trafficking from his Freeport case.

FBI supervisors were more intent upon discrediting her by failing the polygraph test than in determining the truth. On that question, there was no ambiguity, no inductiveness. She was telling the truth. She was not seeking vengeance over a spurned romantic affair. Fencel's report claimed that the testing was inconclusive. Taus' supervisors told him to close her case. She would not be used as an informant.

Irina had sought no compensation, no favors or any other considerations. She had taken several days off of work which she could ill afford to do. She had told Taus that the United States would be her new country and she wanted a decent place to live. President Reagan's alleged "War on Drugs" was underway, and she wanted to do her part.

When Taus asked his SAC to cable the FBI Legal Attaché in Rome and contact the U.S. Embassy in Athens Greece, he was denied. Nonetheless, the SAC accepted a written draft for a cable to Rome from Taus. It can only be assumed that it was never sent since Taus received no reply or informational copy for the file. From 1985 to that fateful day in December 1988, Irina's FBI file with Taus' reports, the polygraph examination and additional information on the CIA drug-route sat in the classified "Confidential Informant File Unit (CIFU) in the FBINYO.

On December 20, 1988, the substitution of an explosive device on Pan Am Flight 103, in place of the normal drug shipment, resulted in the explosion and crash. The explosive was secreted aboard without any customs or security checks, similar to the placement of diplomatic pouches that are locked and sealed from all scrutiny.

It is interesting to note that the plastic explosive used to down Pan Am Flight 103 was manufactured in Semtin, Czechoslovakia, Karl Koecher's country.

The Romanian émigré community that Taus came to know during his investigations had a long memory. During interviews, these new immigrants wanted to avoid the sins of the past. Taus believed that Irina could still be located in Queens where there were two Romanian newspapers. One was called "Micro." Another was located in an apartment house on 42<sup>nd</sup> Street in Astoria or Jackson Heights, just a half-mile north of the FBI's Rego Park office in Queens. There was a 40-year old editor who inherited that job from her Romania father who passed away in the mid 80s. They are well known in this community. They should be able to locate Irina.

### **Terrorist Training in Czechoslovakia**

The FBI's Foreign Counter Intelligence mission is to neutralize the efforts of agents from hostile countries. These countries included the Soviet Eastern Bloc nations of Hungary, Romania and Czechoslovakia, among others. Taus' assignment in FCI was on a squad that handled both Hungary and

Romania. Any investigation into Karl Koecher's activities had to be handled on the FCI squad having responsibility for Czechoslovakia. As Taus learned, FBI agent Kenneth Geide was Koecher's case agent. Any relevant information from Taus' investigations concerning Czech matters had to be reported to that squad. There was no quid pro quo between squads in the FBI office.

An agent could easily get in trouble doing work for another squad, especially working in a compartmentalized government office.

Ilich Ramirez Sanchez, better known as Carlos the Jackal, was the most notorious terrorist in the world during the early 1980s. Carlos was connected to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine of Palestine General Command (PFLP-GC). [On December 21, 1975, Carlos raided OPEC's Vienna headquarters, kidnapping the Iranian and Saudi oil ministers and killing three other people. This was a time when Iran was a U.S. ally. Two months before, Carlos conducted another raid with less success at Paris' Orly Airport. There his team killed two French security police in a vain attempt to blowup an El Al passenger aircraft.]

Led by another terrorist, Ahmed Jibril, the PFLP-GC and other terrorist groups were being armed and trained in the Eastern Bloc countries of Czechoslovakia and Hungary. This fact has been confirmed by two high-ranking officers in the U.S. Intelligence community: National Security Council staffer Oliver North and Deputy DCI Duane "Dewey" R. Clarridge.

"The Hungarian Interior Ministry revealed in 1990 that his country had given sanctuary to Carlos and 350 of his men. The Czechs had provided training and explosives to terrorist groups, which Yugoslavia was a major base of operations for Abu Nidal." (*Under Fire*, by Oliver North with William Novak,)

The real name of Abu Nidal, Sabri al-Banna, headed the Abu Nidal Organization and was responsible for the airport attacks at the Israeli Airlines, El-AL, ticket counters at Fiumicino in Rome and Schwechat in Vienna. Nineteen people, including five Americans, were slaughtered in this terrible carnage. Libyan's President Muammar Qaddafi would hail these terrorists as heroes, a mistake he would severely regret. By the end of 1986, Abu Nidal and his organization was responsible for the deaths of three hundred and the wounding of another six hundred people according to CIA's Counter Terrorist Center.

The Czechoslovakian connection was seen even stronger in Deputy Director Duane Clarridge's book, *A Spy For All Seasons*. With the CIA's approval, Clarridge described how CIA Agent Theodore Shackley, another key player in the Irangate scandal, retired and went into business training European intelligence services in managing terrorist crises.

It is apparent that Department of State, as well as other U.S. agencies, had great difficulty with CIA infringement upon their legally mandated and chartered functions. In 1990-91, the State Department was kept in the dark about Saddam Hussein's Iraqi planned invasion of Kuwait. The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, John Kelly, testified after the surprised Iraqi invasion that CIA had not given "the State Department any indication of such an attack.

Taus described that at the FBI Academy in Quantico Virginia, new agents were told that communist intelligence officers normally had military ranks. Such was not the case in the FBI that frowned upon its employees participating in the Armed Forces Reserve Components. One new FBI agent in training at Quantico asked his instructor what to do when he meets a Soviet agent.

*Simply say hello, be polite. There is no reason to show any emotional reaction. We are professionals and we will treat them with the same respect. If the Soviet agent introduces himself to you and mentions his military rank, be sure you introduce yourself to him as having an equal or higher rank.*

Most FBI agents had no military rank at all. Koecher's checkered history with the Soviets reflected his own low rank though he claimed to be a colonel. Taus approached Koecher's FBI case agent to find out more about him.

SA Kenneth M. Geide provided Taus with an interesting briefing.

Koecher had actually defected from Czechoslovakia in 1973 and obtained employment with the CIA as a translator in their Soviet Russia division's AE/SCREEN unit. Koecher's Czechoslovakian wife, Hana, was a courier for the Soviets and received CIA documents from Karl, traveled to Europe and delivered the papers to Czech intelligence agents for cash. According to FBI Agent Geide, Koecher had been observed meeting with Czech agents in the United States. Koecher was not confronted, but precautions were taken by the CIA to reduce his exposure to classified materials.

Geide said it was the FBI's intent to arrest Koecher after he led them to other Soviet spies.

Some years later, on November 15, 1984, FBI agents took Koecher aside at a hotel in New York City to discuss his treachery. FBI wanted to use Koecher as a double agent. The FBI then routinely ordered Koecher to undergo a polygraph test, which showed Koecher being deceptive.

There was confusion between the FBI and CIA into the investigation of Koecher. The CIA wanted to use Koecher as a double agent, exactly what FBI agents proposed in November. However after Koecher attempted to leave the United States, the Bureau had a change of heart and presented the case to the Department of Justice for prosecution. Initially CIA was reluctant to prosecute Koecher, claiming he was an important agent. The question arose as to how important was a CIA translator and how reliable was the translations.

Koecher's case went to trial, a trial he could have easily won since a confession from him had been improperly obtained by the FBI. But Koecher had other plans. He deliberately insured he would be found guilty. In addition to making implicating and seemingly careless admissions while incarcerated, Koecher also degraded his attorney and stymied his defense. However, the spy Taus knew was neither careless nor arrogant. CIA personnel had tried to tell the FBI that Koecher was an important spy. Short of saying that he was more than a translator, CIA allowed the Bureau to have its way. CIA could have stopped the FBI with its federal prosecution, but reasons had to be provided which might lead to CIA's sinister roles in other investi-

gations, especially their 1984 probe into the FBI's Freeport investigation.

It could have been CIA's intention all along to have Koecher compromised in order to have him extradited back to the Soviets. The problem was, CIA could not have State Department simply declare him *persona non grata*, the usual way to get rid of a diplomat from a hostile country. Koecher was a Soviet defector. He was working for the CIA. He had to be dealt with in a criminal prosecution. The PR benefits FBI Agent Kenneth Geide and the FBI New York office received for his apprehension and prosecution were fabricated by CIA.

The CIA was now in a position to exploit Koecher's apparent double agent role. The Soviets were already under the impression that Karl and Hana were delivering documents to them. The FBI arrest confirmed Koecher's loyalty to the Soviets. He was now in a better position to be used by the CIA. In 1985, Koecher and his wife returned to Czechoslovakia. Koecher's initial questioning of Taus was ineffective and seriously opened the door on Koecher's real master and tasking.

With the cessation of the Iranian-Iraqi War and the need to bring Iran into the new order created after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Iran was being courted by the United States. Eventually, Iran was neutral as the U.S. launched attacks against Iraq. Syria even entered the Gulf War against Iraq. The U.S. could not jeopardize a friendlier relationship with these two countries.

Despite Qaddafi's rhetoric, Libya still needed the West. American oil technicians and oil-producing hardware were still being used in Libya, as opposed to the Soviet's technicians and equipment. This continued to be the case even after the U.S. bombing of Libya in 1986. Qaddafi was in a dilemma. Had he rid his country of U.S. presence and production means, he would not be able to finance the needs of his people and the Arab World. So he allowed the Americans to stay, but openly criticized the U.S. so the Arab World would not think he had entered into an alliance with America.

By 1989, U.S. officials were reluctant to accuse either Iran or Syria of involvement in the lost of Pan Am 103. These two countries were needed in the U.S. coalition that went against Iraq's Saddam Hussein.

### The United Nations Club

In early 1985, there was an increased emphasis for agents to engage in undercover operations. All agents were canvassed. Perhaps the successes of the FBINYO Criminal Division's investigations involving SAS Joseph Pistone and Ed Roth in the Pizza Connection Case, or the failures of the Foreign Counter-Intelligence, contributed to this Bureau desire to work more aggressive and clandestine operations. There was no doubt among FBI officials that the CIA could not be trusted. As much as the FBI failed to supply information to the CIA, tons of misinformation was supplied to the FBI by the CIA. Regrettably for the United States, a serious rift existed between these two agencies.

Initially it appeared to be interagency jealousies. It dealt with law enforcement. In the CIA's drive for power and control, they were violating U.S. laws. Unscrupulous CIA officers and agents, who knew the agency's bureaucratic ways and mismanagement, took advantage of their system and personally enriched themselves in the profitable CIA ventures. President Reagan masked these illegal activities with executive orders and national security directives. Dutiful FBI agents investigated violations of federal laws only to be confounded by complicity between high-level government officials and corrupt politicians.

The Freeport Sports Club was producing unexpected results, opening a Pandora's box of formerly secret covert criminal operations conducted by CIA personnel and their operatives. So impressive were the exposures and revelations that the FBI thought it would be an excellent idea to mount a similar operation against their target cases in New York, the member countries officials in the United Nations. The Freeport case had already found that the CIA was busily working at the sacrosanct United Nations. CIA K-team players, George Hebert and Kevin Kattke, were breaking into the Grenada Mission to the UN in October 1983, among other escapades. One day, SSA Patrick Groves asked Taus to step into his office cubicle to discuss the matter.

"You spend a lot of time running the Freeport operation. Can you take on another case? The SAC is pushing for more undercover operations; and, I

think you could make a decent operation out of a similar sports activity here in the city.”

Taus already knew what Groves wanted, but allowed him to expound. Without much assistance the Freeport case was headaches enough, why sacrifice himself further for another investigation unless Groves offered more support.

“The Bureau would like to target as many hostile foreign officials and their intelligence entourages as we can. Most of these people are connected to the United Nations. A sports organization geared specifically to their needs would get us into a position to know them better. We can gain valuable assessment data on each person. You have the experience in creating such an organization, like you have done in your hometown. We could organize an athletic club using soccer teams to interest these diplomats. After all, soccer is the world’s most popular sport.”

Groves wanted Taus to start a sports program for the diplomatic corps at the United Nations using the same formula as was done with the Freeport Sports Club. This time Taus would have to assume a false identity. The Bureau did not want UN members to know an FBI agent was running a social program for them. They would have surely shied away. Groves was quite aware of what he was asking Taus to do.

It took an extraordinary amount of work to get the Freeport program underway. The Club had then assumed a life of its own, and thankfully so. It kept going despite the lack of interest at times from Taus’ various FBI supervisors and FBIHQs. Senior Bureau officials wanted to duplicate the successful soccer program, but they had other reasons in mind for doing so.

If Taus did not want to close the Freeport case, which could surely backfire on fearful Bureau officials, then another tact would be used. It would be difficult indeed to assign other cases to Taus to lessen his concentration on Freeport, especially if those additional cases were not of a sufficient priority. But a similar case, aimed at the leading world organization could hardly be considered less important. Taus would have no choice but to close the Freeport case or, at a minimum, neglect it while pursuing the UN one.

Certainly it was true that some member UN countries presented threats to the national security interests of the United States. But the FBI estimated that 84% of these countries were hostile to U.S. interests seemed far-fetched.

Whether true or not, half of the FBINYO agents worked the diplomatic corps of foreign member countries and their staffs. Taus would not be able to do both investigations.

Thinking about what Groves had just mentioned, Taus wanted to avoid some obvious problems. “I don’t think that will work. Many of the diplomats would never play ball on a soccer team. They are out-of-shape. Why would they want to join an athletic club when there are other sports facilities in New York?” Groves was playing a cat-and-mouse game with Taus, waiting for Taus to put things together and say it himself. This would force Taus to be the advocate for the new program. Taus wasn’t biting.

Perhaps a little more direction was needed from Groves, “You didn’t listen to what I said; make the organization exclusively serve the diplomatic



corps. Solicit only those foreign diplomats at the United Nations. They will join just to find out what's going on." Groves offered enough. It was Taus' job to develop the idea.

"It will take a great effort to get any sports organization off the ground and running, a full-time job." Taus did not mention the fact that the Freeport investigation would suffer dramatically. Both Groves and Taus knew that, and that was what the Bureau wanted.

"We are prepared to give you help." Groves had his own ideas, "Get a sports program going for the diplomats and their staffs. I'm sure the same methods that were successful in your Freeport operation can be applied here." Groves was fully aware of the operation Taus had created in Freeport. Taus organized and operated a full soccer program. Before Groves became the FCI squad supervisor, he had heard about Taus' efforts with the soccer program. He was impressed with Taus' organization—which came from Taus' Army training.

There were several parties held at Taus' home in Freeport which Taus had invited his friends and members of the sports club and FBI agents. On these informal occasions, Groves saw the other dimensions to Taus. He was an organizer and an administrator, capable of assuming a leadership role in any organization. Groves remembered what he had seen; Taus' home office had numerous playing schedules posted on a large bulletin board. Financial sponsorships, registrations, community services were all duties that appeared on various charts around Taus' home office.

At that point, it was undecided whether this new sports program would service an adult or a youth group exclusively or a combination. "I don't know if the diplomats would get themselves involved in a sports activity for themselves or strictly for their kids," Taus pondered.

"Well, if not for themselves, then certainly for their kids." Groves was prepared to defend his notion. "Most of these communist countries don't want their diplomats and officials taking their children to any western country, let alone the United States. By keeping the children in the 'motherland,' the communist countries have the hostages they need to fully trust their emissaries abroad. A few Eastern Bloc countries do not permit the children going on overseas assignments with their parents. So you see, those that are over here have overcome any obstacles and really want their children with them. These people will be happy to see an organization started for their children. And an organization of elites which will provide their children with worldwide friendships that may very well be used in their futures, as new diplomats themselves someday."

Trying to assess what Groves was saying, Taus cautioned, "Often parents drop off their kids and make the coaches act like baby-sitters. If that's the case here, the FBI will only be providing a baby-sitting service to the diplomats."

"I don't think so. Remember these people love their children. They're not going to drop them off and leave. They will stay and monitor the activities."

"That wasn't the case with Dave Studer, the CIA agent from Freeport.

He's still dropping his son and daughter off and having some Hispanic men from Castle Securities pick them up," Taus noted. "He's even asked me to drop them off at his house after practices."

"That's because he believes in you. The CIA doesn't think you are investigating." Groves paused and tried to rephrase what he was saying. "Your cover is perfect. The CIA isn't concerned about the club anymore; or at least, they don't think you are getting in their way."

These comments sparked a heated exchange over the value of the Freeport investigation and when the FBINYO was going to ask the U.S. Attorney's office at the Eastern District of New York (USA, EDNY) to assign an Assistant U.S. Attorney (AUSA) and commence a prosecution for the illegal activities and unlawful operations Taus had discovered. Groves never answered him, but continued praising Taus for his investigations and telling him it was necessary to do the same thing with the United Nations.

"You'll get acquainted with diplomats and officials that we (FBI) could never meet in public." Groves pressed on, "You can appoint some as coaches, assistants, managers, delegating responsibilities and tasks, gaining personal glimpse for character assessments. Before long you will have developed a circle of friends who can help the Bureau in many ways. You're a likable guy. They will trust you. We can amass a wealth of information on their whereabouts as well as their personalities."

This was done in the Freeport case, when it was learned members of the K-team would be going to Fort Lauderdale, Florida to meet with an NSC official, Oliver North. Information supplied by George Hebert, a CIA agent in the Freeport station, and confirmed by the absences of the other members at club practices and game in early 1985, shortly prior to Taus' conference with Groves that day.

Groves was still selling the concept to Taus, "The registration forms alone provide information we may never obtain from these foreign officials, such as their unlisted phone numbers and emergency locations. Just like your Freeport operation."

The Bureau intended to divert Taus' attention. He was being offered a bribe in every sense of the word. The United Nations case would come complete with a large expense fund, a New York City apartment, a new car and whatever else Taus wanted to get the investigation rolling. Few agents would bypass such an opportunity. It was the Bureau's way of handling a serious problem.

In the past, FBI agents that caused some concerns or who disobeyed Bureau etiquette would find themselves transferred to an Indian reservation in the Dakotas, investigating violations of federal laws. However, Taus had developed sufficient information on the illegal CIA operations to create a continuing problem that no isolation would solve. It would be much better to put another case in front of him, hoping he would bite. In this fashion, everyone would be happy, especially the CIA who had pushed Bureau officials to make the offer.

Taus was interested but would not give up the Freeport case. "Boss, the Freeport case will have important benefits for all Americans. We are seeing

some very corrupt and illegal activities from..." Groves heard it all before and wanted to finish selling Taus on taking the UN case, "It means you can make a bigger difference in this international forum. You will be handling a case that truly affects our national security and that of the Free World."

Groves' rhetoric was appealing to Taus' sense of patriotism.

"It means you will need a cover too," Groves continued. "Can you come up with one that makes sense? Give me some thoughts on the costs involved in setting up an operation like this. And some ideas on how to get started," Groves was ever the Bureau supervisor. He had dumped the entire package into Taus' hands though Taus never accepted taking the case. In short.

Groves never really asked Taus if he wanted to do it, undercover operations are voluntary in the Bureau. Groves simply was telling Taus, he had to do it.

It was not a bad idea because Taus had proposed it a year ago when the Bureau asked for suggestions. It was just an untimely one, Taus thought, in light of his recent discoveries in Freeport. Plus he was involved with Kaminsky's overseas proposal for a business consultant operation. How could he handle another undercover assignment? He reminded Groves, "I think we are forgetting about Kaminsky. He wants to introduce me to several commercial representatives from Eastern Bloc countries with a business cover."

Groves knowingly shook his head, "I know and that's fine. I've already thought about that possibility. You can use the same cover. It may work to a greater advantage. This way the diplomats know who you are and where you are working. It'll add to your credibility. I want as many irons-in-the-fire as possible. Whichever operation kicks off first, go with it. I think you can do both." Groves was excluding the Freeport case,

"Both and no other cases," Taus was establishing his caseload limits, but thinking about the Freeport case first. He asked Groves to reassign his ten other cases and started pointing out how his personal life would have to be rearranged to accommodate the UN undercover operation. One final attempt to avoid the UN assignment, Taus stated, "I've never asked to be assigned to an undercover operation." And just what do you think, you were doing in Freeport then?" remarked Groves. "For some time, they never knew what an FBI agent was doing there and they took you into their confidence," added Groves.

It was true enough; agents were asked if they wanted to go undercover. Such an existence changes one's lifestyle. Family ties are cut temporarily. A married agent is thoroughly questioned about this radical change of life. Often an agent would simply use a false identification card or fake business card to identify himself. Such short termed operations were not envisioned here. Like Pistone and Roth, Taus would have to adopt a deep cover.

Looking sternly at Groves, Taus said, "You haven't given me a chance to think it over." Groves pressed: "So, let's have a go at it now. Where did this business consultant come from and why does he want to start a sports program?" Taus shrugged his shoulders still upset with the additional assignment. "You tell me?" Groves squirmed in his chair. Taus knew it was final. He was supposed to be giving his supervisor ideas now, if he was such

an outstanding agent.

Taus reluctantly proceeded, thinking aloud, "They say the best cover is one a person is familiar with. Use the same first name or middle name, reverse them. Probably base my background on what I did in the past."

"Certainly not a former FBI agent!" warned Groves.

"A retired Army officer! A man who has seen combat, war and its horrors. A man who now wants to see world peace. That's where the diplomats come into play." Taus was providing a workable scenario, not created out of thin air, but from his own experiences.

"The diplomats affect the peace process. We are engaging them in friendly competition, much like the Olympics. By having them play together, they start to better understand each other, fostering closer personal relationships with one another. That ideal will be my cover purpose, the reason for this program, promoting world peace. As you say, I've become a business consultant. I do have a business degree from college, being semi-retired from the Army. I now have the time to run a volunteer program."

"Good, very good. Rich!" Groves was satisfied. Taus was spouting out what Groves wanted to hear. The FBI supervisor accomplished his goal, assigning the case and just in time for the upcoming NYO conference where he could tell his bosses and the other supervisors what his squad goals would be in the coming year. However, much more important than an ego-trip for Groves was his feat in diverting Taus' investigative efforts from the Freeport case to the United Nations. This was the main reason Groves had approached Taus. Groves would first announce his good news to his boss, the FCI Division SAC.

To make a decent presentation to the SAC and then to the ADIC, Groves queried Taus further, "What about costs, facilities and employees' expenses?" All of the facts were already known to Taus. "Registration and membership fees will cover the operating costs. City facilities, gyms and playing fields can be secure by applying for New York City permits. A not-for-profit, charitable organization can be established with the State's Department of Law. Advertising for the program may be a problem. Just how do we solicit the diplomats and their families?" Taus asked.

We have a list of these people and their family members," Groves added while reaching for a large computer printout in the credenza behind his desk.

The four-inch thick tabulation listed each country and its diplomatic staff, including all family members. The ages of the youngsters and home addresses were provided, though many such addresses were of foreign consular staff offices. Groves was prepared for the UN case. The computer listing was especially prepared for Taus' use.

"You could have just as easily handed me this listing beforehand and saved some discussion," Taus dryly noted. "Then it would not have been your baby," Groves smiled. "Our best informants come from "Recruitments-In-Place" (RIP). If we can get an individual to work for our side, while employed by the communists, we will have an effective operative, providing he does not do something stupid and get caught. It's better if we place our own people into a sensitive position. For now, do some homework on this project

and present me with a complete report. If it looks promising, we'll get it approved and proceed with the operation. "Oh yes," added Groves, "When is Kaminsky due back from Europe?"

"Today," Taus said. "You are keeping me very busy."

"Don't worry, I have reassigned your entire caseload. That's part of the reason for this meeting." As he looked at his watch. Groves said, "Let's get started early. Call the other agents into my office now for our squad conference."

The squad conference dealt with undercover operations and, in particular, Taus' new case. Thomas Pierce was assigned as Taus' assistant to handle the office administration while Taus operated undercover. Pierce would have balked at assisting anyone, but he saw the new case as a productive assignment; and, it freed him from making new informants. There was another reason for his approval. Pierce may be involved in CIA operations. Though an FBI special agent, Pierce could be working for the CIA as an inside man.

The rest of the squad was admonished for not developing more informants. Several other operations were parenthetically mentioned preserving most of the real details for only those working the cases. Again compartmentalization. But Taus' future operation was known to everyone, especially since Groves could strut into the SAC's office with this one.

The following day, the SAC had a conference with Groves and Taus to discuss the merits of the new case. He liked Taus' report and leafed through it as Taus presented the operation. Four superiors from other FCI squads attended this meeting for their expertise and opinions on the proposal.

One suggested that Long Islanders may recognize Taus from the Freeport operation. Groves noted that a review of UN officials and personnel had no "hits" with any contacts on Long Island. There was a risk but only a slight one which they felt was acceptable. If any such revelation did occur, identifying Taus as an FBI agent, he was instructed to avoid any further disclosure of FBI participation. In short starting the UN club was his own idea.

He would be on his own.

Ironically, this idea was not far-fetched. Taus was a combat veteran and the purpose of the UN club was to better seek world peace and harmony. Nonetheless, if discovered Taus would have to bite-the-bullet to relieve any diplomatic pressures on the United States as well as public opinion concerning undercover FBI operations.

Taus noticed Supervisor Vince DeCampo at the SAC meeting, sitting back and smiling. Back in 1980, Taus had borrowed DeCampo's bureau squad car (bucar) for his investigation. When Taus opened the trunk, he found Little League Baseball equipment inside. DeCampo was a volunteer coach in his son's sports program. He knew what was involved in establishing and running an athletic program. He sat there and just grinned.

The green light was lit as the meeting ended. Taus knew he had a job cut out for him. Unlike the Freeport Sports Club, Taus needed phony identification cards, another New York State driver's license, credit cards, all under some alias.

It was time consuming completing the bogus identity applications forms

and records, one from the American Express Company, one from New York State's Department of Motor Vehicles, etc. Many such organizations and agencies knew the cards and licenses were under fake names, especially since their administrators demanded these forms be expeditiously processed. It would take weeks for the applications to be fully processed. Most of the time, the delay was due to the Bureau's own lethargic administration.

"Operation Footwork" was dubbed as the case caption (title) for all the efforts it would take to get things going, plus the fancy "footwork" that would be needed to keep things secret. Case captions usually approximated the most visible aspects of an investigation. For example, the 1979 robbery of Lufthansa Airlines at John F. Kennedy International Airport was captioned "Lufrob" by the FBI for the Lufthansa Robbery.

### **Dual Focus**

While Taus was working on the FBINYO's Criminal Division, he handled the Bonanno OC cases. A search of the FBI office's closed confidential informant files showed an informant who could be productive. Further, this was confirmed by the former FBI special agents that handled the informant. They recommended that Taus reopen the informant's file, the one involved in the Lufthansa case.

### **DeVecchio Continues Protecting Colombo Mafia Family**

In 1983, this informant's file was reopened by Taus in connection with Mafia drug-trafficking operations linked to the CIA. His squad supervisor on the Bonanno OC squad was DeVecchio. Again the CIA was connected to drug trafficking. That case was quickly ordered closed by DeVecchio. In 1996, DeVecchio would be formally subpoenaed to testify before a federal court on why he assisted Capo Gregory Scarpa, a member of the Colombo OC Family. DeVecchio claimed Scarpa was only an informant, which was a cover for the FBI assisting this capo, protecting Mafia activities connected to the CIA.

### **Federal Prosecutor Charges DeVecchio, in 1992, With Ties to Colombo Mafia Family, Followed by FBI-DOJ Cover-Up**

During a hearing in the Federal District Court of New York for the Eastern District (EDNY), Assistant U.S. Attorney Valerie Caproni charged DeVecchio with lying, claiming the FBI supervisor had fed confidential information to Scarpa, and that this information fueled some murderous warfare between the two Mafia factions in 1991 and 1992. Both factions had sought control of the Colombo OC Family's empire. Ten mobsters and an innocent teenager were killed. AUSA Caproni said Scarpa was a battle commander in one faction and used information DeVecchio provided him to murder his rivals.

Other FBI agents and numerous Mafia insiders provided evidence showing FBI Supervisory Agent DeVecchio with criminal ties to the Colombo mafia family. As if the FBI and DOJ knew of this conduct, or had sanctioned it, the DOJ's Office of Professional Responsibility held that there was no evidence to suspect DeVecchio and gave him a clean bill of health.

However, to bring the escalating media attention to a halt, the FBI had DeVecchio retire. Secretly, the FBI retained DeVecchio as a consultant.

Taus felt that DeVecchio did not take the risks that he took in dealing with the Mafia, and that there were other reasons that involved high FBI-DOJ officials—and the CIA. Taus had discovered there were connections between several New York Mafia families, drug smuggling, and the CIA. DeVecchio had blocked earlier investigations, including one in 1983 that involved interrelationship between these factors and drugs.

### **People Stronger Than the Mafia Were Involved**

After repeated meetings with the informant, Taus felt he would be of little use since he was scared about being targeted. Why then had the informant been so brave when he came forward the first time? Then the informant's only fear was the Mafia. Then he realized that there were others. The informant told Taus there were people stronger than the Mafia involved in the robbery. It was the CIA's name again being brought up in another Mafia case. Given the magnitude of the international heist, how else could it have been so successfully pulled-off? A stronger organization assisted, one that could make the money disappear without any trace.

The informant told Taus that the money from the Lufthansa Robbery had immediately been shipped out of country with the help of CIA agents. "They are the best in handling money-laundering problems," according to the informant. The very fact that none of the millions of dollars were ever identified or recovered indicated that some higher financial wizards had absconded with the funds.

When Bureau officials were warned about the competitiveness of international soccer, they decided to stay with a youth soccer program. It was decided that the FBI would have better access to these UN members anyway when they stood waiting on the sidelines, rather than engaged in competition. At least, for those foreign officials having children in the new program, they would find themselves in a casual social situation. Just as the Freeport Sports Club had demonstrated, people would say things in a club environment, at practice clinics, games and committee meetings which never would be spoken about in a more structured or formal situation.

Diplomats could be assessed as never before. Their behavior in such social meetings would provide invaluable insights into their personalities, motivations and emotions. Informal chitchats would reveal traits about members not found in any "Essential Elements of Information" (EEI) forms contained in the FBI's Foreign Counter-Intelligence files. Freeport youth members often gave insights into their parents' personal affairs and problems.

Something as simple as getting the unlisted phone numbers of these UN members was possible without any formal requests to the phone companies.

Aside from the administrative burden of processing such a request, the phone companies would often later notify their customers, within a six-month period or after the time in the request was expended, that the FBI had subpoenaed their records. Such subpoenas would ruin any monitoring, as had happened in several FBI cases when the phone companies felt compelled to inform their patrons. The Sports Club's application form asked for references and acquaintances in case of injuries on the field. This kind of data took an FBI agent months to gather.

It would take Taus away from the Freeport operation where some serious developments were occurring. The list of unlawful activities attributed to the CIA's K-team was growing each week. Connections with known Mafioso figures, politicians, high-level government officials and corporate executives were disclosing numerous criminal activities, drug trafficking, weapons sales, financial frauds, unsecured loans, etc. To start this massive UN case would seriously detract from the Freeport case. This was exactly what the FBI and CIA wanted.

The United States Government had many intelligence personnel in key positions with the United Nations, a fact not unusual for many countries' diplomatic corps and official embassy staffs. These officials would pave the way for Taus to approach the United Nations administrative body with the suggestion of running a soccer program. It would be opened only to UN officials, foreign diplomatic corps members, their staffs and officials and the families of these persons. As a former U.S. Army Colonel who saw the devastating cost of wars, Robert Trainor, Taus' alias, was seeking more harmonious relationships between countries. Thinking that the UN would be a good place to start, since "Trainor" lived in New York City, he would offer them a sports program, bringing the diplomats together.

Initially FBI agents and officials from the United States Mission to the UN would assist Taus in getting his foot-in-the-door, disseminating flyers on the new organization, placing bulletin board posters, mailing official communication releases to all UN member countries. And even asking local merchants to place posters in their store windows about the new club.

With approval to commence the operation, Taus briefed Pierce, who seemed distant, aloof and unwilling to cooperate. Pierce was an American native Indian originally from Western New York State. He was not well-liked by the FBI female employees. They said he was pretentious. At 6'3", Pierce was impressive and looked robust with his dark skin, red-tanned complexion and his black hair and eyes.

One day during lunchtime, while crossing Broadway Avenue near the Jacob Javits Federal Office Building, an irate truck driver hollered obscenities at Pierce who was slowly walking in front of the truck. The driver made the mistake of exiting his vehicle to confront Pierce who promptly decked the man. Pierce was hotheaded too. He refused to say "The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag" or stand up for the playing of "The Star-Spangled Banner." Odd it seemed, since Pierce took the oath of office as a Special Agent when sworn in at FBIHQ. Pierce claimed the American Government violated his Indian heritage.

Pierce never accounted for his time or whereabouts to Taus, though he was assigned as Taus' assistant. He was unreliable and with a program of his own. When Groves was approached about this matter. Groves defended Pierce saying he was conducting other official business. Pierce made numerous trips with the secretive FBI scuba-diving team, consisting of only three FBI agents and an unidentified fourth individual. This fourth person turned out to be Steve Lopez, a New York City Fireman who was connected to the CIA.



Most FBI agents were rarely innovative or imaginative. They were selected by review committees that looked for a conservative individual, a traditionalist, and one who supported the present form of government. Based upon the FBI mission of "containment," few agents wanted to exhibit an aggressive style and fewer supervisors wanted any high-profile cases which could quickly draw unneeded attention to them. Yet these same supervisors were quick to take credit for any successes. Taus' Freeport case was successful, and no lone supervisor could take credit for it. No matter, the case was being stalled by Bureau officials. Still, it had so much merit that another similar operation could be undertaken, giving credit to the inaugurating supervisor, particularly since FBIHQ wanted Taus to leave the Freeport case alone.

There were objectives to be attained that were identified as "Management Objectives" instead of mission objectives. The greatest mission of the FBI would never fully be achieved, to enforce the laws of this country. It was done only selectively. The most powerful criminal organizations and elements were left untouched. They were the real "Untouchables." Unless of course, they created a problem for the powerful forces controlling this country. Constantly, Bureau officials, including the FBI Director and the U.S. Attorney General would point to criminal statistics, arrests and the continuing need for tough and effective law enforcement. In truth, crime statistics had plummeted.

At no other time in American History were there so many law enforcement agencies, organizations and officials to counteract the greatly exaggerated and falsely perceived threats from criminal elements. Per population, not only did the United States have the highest number of law enforcement officers, it also had the highest ratio, for all countries, of its population imprisoned.

To defend this prefabrication to the American Public, greater criminal statistics needed to be produced that would show an increasing crime wave. They were. Conduct which normally would be addressed by family courts or mental health counselors or social service organizations and church groups were suddenly placed in the realm of criminal cases. Such conduct was now included in the formulation of inflated criminal statistics. Politicians relished this fact since they could harangue their constituents to vote for them because they would protect the public by enacting stringent laws and improving law enforcement services.

Beginning in the late 1970s, spousal and child abuse became major felonies. All an individual had to do was make an allegation against someone and a new felony statistic appeared, putting more fear into the public's heart. Federal funds were provided to local counties to carry out law enforcement efforts with these new crimes and to finance prosecutions of individuals so accused. "The Politics of Child Abuse" points out this fact as the book describes the funding of spousal and child abuse cases by the federal government. The CIA was quick to use such charges to discredit anyone who sought to expose their criminal operations.

The FBI too, alarmed the public with the need for better law enforce-

ment. Both FBI budgets and manpower were substantially increased. However, in most cases, the federal investigations and the need for effective crime-fighting could have been handled by the local authorities. Many of these crimes were being committed by psychopaths who were not involved in any national conspiracies. In essence, the only criminal conspiracy here was against the American Public, the taxpayers who were funding redundant law enforcement activities. Americans were paying a high price for the mismanagement of their law enforcement dollars. In the meanwhile, white collar criminals were making billions of dollars in ill-gotten gains, fleecing the American Public. These perpetrators included high-ranking government officials and American business leaders and the Mafia.

Americans cowered at the newly reported crimes involving spousal and child abuse. Yet these crimes always existed. They were not a phenomenon of the late twentieth century lifestyle. "Big Brother" was simply invading the American home, gaining more and more control over a submissive and frightened public.

No one would condone spousal and child abuse crimes, but they were deliberately exploited to divert the public's attention from other criminal activities that their elected officials and leaders were doing. It's not necessary to establish that America's leaders were capable of criminal activities, anyone reading the daily headlines would hear about the on-going political corruption and business irregularities that effects all Americans.

The United Nations case would be another diversion, to take Taus away from the Freeport case that would have identified even more prominent leaders and sinister cabals within the government. One could present an argument that national security interest could be served by the UN case, but its implementation was at a bad time. A time when the Freeport case was producing extraordinary results.

There was no escaping the UN case for Taus. SSA Groves reminded him of October 23, 1983 when Taus was summoned by George Hebert, a member of the CIA' K-team in Freeport. On that date, Hebert and Kattke had been apprehended for breaking into the Grenada Mission at the United Nations. When New York City Police arrested them, Hebert had telephoned Taus at the FBINYO, asking him to come over and handle the police. The K-team could have just as easily called their CIA contact in the city to spring them, but they did not want anyone to see the CIA connection. Groves grinned and said, "You see, you are the perfect agent for this case.

#### **Pierce and the Informant**

Months prior to Taus' meeting with SSA Groves concerning the UN case, Taus had observed Pierce's unusual demeanor and awkward personality. Entering the dimly lit squad area, Taus noted that Pierce had not arrived. It was 7:05 A.M. on Monday. Unusual. Normally Pierce was the first person in, brewing a pot of acidic coffee as he waited for the rest of the squad to show up from their weekend repast. It seemed to be the only social life that Pierce had, as he smiled and greeted each person that passed his way, asking them how their weekend was spent. Early on a Monday morning for the

most part, people are not too talkative. Social chatter was avoided. Perhaps a quick hello, how are you. Nothing more.

But Pierce insisted upon engaging everyone in a prolonged conversation. He situated himself right next to the coffee maker and smiled, trying to harpoon each passerby into a chat. One particularly attractive young secretary dreaded these encounters. On another Monday morning, after a rather rough weekend, her temper showed as Pierce said, "And what did you do on Saturday night, Alicia?" Please Tom, it's too early for your silly interrogation." She paused for a moment and relented, seeing how Pierce's face became flushed and lost its stupid smile. "My weekend wasn't the greatest."

Sensing his harpoon had struck his prey. Pierce proceeded with his assault, armed again with his shit-eating grin. "A pretty girl like you should have a good time every weekend." Before he could finish, Alicia shouted, "Stop it Tom! You're prying. Don't you have any social life yourself? Why must you badger people everyday?"

Again his smile disappeared as he addressed the unknown audience, in the squad area, which he suspected was listening in, "Well okay, if it was that bad. You needn't get so upset."

This usual exchange would be missing that Monday morning. Pierce had gone to firearms training. His absence was noticed by everyone who passed by the coffee maker, but he was not missed.

The early morning sun fiercely penetrated the east windows of the 25<sup>th</sup> floor in the Javits Federal Office Building. As it did, long shadows were cast across the floor, sharply contrasting areas in either bright sunshine or dark shadows. The windows on the building had a special film covering them to disperse the intense sunlight, but the effect was minimal. The office windows had vertical Venetian blinds. Most were broken, stuck or simply inoperable. GSA maintenance was a joke, part of a federal austerity program.

As Taus prepared to make the first pot of coffee, Pierce's desk telephone rang. A voice at the other end announced, "This is the 28<sup>th</sup> floor reception desk." It was an FBI special clerk. "There is a gentleman here to see Pierce. He says it is very important." Taus noticed Pierce's desk calendar that listed his firearms training days and so informed the clerk. However, the gentleman insisted upon speaking to someone on the squad. Taus agreed to see the person.

The lobby of the 28<sup>th</sup> floor has a bulletproof Plexiglas enclosed counter desk, similar to bank tellers' stations. As Taus exited the elevator and approached the counter, the receptionist pointed to a person seated in one of the adjacent chairs. He was in his middle thirties, dark, intense and handsome. Perhaps one of Pierce's friends, thought Taus. "Hello, you asked for Agent Pierce?" Taus did not identify himself. It was the prudent thing to do. Years of experience in interviewing unknown subjects had taught agents not to surrender their names unless absolutely necessary. The gentleman was not interested in anyone's name, he just wanted to inform the FBI about an urgent matter. "I'm his confidential informant.

My name is Steve Lopez." Taus now had to warn him about this disclosure. "Be careful, Mr. Lopez, disclosures here are imprudent." Taus was

stumbling trying to tell him that the FBI compartmentalized information and that the handling agent, Pierce, could be very upset with Lopez' disclosures to another agent. "I know, I know," Lopez anxiously said. "Someone's been tapping my phone. My apartment was broken into."

"It's too bad my supervisor is not here now," Taus tried to avoid the problem and provide Lopez another forum to register his story. "Listen, if you work with Tom, you'll understand," Lopez implored. "Tom engaged me on some dumb operations and I think I am being followed."

Lopez was not psychotic. He saw Taus' dubious reaction and decided to provide more on his own background. "Look, I'm a New York City Fire-fighter. I'm a former Marine. I know Tom from the FBI Scuba-Diving Team." Once establishing his credibility, some of Lopez' paranoia made sense to Taus. However, this information could result in a confrontation between Taus and both Pierce and the squad supervisor. Most agents prefer to operate their own informants, though assistant case agents are assigned. Pierce was unstable enough without giving him any other reasons for being upset.

Deciding to reach out for Pierce, Taus asked the lobby special clerk to call the FBI Seagirt, New Jersey Firing Range and page Pierce. Within a few minutes, firearms instructor was on the line informing Taus that Pierce was not there nor had he scheduled training for Monday. Taus thought, perhaps Pierce was at home sick. Another phone call was made to the 25<sup>th</sup> floor squad area. SSA Groves had just arrived and answered.

Once Taus explained that Lopez wanted to talk to someone. Groves became excited, "What's he doing here? Wait, don't handle him. I'll come up there." Ten minutes past and Groves had not arrived. Instead the clerk called Taus to the phone. It was Groves again. "What's he told you?"

"Nothing at this point," Taus replied. "Lopez has calmed down somewhat. Is Tom on sick leave today?" Without answering Taus, Groves said, "Tell him Pierce will contact him at home later today. Make sure he agrees not to talk to anyone else until then, understand! And see me as soon as you get rid of him."

Taus understood he was not to be appraised of whatever urgent matter that troubled Lopez. Surprisingly Lopez was satisfied with Taus' explanation. Upon returning to the squad area, Taus saw Groves pacing in his office with the phone receiver in one hand. As soon as Groves saw Taus, he signaled him to come over. Still on the phone, Groves said, "Lopez will wait at home for your call."

Obviously, Groves was speaking to Pierce, and Taus noticed the phone used was the "scramble phone," a secure method of telephone transmission which garbled voices. "Then call me from Headquarters if there is any change of plans, Tom." As Groves hung up the phone, it was clear to Taus that Pierce was in Washington, D.C.

"I don't want you talking to anyone's informants," Groves scolded Taus. The basic rule did not have to be repeated. Taus noted it was not his idea to speak to Lopez. Groves continued to brew over the situation as Taus slowly exited the cubicle. On Taus' desktop was his coffee cup and several newly

assigned case files, all of which were as cold as the half cup of coffee.

### **Pettiness in FBI Offices**

The card on the "Sign-In Register" read, "Squad Conference at 9:30 A.M. Tuesday. All will be present!" Taus did not notice the card as he searched for a pencil to place himself "on-the-books." He had left home earlier than normal due to the inclement weather forecast. Many New York commuters, who drive, tend to crawl along in rainy road conditions. One would think it's because they are safety conscious. With all the accidents good driving practices do not account for the rainy day drives into work. Rather, these drivers have slowed down to rubberneck, gawk at the accidents and their fellow commuters' misfortunes. Traffic was light despite the weather and Taus made it to work before 7:00.

"Is the coffee ready?" Taus asked SA Thomas Pierce. He always arrived early and made the coffee for the squad with the professional coffee-making machine. The squad area around the coffee machine became the office "watering hole." There was usually a crowd of agents that congregated around the coffee maker, sipping their coffee in oversized mugs.

A sign on the machine pointed to an empty can which had a slot cut into its plastic lid. The sign read, "Please deposit 25 cents for each cup." Agents were notorious in forgetting to drop in a quarter.

Some coffee drinkers cheated the system by more clever deceptions. To avoid being accused of not feeding the kitty, they would place a nickel into the slot. By tossing it with some force, a resounding metal click would appear to have been made by a quarter. This tactic was employed by an older agent. He saved money on his apparel too. His two Sears' suits were brought on sale over a decade ago. For \$50 a suit, they were a bargain. The older agent would mix the suit coats and trousers. Somehow the blue pinstripes of one suit never coordinated well with the gray polyester of the other outfit.

"If you have a quarter, you can have a fresh cup," SA Pierce said. He was the "Gatekeeper of Coffee World."

Pierce had a manic-depressive personality. In his middle-thirties, he had not found any happiness in life. His inconsistent behavior was the object of ridicule from fellow agents, and sympathy from others like Taus who knew there was a racial bias in the Bureau.

Toying with his paperweight. Pierce reminded Taus about the 9:30 conference. Pierce's paperweight was an old scuba-diving oxygen regulator. He was a member of the mysterious FBI Scuba-Diving Team. No one knew what was their function or mission. There seemed to be little need considering the U.S. Coast Guard's capabilities along with the New York City Police Department Marine Unit.

Taus had attended firearms training on Monday and was unaware of the meeting. He would have to cancel some interviews if he could not be excused. Informants were upset with unexpected schedule changes. They were paranoid enough, working for the FBI.

### **The Block Stamp**

It should have been uncharacteristic when Groves yelled at one of his squad's agent, but Groves had a temper. "Taus get in here!" Wondering why

Groves was shouting, Taus walked over to Groves' cubicle. Taus thought, could it be one of my informants, perhaps the undercover operation? Possibly it was something else such as my Army Reserve status, or maybe..."

Without further consideration, Taus had reached the dragoon's head. He stood at the entrance to Groves' cubicle. There was a flush brooding expression on Groves' normally ashen complexion. He was waving a stack of papers at Taus.

"You cannot do this! It is incorrect and unacceptable. It is a security violation!" Groves emphatically bellowed. Taus felt a rush through his system. What exactly had Groves unearthed? He seemed to have proof with the paperwork he was waving in his hands. Taus had no idea of what to say as Groves pushed the stack of documents into his hands, making Taus take several steps backwards.

Reaching across his desk. Groves grabbed a small block stamp. "Where are you going? Do it here!" The pale color was returning to Groves' face. He added, "Stamp the backs of every paper on your report. You know stamping "SECRET" on the front alone is not enough. According to the manual, when you classify any documents, you must stamp both sides even if there is nothing on the reverse side."

"The United States has loss several nuclear weapons today. I had to kill the two spies who did it today." Taus' remarks fell on deaf ears. They were jokingly intended to elicit some kind of response from Groves who was trapped in the bureaucratic web and could not see the forest through the underbrush.

On some squads, the relationship between supervisor and squad members were a little friendlier. If a supervisor did not use a person's first name, then the supervisor would address them as mister or miss. That was one way of getting someone's attention, a formal address.

The stack of papers Groves handed Taus was on a minor case Taus had submitted earlier that day. Taus was relieved. He dutifully acknowledged his oversight and apologized with a smile. Quickly stamping the papers, his thoughts were on the Bureau dumbbell that was so concerned with administrative details that he could not see what was happening in major investigations.

"I need your advice on several important matters I am handling in my caseload," Taus implored. Groves looked up from his desk and nodded, taking the freshly stamped papers out of Taus' hands without further comment.

If Groves had any advice, it would be useless. He was an administrator and that's why he sat behind a desk. Taus could only depend upon himself. The Bureau had created paranoia among its agents. Few would speak to one another about their cases, partly due to compartmentalization, partly due to internally created jealousies that pitted agent against agent, seeking favors from supervisors.

If an agent worked for another agent, he or she became an indentured servant. The slightest remark from a case agent against his assistant case agent could trigger supervisory retaliations. Teamwork was only a veneer. Part of the problem was the high cost of living in the metropolitan areas.

Salaries were low. There were no cost-of-living adjustments (colas). FBI equipment was second-rate. Revolvers and pancake holsters were used when double action automatics and specialty holsters were available. Communication equipment was archaic or extremely complicated to use.

When the FBI introduced a new encoded mobile Motorola radio unit in their bucars, most agents gave up trying to employ them. If a message had to be sent, an agent would pull over to a nearby telephone booth or wait until he reached the FBI office.

At least one-third or more of the agents assigned to the FBINYO did not have a bucar to cover their cases. They were dependent upon the agents assigned cars to provide them with transportation, otherwise one had to take public transportation to handle a lead or investigation. Why hire a college graduate with professional experience and not provide that person with the tools to conduct an investigation?

The CIA was light-years ahead in its practical technology and equipment. In the 1980s, CIA agents had cellular phones, pocket-sizes computers and the most advanced weaponry. The FBI was a stepchild in the Intelligence family and was hamstrung in its criminal investigations by an overpowering CIA.

The CIA also had a secret budget. The FBI had to account for every cent it could squeeze out of a corrupt Congress that did not want a "too efficient" law enforcement agency. Many politicians were involved in CIA money-making schemes. Payoffs and kickbacks drove government officials in every department. The CIA had access to many other moneymaking projects, some sanctioned, some unofficial, but all protected by a hidden, shadowy parallel government, virtually unknown to the American Public.





## CHAPTER THIRTY

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### CIA Links in Freeport Soccer Club

It was late afternoon before all the scores from the traveling team competition were recorded. The Freeport Soccer Club had come a long way, but there were several traveling teams that were losing nearly every weekend, causing Taus to call a meeting of the coaches. Traveling teams competed with other communities on Long Island and operated under league rules from the Long Island Junior Soccer League and the Mid-Island Soccer League where Taus held the position of vice-president.

Intramural teams competed within the same club against other teams in the same age group. The more skilled players moved onto the traveling teams where the competition and skill levels were higher. The Freeport Club's policy was to teach soccer, not simply to have winning teams. However, new teams and new coaches often thought they had to win and would disregard the basic rules.

One problem endemic to all new youth soccer players was chasing the ball. Instead of relying upon fellow teammates, players would all swam over to the ball, often interfering with their own players. Position playing was the key, but with unskilled players, it took time to acquire the skills and patience necessary to play a position well, to be able to handle a pass and kick accurately. So teams tended to bunch-up, losing command of the playing field.

Several of Freeport's traveling teams were making these basic mistakes.

Players and coaches alike had to be told to play positions, taking whatever lumps that would occur from the lack of skills and looking towards the long-term benefits that came from hard practice. If the teams sought victory without having the prerequisite skills, their playing would resemble a herd of cattle chasing a ball. Gone were the days when the Freeport Club first started in 1981 that youngsters were assigned to teams based only upon their age. Now skills became primary and teams were organized down to the five-year old age group. Usually a few four-year olds could be found on those teams too. There was no pressure exerted upon the younger age teams, scores did not matter. By the time those youngsters were nine-years old, they had acquired the skills and played position and won their weekend

games.

The following Monday morning Taus tried to settle the weekend of problems that arose. Taus was frustrated with his investigation of the CIA's operation. His supervisor had denied him subpoenas for Castle Securities' records and denied him any telephone taps. Someone was protecting that CIA operation despite the fact that FBI animosity towards the CIA should have welcomed an investigation of this kind into their illegal operations.

Taus' desk phone rang. It was the Freeport Club's First Vice-President asking him when to schedule the coaches' meeting. Taus said to plan on a Thursday meeting and added Studer and Hebert's names to the list of coaches. Taus would ask Hebert more about their own operations, the team run by the CIA.

Right after the phone call, FBI agent Rod Walls told Taus he was going to lunch. It was only 10 a.m. and was Walls' usual pattern. He left early to go to the gymnasium, then a quick lunch and a slow return back to the FBI office. He would stroll down lower Broadway, watching all the pretty young secretaries pass by.

Taus thought more about the K-team and wondered if the CIA also had a pattern. Were there other K-teams? Hebert had mentioned other financial organizations remote from Freeport, such as BCCI. And there were the old reports of the CIA's Nugan Hand Bank in Australia that had to be shut down. There was the CIA operation based in Honolulu known as Bishop, Baldwin, Rewald, Dillingham and Wong. At the time rumors circulated that they all were involved in drug-trafficking, money-laundering and unlawful arms sales. Taus felt there was a CIA pattern.

The Union League Club in New York City was having a meeting during which CIA Director William Casey would be speaking. The meeting was restricted to members and their guests. Taus secured an invitation from George Hebert, who wanted Taus as an ally, thinking that Casey's speech could enlist Taus' support.

The Union League meeting reminded Taus of a much earlier meeting in 1967 when another select audience gathered at the Eisenhower Library in Abilene, Kansas. Anxious to attend, Taus felt the Union League members might provide some answers. The club's philosophy, or that of DCI Casey, could shed some light on whatever CIA patterns existed with Castle, BCCI, Nugan Hand and BBRDW. The drug trade had something to do with the various secret wars being conducted by the CIA and it was an easy way to generate funds for CIA covert activities. The criminal elements in the drug-trafficking operations could mask and eventually be blamed for any illegal activities.

When George Hebert mentioned the Bank of Credit and Commerce International, Taus made it a subject to research. BCCI was originally a Pakistani bank.

FBI agents Robert Hanssen and Earl Edwin Pitts were assigned to the Soviet Division in the FBI New York office, and were actively engaged in selling secrets to the Russians. Taus occasionally saw these agents at the

FBI's New York offices and they appeared to be consumed by other interests, preferring not to discuss their cases. Both renegade agents were suffering from financial problems, one of the main reasons for agents to resign.

Seeking an appointment with the Supervisor-In-Charge (SAC) of that division, Taus was finally given an interview with SAC James Fox concerning the Freeport cases. Fox kept the meeting short, refusing to provide much information. Fox claimed such knowledge was strictly compartmentalized, which Taus recognized as an excuse since his case had uncovered valid leads that could be answered by the FBI's Soviet Counter-intelligence Division.

Fox never discovered the traitorous activities of Hanssen and Pitts during his watch. In 1988, Fox was elevated to Assistant Director in the New York Field Office, proving that merit and ability were never criteria for leadership advancement in the Bureau.

Secretive financial institutions appeared or were connected to the major drug producing countries in the world. Hebert had shown this to Taus when he explained about Castle Securities' relationship to Castle Bank and Trust and that bank's association with BBRDW and Nugan Hand Bank.

When Taus traced the financial leads he had, they invariably led to financial firms and banks connected to drug-trafficking operations. The Golden Triangle of Southeast Asia had the Nugan Hand Bank handling its financial affairs, and later, BBRDW stepped in after Nugan's collapse. Castle Securities handled the Iran-Contra Arms Initiative, particularly the Contra resupply efforts. There were other major financial links overseas in the Near and Middle Eastern countries, primarily BCCI.

The Union League Club speech outlined what would be known as "The Reagan Doctrine" by a *Time* magazine writer, Charles Krauthammer, in an April 1, 1985 article. DCI Casey had outlined a worldwide struggle against communism, claiming it to be the biggest threat to Americans and all free people. Casey viewed the Third World as being "divided into two groups: 'occupied countries' in which Marxist regimes have been either imposed or maintained by external forces, and unoccupied countries,' that is, all the rest." He identified five countries as occupied: Afghanistan, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Angola and Nicaragua. (See Roy Gutman's *Banana Diplomacy*.)

Taus saw the improbable reasoning used by Casey. Nicaragua, at least, did not meet Casey's own definition of "occupied." Its communist government was not installed or maintained by external forces. It came about due to the people's rebellion against the brutal right-wing Anastasio Somoza's reign.

After the speech, Taus felt the drug trade played a major role in most locations identified by Casey. Cambodia, for instance, was in the Golden Triangle region. Afghanistan had taken over the lucrative drug trade formerly operated out of Turkey. The Nixon Administration's ultimatum to the Turkish government had shifted operations to other Middle Eastern countries. Syria, Bulgaria, Iraq, Iran and Pakistan were all parties to the Afghan connection. Casey did not include Iran or Iraq in his list of occupied countries, though each had their own despot and form of totalitarian governments. The

reason was that both Iran and Iraq were supported by secretive U.S. funds.

Coupled with the various covert wars were the shady financial operations. Taus traced Castle Securities to the Cayman Islands and to Great Britain. Other FBI investigations traced Nugan Hand Bank and BBRDW to the Golden Triangle. Hebert provided Taus a new link between the older Turkish drug trade and the new Afghan/Pakistan locations that involved BCCI, a financial institution that came into being just as the Vietnam War was winding down in 1972.

In 1971, a congressional review described heroin addiction among the Vietnam troops as epidemic, which Taus had personally discovered as an understatement. The great majority of the troops were using various drugs which, obtained at the source, were more powerful and addictive. The heroin, which cost \$2 a capsule on the Saigon street compared to \$50 in New York, was 98% pure as against the three to twelve percent purity in the United States. In 1971, fewer than 5000 American soldiers required hospital treatment for combat wounds, but four times that number, 20,529, were treated for serious drug abuse. (See Michael Maclear's *The Ten Thousand Day War; Vietnam.*)

During that time period, Taus saw his own First Cavalry Division outfit afflicted by the drugs that the CIA helped make available to the troops. On one occasion, Taus could not provide enough flight crews or mechanics for mission purposes because many men were incapable of performing their duties due to drug use and addiction.

In 1971, the First Cavalry Division's aviation assets were transferred to other units as subordinate commands left for home. Taus was transferred to the Mekong Delta, and then assigned as Aviation Officer for the 307<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Battalion (CAB). Within a few months, the 307<sup>th</sup> CAB also stood down. Taus left Vietnam as the escort officer for the colors of both units: the First Cav's 228<sup>th</sup> ASHB and the First Aviation Brigade's 307<sup>th</sup> CAB.

The last major offensive battle fought was in early 1971 and had the unusual name of "Lam Son 719." This was to be strictly a South Vietnamese Army operation into Laos. However, it was supported by U.S. troops, which in the end, were needed because the South Vietnamese forces were not aggressive enough to carry the battle. Lam Son 719 did not achieve all its objectives but it did set the stage for an interest in other areas. One was Pakistan.

A new government was installed in Pakistan in 1971. Zulifar Ali Bhutto was a Pakistani statesman who was swept into power after East Pakistan's own military defeats at the hands of India and West Pakistan. In January 1972, Bhutto nationalized East Pakistan's banking industry. Another Pakistani, Agha Hasan Abedi, had a small bank of his own and his ambition was to have a multi-national bank to bring in the new Euro-dollar deposits. Abedi knew that dollar deposits from Middle Eastern oil exporting countries would tremendously affect the banking world, making many clever bankers rich. (See *The Outlaw Bank.*)

Agha Hasan Abedi started his bank in 1971, just as a new country

emerged from the former East Pakistan: Bangladesh. West Pakistan was now known simply as Pakistan. Abedi called his new bank the Bank of Credit and Commerce International. It was soon banned by the Pakistani Government. The Eurodollar continued to be an international banking boom, so Abedi took his bank charter to Luxembourg where it was formalized. Its first six offices were located in the Gulf Emirates of Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, and Dubai, and in London, Luxembourg and Beirut. The British Government had departed from the Trucial Coast in 1971 just when oil prices started rising and powerful forces aligned themselves with this multinational bank.

Britain had to maintain something from its old empire. Britain's close friend, the United States, had a great stake in the Middle East. The Arab and American Oil Company (ARAMCO) was an American idea. Oil was owned by the Sultans, but the technology and personnel for extracting that oil came from either the Free World or the Soviet Union. Western technology was more efficient and productive. Like the rest of the industrialized world, the U.S. needed oil and would exert a powerful influence to gain these resources. The U.S. intelligence apparatus, consisting mainly of CIA personnel with Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) officials in a supporting capacity, along with friendly nations, particularly Great Britain's MI 6 Intelligence Division, would assist. These agencies became embroiled in BCCI's affairs.

#### **CIA Pattern**

The early 1980s investigations into the Mafia and its drug-trafficking activities discovered CIA personnel involvement with the Mafia. At the same time, FBI Foreign Counter-Intelligence investigations uncovered CIA participation in global drug-trafficking operations. The evidence included money trail or money laundering. Major U.S. investment firms had been accused or indicted in money-laundering activities from funds generated by illicit drug sales.

#### **Drexel Burnham Lambert and Drug Money**

The more notorious cases of laundering drug moneys came to light in the early 1980s when Shearson-Lehman, a New York City investment firm was indicted by the U.S. Southern District of New York. At the same time, another giant New York investment firm, Merrill Lynch & Company, was also accused of the same unlawful activities: laundering drug money. Drexel Burnham Lambert was another infamous financial institution that Taus had found connected to the junk-bond market involving Drexel/Castle Securities in Freeport, New York. Many junk bonds ended up in the portfolios of the troubled Thrifts, Savings & Loans Associations, which had brought them seeking high returns.

#### **Further Intrigue at Freeport Sports Club**

There was never enough time to handle all the commitments Taus had. His full time FBI position overlapped into his own social life with the undercover Freeport Sports Club operation. Taus' experiences in Vietnam and Central America contributed to his desire to remain an Army Reservist. Taus had 12-years of service in the U.S. Army, was now a Lieutenant Colonel, and well toward a 20-year retirement. Another consideration was the extra

pay that financially helped overcome the frugal FBI salary. There were no cost-of-living adjustments (colas) for agents living in the high cost metropolitan areas. In addition, a portion of Taus' FBI salary was contributed to the Freeport Sports Club.

The undercover sports program was a successful operation in several ways. The CIA cabal in Freeport was being monitored and much information was obtained on criminal activities involving CIA people. Another important reason for Taus was that the sports club was a success story in its own right. It serviced many underprivileged youngsters.

Physically demanding, Taus' routine was exhausting with requirements of every conceivable nature. In the FBI, besides his duties as a case agent, there were the administrative file reviews, firearms training, physical fitness tests and physical examinations.

The Army Reserve demanded the same, separately. Neither federal organization would accept the other's test results. So it was a minimum of two medical examinations that did not include flight physicals for his aviation duties in the Bureau and the Army. There were also separate firearms training and proficiency testing. The Freeport sports program also had its own requirements ranging from the U.S. Soccer Federation licensing and registration requirements, game scheduling, finance arrangements, insurance coverage, down to the least little problems with volunteer participation.

The Freeport Sports Club, also known as the Freeport Soccer Club, conducted evening indoor clinics at school gymnasiums during the academic year. It was in November 1986 at one such instructional session at the Bay view Avenue School gym that Taus would again meet with George Hebert. The large gym held 75 parents and children enrolled in the junior division. Four youth teams and their coaches and parents were present. Taus led the instructional clinic prior to the indoor games, which he often had to referee.

### **Hebert and Studer at the Freeport Sports Club**

Taus saw an old friend at the club, George Hebert and said, "I did not see your name on the registration sheets, George. Do you have any children in the program?" Hebert answered, "I'm here with my boss, David Studer. He has his son and daughter in this group." It was 21 years since Taus and

Hebert attended Pennsylvania Military College. Hebert was an upstart young plebe back in 1962. He was a member of the Political Science and Young Republicans clubs. Taus knew Hebert was up to something again.

Their previous meetings addressed several sensitive issues.

Since Studer was unable to learn whether Taus was still checking out his "company," Studer told Hebert to tag along. Hebert was there to probe Taus and ask more about his FBI investigations.

The coaches had completed their practices and were waiting for the next instructions. It provided Taus a chance to think about his approach to

Hebert. "Excuse me George, I have to continue with the lessons."

By 8:30 p.m. the session had ended and Hebert again approached Taus, asking, "Do you see what's happening in the newspapers?"

"What part? The sports section?" Taus would let Hebert answer his own question. This was partially taught by the Bureau, which was infamous for

never supplying, but always asking for information. This was part of Hebert's continuing probe on Taus' activities. The Freeport CIA knew Taus was on the Foreign Counter-Intelligence Division and were unaware that Taus was investigating their company, and finding their association with known Mafia figures. The CIA was probably wondering what this FBI agent was doing running a sports club in their community.

Hebert mentioned the news articles dealing with the U.S. Iranian initiatives concerning the sale of arms,

*The story broke in a Lebanese periodical called 'Al-Shiraa' just before the 1986 elections. It reported the United States was trading arms for hostages with Iran. There's much more to this affair than has been mentioned so far. What countries do you handle?*

Hebert showed he had more than a layman's knowledge of the Bureau, recognizing that the FCI divisions consisted of different squads handling different countries. "Just who do you know in the Bureau?" asked Taus.

Hebert mentioned some agents at FBI headquarters in Washington, who were unknown to Taus. Then he added another, Rivera, who worked at the FBI New York office dealing with Latin American cases. Taus knew Rivera was on the FBI's FCI division's Cuban squad. "What's your connection with Carmine Rivera?" Taus asked. "I met Cookie (Rivera's nickname) when I had a vacation in Nicaragua," replied Hebert.

"I don't understand the connection between your interest in the Iranian news article and your trip to Nicaragua," Taus replied, asking for more details. Hebert had dealings with Rivera and with the recent news article, both Hebert and Rivera was aware of the arms shipment. "Why don't you call Rivera and ask him about the newspaper instead of me?"

There was a moment of silence while George came up with a reply. *Rich! Come on. Put two and two together," chastised Hebert. "You are an Army officer. Look at what's happening in Latin America today. You are aware that the United States Army has deployed its troops in Honduras on training exercises in support of the Contras fighting against the Sandinista government in Nicaragua? I thought, as friends, it would be easier to talk to you rather than Rivera.*

Taus responded: "If I knew what you wanted after 20-years, George, I would try and help you. But you haven't told me anything yet."

Towards the end of the practice session, Hebert appeared at the entrance door. By 9 p.m. Taus and Hebert were sitting in the diner adjacent to Castle Securities. The pair ordered coffee and took up the conversation on the Iranian Arms deal. Hebert asked, "Are you aware of the bigger picture in this weapons shipment?"

"I suppose I am," Taus responded, "but why don't you tell me what's this all about?"

Struggling for the right word, Hebert's blunt style brought him directly to the point; "You weren't put here deliberately by the FBI? This sports program you're running, just happens to be in this town?" Taus nodded and asked Hebert to continue.

"There are two diverse groups on Long Island. They are the communist-

inspired left wing and the Republican ultra right wing. You must have seen the occasional protest groups that picketed Freeport's Post Office, complaining about U.S. involvement in Central America, particularly in Nicaragua?"

Taus answer, "Yes, I have. It disturbed me seeing portions of the Hispanic community here siding with the Sandinistas."

"That group is active here," Hebert sounded more like an FBI agent. "That's why we...(pausing). That's why a group of U.S. patriots are opposing them." Hebert's reference to a patriotic group indicated something furtive and organized. In trying to solicit information from Taus, Hebert looked frustrated. He only saw an empty expression on Taus' face.

The waitress was a woman in her thirties. She greeted Taus, "Hiya Rich. How was soccer tonight? My husband took Joey over to the gym tonight. Did he do well?"

While Taus nodded and made some small talk, Hebert sat mildly agitated but he started to realize that Taus' association with the sports club was genuine. With a wry look, Hebert sipped the cold coffee while the waitress, who was holding a steaming coffee um, continued to talk to Taus. Another customer interrupted her for an order.

Hebert continued his questions. "Do you remember Colonel Boris Pogoloff, one of our tactical officers at Penn Military? He was a major then." The question only drew a nod from Taus. Hebert added, "He was a member of our Political Science Club and the Young Republican Club. He knew quite a few people like General Sturm and Castellano." The names brought a sudden chill to Taus. Hebert sensed it and smiled. "You knew them. Didn't you?"

"How did you become acquainted with them?" asked Taus, trying to regain his composure. "In a manner, the same way you did," remarked Hebert. It was Colonel Pogoloff that introduced me to the Steering Committee. My father worked for the CIA. We know about your trips to Latin America in the seventies. It's your connection with the FBI that I don't understand."

General Sturm's untimely death shortly before Taus' appointment as an FBI agent upset the smooth machinery of the Steering Committee. To complicate matters, Admiral Rufus Lackland Taylor also met an untimely death. And the very person that secured Taus' position in the FBI, William C. Sullivan, died several months prior to his appointment. Evidently, no one on the committee knew that Sturm had groomed Taus to become their new insider, replacing Greg Lawson or Gary Smith. Certainly Hebert and his CIA associates were not aware. This accounted for the lack of contact with Taus after his entry into the FBI. He became a member of the enemy's camp when he pursued a legitimate investigation against the criminal activities of the Freeport CIA.

Taus cautiously acknowledged some of Hebert's facts and asked him what he wanted. Hebert replied, "We need your help in some matters. First, we think you may have been tasked to..." Hebert searched for words, "to check us out, to conduct an FBI investigation into our Freeport operation."

Taus did not respond. The soccer workout, his FBI day on the job, and the previous night's drill with his Army Reserve unit had taken a toll on him



and his mental acuity.

Hebert returned to his main point. "The headlines in the paper the other day on the Iranian arms trade for hostages. Some of your FBI people are focusing in on us." Hebert must have thought that Taus was being rather coy. Yet Hebert was not overly concerned. He had mentioned nothing more than that reported by the media, and both he and Taus knew the FBI was investigating his operation in Freeport.

Leaning closer to Taus, Hebert looked from side-to-side and whispered, "William Webster, your FBI director, has always been on our side. Some of your assistant directors are being prodded to make a mess for President Reagan. Webster agreed to Attorney General Meese's request to back off the investigation. Assistant Director Oliver "Buck" Revell is doing just that." Then Hebert mentioned Taus' close acquaintance, "Your missions to Latin America were with Nestor Sanchez, our division chief for Latin American Affairs in the Directorate of Operations."

"You're talking about the CIA," Taus was putting the old puzzle together. "Sanchez worked for the NSC, or did he work for the CIA?" Hebert replied:

*Both. He's one of us, but he raised too many obstacles, probably remembering what had happened to his old friend, John Jesus Angleton. Casey did not like Sanchez' attitude, saying he was over cautious. Sanchez has been working with us. He's a member of the Restricted Inter-agency Group.*

"Restricted what?" asked Taus.

*Oliver North's group. The ones involved in the Iranian Arms Initiatives. Sanchez left the Directorate Operations office around 1980. He joined the National Security Agency then, and has continued working with us.* Sanchez' transfer and Sturm's death explained the lack of contact Taus had with his former clandestine group. Now that Taus was an FBI agent, the newer leadership was wondering if he could be used again. That may have been part of Hebert's assignment that night. It struck Taus that Hebert was more concerned about an ongoing FBI investigation into the Freeport company. That could upset the National Security Council's clandestine operations, the CIA, the Reagan-Bush Administration and their agendas, and the Steering Committee.

"I haven't been contacted by anyone for a long time," noted Taus. "No one contacted me after General Sturm and Admiral Taylor passed away. Lawson disappeared, resigning from the FBI. In a way, I was happy to close that chapter of my life." Taus added that he was not working any cases directed against Hebert's company at that time. Finally, Taus asked, "Who's your boss and what do you want from me?"

"Dan Priscu. Let me speak with him then I'll get back to you." Hebert needed to confer with the CIA Station Chief. The next day at the FBI office, Taus asked Carmine Rivera from the Cuban squad about the situation. Agents referred to Rivera's squad as the Cuban squad, but its caseload included any communist-oriented Latin American country.

The squad's secretary told Taus that Rivera was in Washington, and

would return for two weeks. The other agents on his squad were unaware of Rivera's case. The Cuban squad's supervisor, William Branigan, overheard Taus questions and asked him to step into his cubicle.

Branigan wanted to know why Taus was interested in Rivera's highly sensitive investigation. Taus stated the news media had played upon it for several days and he was simply curious. Taus did not mention his meeting with Hebert. Branigan continued to caution Taus to avoid a confrontation by further inquiries. Taus told Branigan he would ask the supervisor from the Middle East squad what was happening. Branigan became visibly excited and said he would talk to Taus' supervisor.

Before Taus left, Branigan reminded him that he was not assigned to the case and to "stay away from the fire, lest you get burnt by it." Good advice, Taus thought. But Taus was involved.

In 1986, CIA agents David Studer and George Hebert introduced a new family to the Freeport Soccer Club. There was nothing unusual in recruiting new members for the club except that both CIA agents took pride in introducing the new family to Taus.

It was during another hectic weekday evening at a soccer practice for youngsters between ages five to seven-years old and Taus arrived a little late for the 7 p.m. practice at the school gymnasium. He was disappointed after a rather frustrating day in the FBI office.

#### **U.S. Attorney Blocking Investigation into CIA-Related Corruption**

For reasons then unknown to Taus, the U.S. attorney's office at the Eastern District of New York (EDNY) refused to issue subpoenas for wire and telephonic taps on Castle Securities in Freeport. This refusal was particularly upsetting to Taus since he had provided sworn statements that Castle was involved with several other financial institutions, including BCCI, that were associated with criminal activities, including drug trafficking and arms smuggling. Among the financial culprits was BCCI. Some of the information was based upon what he had learned from George Hebert.

In one of their frequent meetings, the week prior to this soccer practice, Hebert questioned Taus about the FBI's investigation into the Iran-Contra Affair. The usual "quid pro quo" followed with Taus saying FBI headquarters in Washington knew about several illegal financial deals concerning institutions associated with Castle. Taus' knowledge was based upon FBI reports that Haitian ruler, "Papa Doc" Duvalier, was doing business with an Egyptian businessman, Mohamed Al-Fayed, who was involved with several financial firms under a separate Bureau investigation.

Again, BCCI's name popped-up. This time certain arms purchases had been traced to BCCI and to accounts held by Al-Fayed. These illegal transactions were uncovered only because the Haitian government wanted to recover its missing funds, said to have been taken by Al-Fayed. In return, Hebert confirmed the story, adding more information. Taus' stoic looks encouraged Hebert to prove the connection with Al-Fayed a week later.

#### **Al-Fayed, Munitions and Movies**

During the night soccer practice, after Studer and Hebert introduced the new family, Taus had to leave them so as to set up the practice courts. The

mother came over to Taus and said he should be more interested in them. Taus apologized, saying he had a busy working day and needed to get the practice started.

The woman introduced herself as Robert Roth's mother. She noted with pride that Robert, a five-year old, was a movie star. He played the part of the toddler in Robin Williams' 1980 movie, "*The World According to Garp*." Hebert joined the conversation, while Studer took over Taus' responsibilities in organizing the young soccer players.

Hebert thought Taus was aware of who produced the movie and stated that Al-Fayed's son was the movie producer. This information further confirmed a relationship between Castle and Al-Fayed. What Hebert failed to realize was he had given Taus another connection between Castle and BCCI.

Taus took a greater interest in Mrs. Roth at that point. She mentioned that the movie was filmed in Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts. Such a location incurred great production costs. Taus asked her how her family got involved. Roth said she recently moved to Freeport, that her husband was now working with the Freeport company, and that meant Mr. Roth was working with Studer and Hebert at Castle Securities, the CIA station in Freeport.

### **Mohamed Al-Fayed**

The billionaire Mohamed Al-Fayed resided in London, where he raised a family and acquired the large department store, Harrod's of London. Al-Fayed made millions from his Middle Eastern business ventures. His own wife's brother, Adnan Khashoggi, was a major Saudi Arabian arms-dealer and central figure in the Irangate scandal.

Back in 1979, Mohamed Al-Fayed helped organize the Egyptian American Transport Service Company (EATSCO) where he held a controlling interest. In 1979, when Taus was on the FBINYO's Asian FCI squad, he received information about Al-Fayed. It came from a Long Island College dean who was a double agent (See "CIA Corrupt Activities.")

EATSCO's business was worldwide in scope, covering Asia, Europe, Africa and Latin America. When General Secord plead guilty to making false statements to Congress during the subsequent Irangate investigation, Secord acknowledged his close relationship with CIA Agent Edwin Wilson who set-up EATSCO.

The "Egypt" in EATSCO stemmed from Wilson's association with Al-Fayed, an established Egyptian shipping executive. Also in the late 1970s, Britain's MI6 was well aware of Al-Fayed arms ventures, particularly since EATSCO and its officials sold arms to the Irish Republican Army (IRA). MI6 is the British Secret Intelligence Service, formerly Section 6 of Military Intelligence. It is a non-uniformed or civilian government organization with functions resembling the U.S.'s CIA. [In late November 2005, Wilson decided to bring a lawsuit against the U.S. Government. He had served time in federal prison for unlawful weapons sales. He claimed his activities were approved by the CIA.]

The undercover objectives of the Freeport Soccer Club had been achieved. The original purpose of investigating an unknown group in Free-

port, with Mafia connections developed extraordinary information and disclosures involving national security matters. These consisted of illegal actions by people in the CIA and the Reagan-Bush administrations. Taus, as an FBI agent, was duty bound to investigate and report these matters.

Previously noted in this book, the Freeport Soccer Club was so successful in its objective that Bureau officials asked Taus to target the United Nations Diplomatic Corps with the same undercover organization. Though some foreign countries' diplomats may have taken offense to such a project, it was legally within the purview of both the FBI and CIA for national security interests. In the FBI's attempt to ascertain who was involved in the criminal organization and conspiracies in Freeport, Taus had uncovered the unlawful activities and operations of the CIA. The CIA was not acting on behalf of U.S. national security interests and future disclosures would reveal these crimes.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

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### BCCI and CIA

The *Washington Post* carried an article (December 3, 1986) entitled “Iran Arms Cash Is Tied to CIA-Run Accounts Aiding Afghan Rebels.” The Iran-Contra Arms Initiative and the subsequent scandal were being disclosed after the first revelations in the Lebanese weekly, *Al-Shiraa*, on November 3, 1986. Less than a month prior to the *Al-Shiraa* article, a CIA cargo plane was shot down over Nicaragua. Its sole surviving crewmember was the loadmaster, a former U.S. Marine by the name of Eugene Hasenfus. A windfall of evidence was collected from that crash, linking the CIA to the Contra War and to the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI).

BCCI maintained branches around the world and its branch in the Cayman Islands had become an impenetrable haven for financial transactions hiding money trails. The bank’s founder and owner, Agha Hasan Abedi and his successor Swaleh Naqvi, had established the offshore banking system in the Caymans during the mid-1970s and used the bank to mask their illegal financial transactions.

A web of corporations in the Caymans further disguised the management, the manipulation, and the money involved in these transactions by using a maze of companies and accounts. Other countries offering similar secrecy included Panama, Andorra, Monaco, Liechtenstein and the isles of Jersey and Man off the English Coast

These off-shore banks protected money associated with various criminal enterprises, including money laundering from drug trafficking, sham financial arrangements, the sale of weapons, and tax evasion.

The small Cayman Island had over 550 banks and financial institutions with over \$400 billion in deposits. Obviously, something undercover was occurring. BCCI used the Caymans not just for its banking operations, since 46 of the world’s 50 largest banks were there, but also due to the enormous numbers of corporations and companies registered there; over 22,000, including nearly every field of commerce, including real estate, shipping, trading, and insurance. BCCI also bought existing banks and financial institutions, including some in the United States.

As BCCI continued to wield its financial power, its indiscretions became more notorious. Even prior to 1985, many federal law enforcement agencies were well aware of BCCI's fraudulent and criminal activities. Finally in 1991, a resourceful and courageous district attorney addressed the criminality. New York County District Attorney Robert Morgenthau was described BCCI as "a sophisticated and corrupt criminal enterprise, organized from the top down to accumulate money and power."

Morgenthau initially indicted Abedi and Naqvi in 1991, and a year later, Clark Clifford, and Robert Altman. Altman was the former chairman and president respectively of First American Bank, which was taken over by BCCI. Clifford had been a presidential advisor since Harry Truman's days in the White House. Despite their credentials, Morgenthau indicted them for taking millions of dollars in bribes from BCCI in return for allowing BCCI to manipulate First American Bank's affairs.

In the indictments, Morgenthau outlined BCCI's worldwide criminal activities. The indictments stated:

BCCI achieved its ends in the United States and abroad by paying bribes to bank regulators and central bankers in Pakistan, Nigeria, Morocco, Senegal, Tunisia, Ivory Coast, Congo, Zambia, Argentina and Peru, defrauding in the process the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Nigerian National Supply Company and the African Development Bank.

BCCI used front men to become owners of Banco Mercantil of Colombia, the Independence Bank of Encino, California, and the National Bank of Georgia, through fraud. It became owner of First American through fraud in which Clifford and Altman played leading roles.

The Manhattan's district attorney moved vigorously against BCCI, while federal authorities looked the other way. In a 1985 interview with Dan Priscu, Castle Securities' President and the CIA Station Chief in Freeport, Taus was told that although New York was the financial capital of the world, that there were other powerful forces at work, destabilizing its financial prowess.

Priscu explained to Taus that New York's Manhattan Island contained the world's leading financial institutions or their representatives, as well as the Federal Reserve Bank and gold reserves from most major foreign powers buried underground in giant vaults. These gold reserves could easily be carted from one country's gold vault to another in the underground Manhattan gold vaults to reflect an inter-country exchange. Priscu said that with the coming information age created by computers, that any geographic location would become superfluous in financial transactions, except without legal or jurisdictional spheres. The only competing geo-financial community was in Europe, especially if Europe was able to organize itself with a single currency.

When Taus expressed his concerns, the old OSS warhorse said not to worry, the CIA would handle things. Seeing that Priscu was adopting his usual machismo role, Taus pressed him for details during the interview.

Priscu responded:

*We have our own empire being built, such as this little company here. We are tied together in important areas of the globe. We can influence and direct other financial institutions, world leaders, and organizations.*

Priscu praised the ascension of Ronald Reagan to the American presidency in 1980, hailing Reagan's financial policies. Priscu boasted, "Reagan would use the threat of communism to implement his policies and agendas." Taus had heard similar rhetoric where men sought power. A prime example was when General Douglas MacArthur opposed President Harry Truman's policies in the Korean War. Truman promptly fired MacArthur. This time it seemed "the tail was wagging the dog." President Reagan eagerly followed his CIA director's plans under the guise of stopping world communism. At least halting communism was the reason promulgated for nearly every foreign policy matter that engaged the Reagan Administration.

When Reagan installed William Casey as director of the CIA, the old games played by the OSS surfaced again, much to the chagrin of those who led the reforms of the late Senator Frank Church, who had attempted to correct the "rogue warriors" back in the mid-1970s.

Casey nurtured his relationship with Abedi and BCCI, using BCCI for financial operations such as bribes, money laundering, and financing of arms deals. The CIA opened several accounts at BCCI, as well as its First American satellite in Washington, D.C. The CIA had over forty accounts at First American for routine business, according to *False Profits: The Inside Story of BCCI*. In the book the author stated: "In an effort to circumvent Congress, Casey, together with NSC officials, cooked up a secret plan with Oliver North."

CIA Station Chief Priscu informed Taus of the CIA's tactics and resources that were circumventing the laws of the United States and other legitimate foreign powers. Priscu spoke glowingly of an emerging new world order that would achieve Reagan's end, the fall of communism, and create an entirely new global government.

Taus told me that he did not doubt Priscu's thoughts and that Priscu was a dedicated CIA veteran who had a worldview of political affairs. Taus said that the FBI never tried to update or inform its agents about such matters in a formalized and periodical meeting. The FBI did provide its supervisors with weekly updates, but they were wholly inadequate and redacted of vital information from other U.S. intelligence agencies.

The typical FBI Foreign Counter-Intelligence agent was provided few tools, fewer briefings or information and lacked law enforcement powers due to the Department of State and CIA interference with FBI investigations. This interference was usually attributed to a need not to offend foreign diplomats and officials who were caught breaking U.S. laws.

In its mid-June edition, *Time* magazine appeared with a cover story:

The World's Sleaziest Bank: BCCI is more than just a criminal bank. From interviews with sources close to BCCI, Time has pieced together a portrait of a clandestine division of the bank called the Black Network, which functions as a global intelligence operation and a mafia-like enforcement squad. Operating primarily out of the bank's offices in Karachi, Pakistan, the 1500 employee

Black Network has used sophisticated spy equipment and techniques, along with bribery, extortion, kidnapping and even, by some accounts, murder.

The Black Network—so named by its members—stops at almost nothing to further the bank's aims the world over...The strange and still murky ties between BCCI and the intelligence agencies of several countries are so pervasive that even the White House has become entangled. As *TIME* reported earlier this month, the National Security Council has used BCCI for covert operations. Moreover, investigators have told *Time* that the Defense Intelligence Agency has maintained a slush-fund account with BCCI, apparently to pay for clandestine activities.

The *Time* article went further and accused the federal government for obstructing the lawful investigations:

In the U.S. investigators now say openly that the Justice Department has not only reined in its own probe of the bank but is also part of a concerted campaign to derail any full investigation. Says Robert Morgenthau: "We have had no cooperation from the Justice Department since we first asked for records in March 1990. In fact, they are impeding our investigation, and the Justice Department representatives are asking witnesses not to cooperate with us."

*Time* was accusing the U.S. government of a massive cover-up. *Time* reporters, Jonathan Beaty and S.C. Gwynne, continued their story:

The bribes and intelligence connections may offer an explanation for the startling regulatory inaction. The Justice Department has hindered an investigation by Massachusetts Senator John Kerry, whose Sub-committee on Terrorism, Narcotics and International Operations was the first to probe BCCI's illegal operations. According to Kerry, the Justice Department has refused to provide documents and has blocked a deposition by a key witness, citing interference with its own investigation of BCCI. To date, however, the Justice Department investigation in Washington has issued only one subpoena. "We have had a lot of difficulty getting any answers at all out of Justice," said Kerry.

According to Jack Blum, Kerry's chief investigator in 1988-89, the lack of cooperation was so pervasive and so successful in frustrating his efforts to investigate BCCI that he now says he believes it was part of a deliberate strategy.

Blum stated, "There's no question in my mind that it's a calculated effort inside the federal government to limit the investigation. The only issue is whether it's a result of high-level corruption or if it's designed to hide the illegal government activities." By late July 1991, the global media was fully aware of the BCCI story, its Black Network and the role played by BCCI in the Iran-Contra Initiatives.

Part of Abedi's success lay in his ambitious nature; the other part lay in his lack of integrity. The success of his bank, BCCI, was attributable to his accumulation of petrodollar deposits from the Middle East and Near East.

Abedi asserted that BCCI was the first bank from a third world country to reap the benefits of petrodollar deposits.

Fortunately for Abedi when he formed his new bank, there was an international banking boom initially created by the new Eurodollar, which helped move deposits from first world banks to third world banks. Growing from a capital base of \$2.5 million in 1972, BCCI was a multi-billion dollar enterprise by 1978. Half of its bank branches were in Britain. It did not take long for Britain's intelligence services and the CIA to become interested in its activities. Eventually Britain denied BCCI an "authorized status" as a bank



in England. By doing this, Britain helped precipitate BCCI's status as an "offshore" financial institution, effectively making it a lawless entity. BCCI had become a stateless multinational corporation. Yet foreign banks were quite willing to do business with it.

Bank of America saw no problem in selling its equity to BCCI. Abedi recruited prominent Americans such as Bert T. Bertram Lance, who had been President Carter's budget director and the former chairman of the National Bank of Georgia. Clifford was another influential friend with numerous political ties who Abedi provided bribes for favors.

Clifford co-authored the National Security Act of 1947, establishing the National Security Council and the Central Intelligence Agency. Throughout Clifford's career he had been connected to influential and powerful government and business leaders. Through Clifford and Altman, Abedi exercised control over First American Bank of New York.

There appeared to be a controlled release of news concerning BCCI and other outlaw banking operations. Whether media people or more powerful forces were censoring the information became speculative. People in key government positions blocked investigations. Investigative reporters found their stories blocked by editors refusing to print them, possibly fearing retaliation from the rich and powerful business and government leaders. There was good reason for reporters to be concerned, it seemed those who had developed substantial information and evidence were physically eliminated.

By midsummer of 1991, two investigative reporters who were working on the BCCI story were found dead. The first, Anson Ng, was a reporter for the *Financial Times* in London. According to Senator Alan Cranston who spoke before the Kerry subcommittee, "The British journalist mentioned that he was working on a quote, big story, unquote, related to BCCI and Guatemala." Further, it was revealed that Ng's assassination was the work of a professional hit squad. Documents were missing from Ng's desk.

Within two weeks, another reporter, Danny Casolaro was murdered in Martinsburg, West Virginia. Casolaro had been working on BCCI along with a much greater story involving a conspiracy termed "the Octopus."

Informants for the FBI and the investigative reporters were saying that CIA Director Casey's relation with Abedi was so close that BCCI became an instrument for U.S. intelligence policies. BCCI was financing CIA black operations, brokering weapons sales and laundering drug money. There was some evidence that U.S. secret weapon technology was being provided to BCCI and in turn provided to hostile foreign powers. For instance, it was leaked that Saudi Arabia was engaged in the unauthorized transfer of U.S. military supplies to several hostile governments:

#### **Syria, Iraq and Bangladesh.**

Taus' investigations in the mid-1980s revealed transfers and sales of weapons to Iraq and Iran, and his reports of these criminal activities were ignored by FBI supervisors. CIA agents Priscu and Hebert had acknowledged their cover-up of these matters during an interview with Ken Cummins, a *Washington City Paper* reporter who wrote an article entitled, "The K-Team" on December 4, 1992.

Arif Durrani was a Pakistani arms dealer convicted of selling U.S. HAWK missile system parts to the Iranian government, while the banker for the arms deal was BCCI. Durrani claimed he was part of an operation involving the Israeli government and the United States, and involved in efforts to bring about the release of American hostages in Lebanon.

Information gathered by Lawrence Lifschultz, a correspondent for the Far East Economic Review, disclosed that Durrani was only a part of an organization that dealt in millions of dollars worth of arms and military supplies. Their operations were illegal and unauthorized, and well in excess of the amounts reported in the Iran-Contra Arms Initiative case. Durrani claimed BCCI and First American Bank in New York handled weapons purchases and shipments.

Both the editors and writers, Beaty and Gwynne, for *Time*, pursued the BCCI story again in the first week of September 1991. Their headline read, "Not just a bank. You can get anything you want through BCCI – guns, planes, even nuclear-weapons technology." Beaty and Gwynne wrote:

(BCCI) is a vast, stateless, multinational corporation that deploys its own intelligence agency, complete with a paramilitary wing and enforcement units, known collectively as the Black Network. It maintains its own diplomatic relations with foreign countries through bank "protocol officers" who use seemingly limitless amounts of cash to pursue Abedi's goals.

The third world bank goals involved "transactions that have often upset the uneasy techno-military balance sought by the United States and other major world powers engaging in government-to-government (weapons) sales.

Beaty and Gwynne identified some of the following countries which used BCCI as a middleman for weapons deals: the United States, China, Israel, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, the Soviet Union and Pakistan." Another disturbing item was that Abedi's BCCI organization was providing financial and technical support for Pakistan's acquisition of nuclear weaponry.

In early 1992, an insider at BCCI spoke out. Sheikh Kamal Adham was the former head of Saudi Arabian intelligence and the brother-in-law to the late King Faisal. Adham was a shareholder in BCCI and the First American Bank. Before an Arab audience, Adham stated:

*If you want to buy arms, they (the Western powers) know exactly how the deal is made. If you want to make a venture in atomic energy, which they don't want anybody to do, they monitored all that. Suddenly a new vehicle appeared on the scene which belonged to the Third World, and this vehicle was spreading so fast that it had branches all over the world. (The Third World) had their own vehicle now so the money that came from all the oil business went to this vehicle instead of the banks of the Western World.*

Adham was redefining BCCI not so much as a bank (than) as a geopolitical entity designed to siphon petrodollar deposits away from Western banks, a force certain to confound U.S. efforts to maintain a techno-military balance of its own design among Third World nations.

Sheikh Adham commented further that many Arab banking organizations with international branches were being targeted. He believed it was intentional because the New World Order of the Western powers did not al-

low anyone to have his own vehicles to do with it as he wants. "There were so many things that were done through the bank (BCCI) that are regarded by the Third World as an achievement, like funding the Pakistani atomic energy program." Adham was referring to developing a nuclear bomb too.

Adham's speech astonished the West. In the Middle East, Adham was well respected and his statement seemed to indicate that Pakistan had a nuclear capability through BCCI. Adham's speech was delivered during the time he anticipated being indicted for fraud and bribery in the United States in connection with the BCCI investigation. To avoid prosecution, Adham hired powerful U.S. political allies, while warning the Bush Administration that he knew more and would reveal it if needed.

Despite the investigations, only half-truths were emerging about BCCI and who actually controlled it. Adham was half right and so were *Time* reporters Beaty and Gwynne. BCCI had evolved as indicated but not without the assistance and complicity of the Western powers, particularly their intelligence services. Investigations were stifled by the U.S. Justice Department and CIA officials, as Taus had discovered, but not to protect BCCI itself.

There was a much greater involvement than some mere bribery of a few powerful and former U.S. officials such as Clifford and Altman. The 1990s investigation into BCCI was being stalled by high-ranking government leaders. Such was the case back in the 1980s when Taus' case was stalled and stymied by Justice Department officials and members of the Senate and House Intelligence Oversight Committees.

The block by members of Congress and the Justice Department arose because of the political ramifications, the danger of exposing covert operations of the CIA and other intelligence offices, and involvement of White House politicians.

Taus viewed the cover-ups involving BCCI as paralleling the cover-ups he was encountering from FBI supervisors. These concerned the involvement of financial institutions with covert CIA activities that he discovered with Castle Securities.

As Taus had experienced, other FBI agents also complained about their investigations "spinning its wheels because it was deemed too political and decisions were being held up in Washington." The frustrations of FBI agents were now being heard by *Time* reporters.

President George Bush denied knowing Kamal Adham, which seemed implausible since Adham was the director of Saudi Arabia's intelligence in 1976 when Bush was director of the CIA.



## CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

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### More on Iran-Contra Crimes

**F**rom an investigation originally targeted against the Mafia, far-reaching criminal activities and operations were discovered. An FBI case was opened in New York as a consequence of a Pennsylvania state investigative report published in 1980 on organized crime in the Pizza and Cheese industries. The FBI New York Field Office was already pursuing several separate Mafia figures based on the Pennsylvania report. Eventually a Joint Narcotics Task Force (JNTF) was organized at the FBI New York office to bring cases to a successful prosecution.

The connections between known Mafiosi and the Pizza and Cheese industries throughout the United States and Canada were one of the many ways that drugs were made available to the drug users in the United States. Cheese businesses, which were known or suspected of dealing with the Mafia, were placed under physical surveillances, producing some stunning results. In Freeport, Long Island, one such cheese company was frequented by Mafia figures and CIA agents.

The CIA ran a station in Freeport that engaged in various unlawful activities in the United States, Central America, Europe and the Middle East. The first indications of any criminal wrongdoings had been investigated by the FBI in the late 1970s, during which the FBI discovered connection with various government agencies.

Since the Freeport CIA Station had contacts overseas in Soviet Eastern Satellite countries, a full FCI (foreign counter-intelligence) investigation was opened. But little headway was made in discovering what these individuals were doing and their connections to the U.S. Government. The CIA-front personnel explained that they were non-government covert operators helping the United States because of their patriotic feelings and a desire to make some money.

In a 1992 interview with the *Washington City Paper* they claimed they never did make any money, but spent eight months working for this clandestine company, expending huge sums of money on various expenses such as traveling, telephones, and living expenses. They claimed to be either fully

employed by other companies, such as Macy's, or totally unemployed. Just how could they manage to take time off of their jobs, or spend anything if they were unemployed was never explained.

Not until the CIA connection to the cheese company was discovered, did a more productive case begin. Taus was assigned to the Criminal Division when he discovered CIA members associating with suspected Mafiosi during physical surveillance of the Cremosa Cheese Company in Freeport. Taus was able to coordinate his case with FBI agents from the Foreign Counter-Intelligence division who already had an open case on several members of the CIA operation. The CIA station chief was posing as an FBI Informant to extract information from the FBI in a quid-pro-quo situation.

The suspected drug-trafficking connection would shed light upon other worldwide CIA activities. After numerous arrests in the Pizza Connection case, only one of the known and suspected crime members from Taus' cases was indicted. However, Taus discovered criminal violations conducted by the clandestine CIA secret team that would dwarf any previous cases.

The CIA station was involved in financial frauds with unsecured loans unauthorized securities, shell corporations, the Savings & Loans debacle, illegal weapons transfers, drug-trafficking and money-laundering. Further, they unlawfully participated and meddled in areas handled by other government entities such as the Departments of State, Defense, Justice and Commerce. Their involvement was often unauthorized and unlawful, with serious blowback consequences to the United States.

Because Taus knew of the criminal activities of the CIA, and was blocked from further investigations and reporting of these matters, he refused to sign the bi-annual FBI statement acknowledging to Congress that he knew of no unreported criminal activities. The result was accusations against him of a criminal nature designed to discredit anything further that he may say. A virtual political assassination of a dutiful law enforcement agent occurred. His investigations had struck at the heart of a criminal conspiracy.

### **One of many CIA Secret Companies**

The CIA has always had many secret companies or affiliate properties called CIA proprietaries. There were and are hundreds of companies that have and do allow the CIA to use their facilities. These are airlines, law firms, public relations firms, and financial institutions. Among the most well known CIA airlines were Air America and Southern Air Transport.

Under the Eisenhower Administration, DCI Allan Dulles developed a plan to create a unified Cuban opposition, code named "Operation Pluto." This plan called for a paramilitary force outside of Cuba and with logistical support for covert military operations in Cuba against the communist government of Fidel Castro. A critical element in the Pluto program would be airpower.

A failing Miami-based air cargo company with a four-acre property lot, one C-46, and another leased aircraft, was for sale. DCI Dulles acquired this company, known as Southern Air Transport (SAT) in August 1960 for exactly \$307,506.10, thereby creating a new CIA proprietary company. SAT

quickly grew in the early 1960s with Atlantic and Pacific operations and a fleet of airplanes and government contracts. The CIA placed present and former intelligence people on the board of directors and in management. There was an Executive Committee for Air Proprietary Operations established by the DCI on February 5, 1963, to oversee parts of the covert operations.

In 1973, CIA director Colby ordered Southern Air Transport liquidated, and it was sold to Stanley G. Williams, who was once a manager for SAT.

Although ownership changed, the same work for the CIA continued. In 1978, SAT did work for the Iranian Air Force. With the fall of the Shah of Iran and mounting losses, Williams sold SAT to James H. Bastian, a lawyer who had been SAT's legal counsel during its CIA years.

Despite financial losses, the company never folded. Slowly, it regained profitability with revenues of nearly \$10 million in 1982. Coming from two other CIA proprietary airlines, William G. Langton was hired as President of SAT by Bastian. Experienced in the air cargo business, Langton came from Evergreen International and Flying Tigers airlines. By 1985, SAT revenues were nearly \$39 million, 60 percent of which were contracts from the Pentagon's Military Airlift Command (MAC).

IAS-Guernsey was an Irish firm hired to provide flights to the Marxist government of Angola. IAS-Guernsey subcontracted their business to Southern Air, becoming SAT's largest private account. In the second half of 1984, SAT flew 296 flights to Angola, and doubled that number in 1985. Besides the Pentagon's MAC contracts, the airline had contracted with the State Department for monthly flights to Havana, Cuba and flights to the Nicaraguan rebels in Honduras.

In the final report issued by independent counsel Lawrence Walsh, it was stated that the HAWK missile shipment of November 1985 was sent from Israel to an unidentified European country. Walsh did not disclose the name of that country saying it was classified. However, U.S. Air Force personnel at the American airbase in Portugal Azores Islands noted the arrival of the Israeli flight. Since Portugal wanted to know the purpose of the flight and the U.S. government refused to provide the information, Portugal refused permission for it to land. The CIA then contracted with SAT to provide an aircraft for the arms shipment.

The head of the American delegation to Iran, Robert McFarlane, was quick to point out that he had personally intervened with the Portuguese foreign minister. However, other reliable sources indicate that the European country was Hungary and that a lengthy and secretive relationship existed for years between the CIA and Hungary.

#### **Amalgamated Commercial Enterprise.**

An article appearing in *The Wall Street Journal* stated that Amalgamated Commercial Enterprises (ACE) was established in 1984 to provide maintenance and fuel services, as well as two aircraft for the Contra supply operations. The article continued that SAT used ACE to funnel money for Oliver North's Enterprise for the Contra War. Southern Air Transport purchased ACE in 1985. North's White House diaries recorded an entry on November

12, 1985, concerning ACE: "Tell Alan (Fiers, the CIA Central American Task Force Chief) that ACE is OK."

A Miami attorney, John Mattes, said that North told Southern Air Transport to contact Steven Sandor Samos to set up ACE for an off-the-shelf Panamanian company. ACE's employees worked for another Panamanian company owned by Samos, known as the International Management & Trust Corporation. North had established bank accounts in Switzerland and money from these accounts were sent to Banco de Iberoamerica, a Panama bank owned by the Arab Banking Corporation. ACE's bank accounts for the Contra operations were also at Banco de Iberoamerica.

### **Steven Sandor Samos, Hungarian Drug Trafficker**

Samos was a Hungarian, a drug-trafficker, and money-launderer, who sold off-the-shelf dummy or shell corporations to anybody who needed one.

In the late 1970s, Samos helped Tony Fernandez and Ray Corona, a CIA contract agent, also drug traffickers, to buy the Sunshine State Bank in Miami." Samos turned state's evidence in the mid-1980s against Corona while receiving immunity from prosecution for his admission of laundering drug money.

The FBI's New York Field Office had references to Samos in both its Criminal Division and Foreign Counter Intelligence Division (FCI) under Hungary. Samos assisted Lawrence Iorizzo, an associate of the Colombo organized crime family launder money through offshore companies.

### **Lawrence Iorizzo and Adrian Khashoggi**

Among people for whom files existed in the FBI's Criminal and FCI divisions in New York were Iorizzo and Khashoggi. Iorizzo was in the gasoline business in New York and charged with bootlegging gasoline and pocketing the taxes in a scam with a Capo in the Colombo crime family, Michael

Franzese. Iorizzo also engaged in financial scams with Mario Renda, the Long Island money broker, convicted felon and Mafia associate connected to many CIA officials.

Iorizzo said he met Renda through a mutual friend, V. Leslie Winker, another con man in 1981. Iorizzo's affidavit stated:

Winkler told me that Renda was very close to Adnan Khashoggi, an Arab oil magnate, and that Renda might be able to assist me in obtaining a Kuwaiti oil contract. Renda explained that Khashoggi owned property in the town where I lived and wanted to build a helicopter pad on his estate but had encountered resistance from local authorities. Renda told me that I could ingratiate myself with Khashoggi if I could assist in obtaining the necessary permits.

The affidavit connected Samos with Renda through a link with a New York bank, First United Fund of Garden City, Long Island, and one of Samos' off-the-shelf Panamanian companies owned by Iorizzo, called Houston Holdings (HH).

Iorizzo stated:

*I explained to Renda that HH was a Panamanian 'shelf corporation inasmuch as I had literally purchased it with a lawyer (Samos) in Panama who maintains them, along with other entities, on the shelf of a bookcase in his office in Panama. This lawyer's last name was Samos,*



*and I believe that I had been introduced to him by V. Leslie Winkler or our mutual acquaintance, Eric D'Antin.*

*Renda, V. Leslie Winkler, and I discussed that HH was a company which had been originally created and used as an offshore 'cash laundry' by its previous owner. I explained that HH had been used in prior years by its previous owner to hold several millions of dollars in Panamanian banks and financial institutions. I had purchased the financial statements of this company from Samos prior years along with the stock of the company for \$10,000."*

**Nestor Sanchez.**

In 1969 and 1973, Nestor Sanchez was involved in diplomatic liaison flights to Latin America, Taus, then an Army helicopter pilot, was on several of these flights, with other intelligence agents. Sanchez continued in high governmental posts for the next 30 years. Among the government positions he held was that of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Inter-American affairs.

Sanchez was also a CIA official and special envoy for the National Security Council. He was a close friend and associate of Oliver North. Samos mentioned Sanchez in his grand jury testimony, saying Sanchez told CIA contract agent Tony Fernandez about Samos and his business. Fernandez was involved with smuggling over 1.5 million pounds of marijuana into the U.S. from Colombia from 1977 to 1981. After being arrested and jumping bail, Fernandez was apprehended in Brazil.

Sicilian Mafioso boss Gaetano "Don Tanino" Badalamenti also fled to Brazil in 1981. In 1984, after being extradited to the United States, he turned state's evidence and was released from prison in 1990, despite receiving a 30-year sentence. FBI files identified Nestor Sanchez as being in Panama in the mid-1970s, as reflected in his own testimony before the Senate Subcommittee on Terrorism, Narcotics and International Operations. Sanchez tried to deny any relationship to Samos in his 1988 congressional testimony. However, he did phrase that denial in the present tense to avoid conflict with FBI records and files that indicated otherwise.

**The Hungarian Connection to SAT**

Early in 1981, the FBI had extensive information on a Hungarian firm, Technoimpex and a U.S. technology trading company, Northwest Industries (NWI). FBI headquarters and several FBI Field Offices were involved in this investigation, including FBI Field Offices in Oklahoma City, Chicago and New York. Since Technoimpex was in an Eastern Bloc country, and NWI was engaging in business with them, they were both listed in FBI files as "Open and Pending Investigations."

NWI reputedly hired Terry Kent Reed, a former U.S. Air Force sergeant and CIA asset. Reed instantly rose from salesman to Vice-President in the company. Emery West, the president of NWI and a former Hungarian refugee, was deeply involved with the CIA, FBI and KGB. West told Reed that they would provide the FBI's Oklahoma City Field Office with information about KGB moles in Technoimpex. Since Soviet Satellite countries had their share of intelligence officers occupying company positions, any U.S. com-

pany, doing business with them was asked to provide information to the CIA and FBI.

In 1982, Terry Reed decided to set-up his own company. Reed Kerr and Associates, a machine tool and automation consulting firm, whose first client was Toshiba Machine Company of America in Chicago. Toshiba sold restricted technology to the Soviets between 1982 to 1984, resulting in an intensive investigation into Toshiba by the FBI. When Reed acquired Toshiba as an account, it was a penetration operation by the CIA. Reed claimed to be working for the FBI while at Technoimpex, and he was supplying the Oklahoma City Field Office with information. By the time he started his own firm, he was working for the CIA, and any information he supplied to the FBI was first cleared by the CIA.

Intelligence agencies do not like handling assets or operatives who supply other intelligence agencies with information, even if those other agencies are with the U.S. or other friendly governments. As early as 1982, Reed met Oliver North who used the alias John Cathey. North had been assigned as a staffer on the National Security Council staff on August 4, 1981. Within six months, Reed claims he met North, along with FBI SAC Edwin Enright of the Oklahoma City Field Office.

The meeting between Terry Reed, Enright and Oliver North had North identifying himself as a CIA agent. According to Reed, North said to Enright:

*We're getting into a sensitive area here, Ed. I'm sure Terry is aware of the problems for a CIA agent operating within CONUS (Continental United States) where laws bar the CIA from operating. Let's not create any needless problems. I'm sure you'll agree you should excuse yourself before continuing."*

Taus could not imagine any FBI supervising agent, heading a major FBI Field Office, taking that kind of suggestion from anyone, whether they were with the CIA or the NSC. That kind of talk would constitute a federal violation, which in this case, SAC Enright would have to further investigate and report, rather than abet and follow. In any case, Enright had to report this incidence and determine if higher authority agreed for Enright to continue his role with Oliver North.

On November 7, 1984, North called Reed and spoke cryptically about an "off-the-shelf, self-sustaining entity that could perform certain activities on behalf of the United States." North made reference to the Southern Air Transport operation in Florida and a team of SAT pilots, which caught Reed's interest.

On March 16, 1985, William Cooper, who would later pilot and die in the Hasenfus C-123 shoot down, told Reed that SAT was considering a start-up operation in Mexico that could use Reed's talents. Reed was asked to conduct a feasibility study for a machine tool company as a front to operate in Mexico and that SAT would assist in that operation.

The CIA would establish contact with Technoimpex, the Hungarian trading firm now with an office in Mexico. Reed said the written study he submitted included the possibility of bringing in outside investors with interna-

tional ties, and this included the idea of a Hungarian firm operating in Mexico. Due to Mexican laws, it would be necessary to penetrate an existing machine tool operation through a stock purchase or merger to avoid official scrutiny. Reed decided to check out this idea by calling an old KGB ally, Joseph Bona, who assisted NWI and Technoimpex in their joint venture.

Through a series of coincidences, Reed claimed he found Bona "functioning as the Director-General of an industrial firm called Cortec, S.A. It was headquartered, as luck would had it, near Mexico City."

In Reed's study, he suggested an international camouflage, which involved placing a high technology trading company in a third world country, such as Mexico, "and develop the proper supply conduit that could deliver 'things' in addition to machine tools, the company's cover business."

By this time, the FBI New York office Hungarian and Romanian squad was inundated with information on Technoimpex. CIA officials were making weekly visits to the 25<sup>th</sup> floor of the Javits Federal Office Building where the FCI division was located. They spoke to FBI case agents under the FBI squad supervisor's eyes, probing FBI agents assigned to the squad, seeking whatever additional information they had about the FBI's pursuits. As an example, a CIA agent with a false cover would pose as a businessman and contact the FBI Field Office, seeking the FBI handling agent for whatever country or matter that concerned the CIA.

Taus experienced this several times when probing CIA agents masqueraded as businessmen and notified the Bureau that they intended to do business with Soviet Satellites countries. On some occasions the deceit was evident. With the increasing probes of the CIA, the FBI supervisor held a meeting to discuss the touchy situation.

#### **The FCI Compartmentalization Meeting**

The squad supervisor's meeting dealt with the need for compartmentalization, stating, "You are reminded that your cases are classified 'Secret.' We compartmentalize our records and information for very good reasons." It was directed at Taus' attempt to develop information on his Freeport leads where CIA officers and agents were conducting illegal and criminal activities with far-flung operations, both internationally and domestically. Taus sensed an FBI cover-up of the CIA's criminal activities.

Intelligence reports demonstrated there was little threat pose to the United States. The Soviet Union was collapsing, her satellites were starving, her own republics were clamoring for separation, internal crime was escalating, and the Communist Party was yielding to the calls for democracy and capitalism. When the KGB tried to penetrate a U.S. Intelligence activity, they were too clumsy. They lacked adequate resources and could only achieve something if their targets were weak. Consequently, the faults lie with the U.S. Intelligence agencies that produce such agents as Richard Miller and Aldrich Ames.



## CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

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### Sanctioned Dominican Drug Trafficking

**T**here were other groups besides the Italian Mafia that handled drug trafficking in major metropolitan areas. As early as 1983, a new drug appeared in the inner cities: crack-cocaine. Costing considerably less than the cocaine hydrochloride process used for making the addictive drug, the ample supply of cocaine that flooded into the United States could be converted into by a much cheaper process called freebasing. Crack-cocaine was being produced for the ghetto marketplace where its cheaper price made it available to the masses. But it was far more addictive and deadly than the former cocaine. A “hit” would cost a user less than two dollars.

When the Italian Mafia decided not to service the ghetto, other criminal groups emerged. The cocaine trade was controlled by powerful cartels, some with CIA connections, while smaller groups became the middlemen in the production and distribution of crack-cocaine. In the five boroughs of New York City there is a substantial presence of emigrants from the Dominican Republic, and this group would play prominent roles in street-level drug sales.

Three separate criminal investigations were triggered from three separate federal agencies, and each investigation would be halted by the U.S. Justice Department. The CIA station in Freeport, Long Island, provided information on the distribution channels to an FBI special agent.

In the same year, 1984, Taus was called into the FBI New York Field Office. Whenever a major raid took place, agents from other criminal squad would be temporarily assigned to provide the manpower for the operation. This raid was so large that the FBI New York office could not accommodate all its agents for the orientation meeting, so the meeting took place at the former Navy base at Floyd Bennett Field in Brooklyn.

Although the Naval base had been closed for several years, other federal agencies had offices located at the base. These included the U.S. Coast Guard aviation unit, U.S. Parks Service, New York City Police Department (NYCPD) aviation section, New York City Police Department’s helicopter unit.

Over 400 FBI agents and the New York City police officers met inside a

hangar at 3:30 a.m. on a cold wintry morning. Assistant Special Agent-In-Charge (ASAC) James Koesler stood up on a mobile helicopter landing platform and yelled through a bullhorn to quiet the assembled law enforcement officers. "We are conducting a joint FBI and New York Police Department raid upon an illegal numbers racket run by Latin Americans. We believe they are mainly from the Dominican Republic."

Within an hour the officers traveled to the Brooklyn docks in a long line of Bureau cars and police squad cars. Situated immediately adjacent to the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway (BQE), on the Brooklyn docks, were several hundred blue-and white New York Police Department patrol cars with their assigned officers. High-ranking police officials, one and two-stars on their lapels, were directing traffic, lining up the cars for their assigned areas.

Taus' light-blue Dodge Diplomat moved to the head of four police patrol cars. As Taus exited his bucar, the police officers from the four cars approached him. A cold swift morning wind made Taus open his rear trunk to spread a tactical map for the raid they would conduct on just one store in Brooklyn.

Simultaneously the other several hundred cars and law enforcement officers would conduct similar raids in the five borough area. Except for the hustle-and-bustle of agents and police, the docks were empty. The overhead BQE highway was beginning to come to life with commuter traffic. One lone figure could be seen, standing on the railing of the BQE. It was a *New York Post* newspaper reporter who was taking a picture for the next day's front-page story. The *Post* had been tipped off to the secret raid.

Hundreds of agents and police vehicles left the docks after completing their individual briefings, proceeding to their assigned locations, waiting for their fellow officers to get to more distant areas, such as the Bronx. At 9 a.m. the signal came over the police radios that everyone was in position and to start the raids.

With weapons drawn, Taus, three FBI agents, and seven police officers entered the front door of a store located on a busy street in Brooklyn. A few Hispanic customers were waiting on line at two windows inside the store. It looked like a third-world bank. The worried numbers buyers were asked for identification and then released. Two young Hispanic female window clerks were quite unconcerned about the raid. They were questioned prior to their release and a thorough search made of the store.

### **Targets All Tipped Off in Advance**

Approximately one thousand dollars were recovered in one-dollar bills and small change. A 32-caliber revolver and a small envelope containing crack-cocaine were also found in a rear office desk. However, the local manager was not present, nor were any of the other local managers in the 120 other store fronts that were raided. No big-fish were caught in the massive raid. The lone *New York Post* reporter, who stood on the BQE, was not the only person tipped off about the raids.

The unsettling part of the massive raids was that other criminal operations were taking place, by the same Latin American groups. The numbers store illegal gambling was just one aspect. Drug trafficking of the new

crack-cocaine and its subsequent money-laundering operation were not touched. Taus' FBI supervisor was not interested in the small envelope of crack. Certainly this store was not being used to sell drugs. There were other locations. One such location evidently sold crack to the absent store manager. Where were the profits of these operations being used?

### **The CIA in the Ghetto.**

The CIA had violated its congressional charter years earlier by operating within the United States and engaging in criminal activities. Taus was receiving reports from the FBI New York office Criminal Division that vehicles registered to Castle Securities, the subject of Taus' Freeport investigation, were showing up in the Bronx and their occupants were associating with known Dominican drug traffickers.

Dominican drug trafficking was something new for Taus. He had long known of the heroin imported by the Mafia and the Colombian cocaine trade, but not the Dominican involvement. However, George Hebert of Castle Securities would quickly provide Taus with the answers: The CIA was backing the government in the Dominican Republic and they needed funds to do this.

After a night's soccer practice at a school gym in Freeport, Taus wanted to interview CIA Agent David Studer, a member of the K-team working at Castle Securities. Studer's wife had dropped their two youngsters at the gym that evening. When the practice ended, Michael Studer, age eight, and his sister Karen, age six, waited for their ride home. Three Hispanic men entered the school gym that night and asked for the Studer children. They seemed out-of-place. (See "Joint Narcotics Task Force.")

Taus felt something was wrong. Perhaps they were kidnappers, someone or group that had an axe to grind with the CIA station. Though little Michael claimed he knew the men, Taus called Mrs. Studer at home. She said the three worked for her husband and they had been instructed to pick up the children. The vehicle they were driving was the same small charcoal-colored truck that Taus had observed in Castle's parking lot. This truck's license plates came up as a "hit" on FBI drug surveillance during an investigation in various New York City locations, including Washington Heights and the Bronx. Investigations showed the involvement of the truck's driver and another male passenger and known Dominican drug-traffickers.

Taus now had an excuse to visit Castle and speak to Studer, ostensibly to show concern for the Studer children with the hope that Studer would provide him with some fresh information about Castle's operations. On the following day, both Studer and Hebert were at Castle when Taus arrived.

Studer told Taus that the three men worked for him as gardeners; but the charcoal truck they were driving was parked on the adjacent lot with the name of an electrical repair company, and electronic equipment and tools inside. There were no landscaping tools or garden paraphernalia. Taus wasn't satisfied with that explanation, resulting in Hebert showing signs of nervousness as he answered Taus' questions about the gardeners. "We have many people working with us." Taus sarcastically remarked, "Like an Army," referring to the CIA's arming of rebels to topple the Nicaraguan

government.

### **Crack Epidemic; Free-Base Cocaine Abuse**

There were different levels in organized crime. As previously stated, the five Italian Mafia organized crime families in New York City answered to higher political, government and business leaders. When the Gambino family boss, John Gotti, rubbed-out the sanctioned godfather, Paul Castellano, Gotti was brought down by the higher-level Mafia. This elite criminal group did not approve of independent actions by its lower echelon mobsters. Drug trafficking also consisted of different levels as reflected by the Dominican Republic gangs dealing crack cocaine in New York City.

During the mid-1980s, an estimated \$4 billion was made in one year by the Mafia with the sale of heroin in the Tri-State New York Metropolitan area. The former chief of the Drug Enforcement Administration's New York Office, Robert M. Stutman, estimated Dominican drug sales at \$200 million.

The Dominicans were not the major drug-traffickers. They dealt with the ghetto that eventually effected middle-class America.

The more established Mafia was selling heroin and cocaine. Poor people in the ghettos could not afford those drugs. Even engaging in criminal activities, a ghetto addict found that he could not afford the Mafia's brand of drug addiction. That's where the Dominicans came in, perhaps as early as 1983, and certainly they were well established by 1986 with the trafficking of crack-cocaine.

The Colombian produced cocaine that arrived in the United States was distributed by several ethnic organizations: the Colombians, who were the wholesalers; the Italian Mafia, who bought from them and wholesaled to other groups; and several ethnic gangs. By the time the drugs drifted down to ghetto buyers, their prices rose from all the middlemen involved.

The Dominican gangs came up with a solution. They developed a new drug, crack-cocaine, which could be marketed to their people in the ghetto. An article in the *Lance*, (March 1, 1986), titled, "Epidemic: Free-Base Cocaine Abuse," described the new drug-trafficking operation. People in the ghetto could not afford the cocaine hydrochloride but could buy the much less expensive cocaine freebase.

From "The K-Team" article, the CIA Freeport Castle Securities' operation was deeply involved with the Dominican Republic and its drug-trafficking activities. Also important to the CIA was neighboring Haiti. Colombia drug traffickers shipped drugs into Haiti, which were then transported overland, across the Hispaniola Island to the bordering Dominican Republic. From the east coast of the Dominican Republic, high powered speed boats delivered the drugs to Puerto Rico and then flown to Miami and New York. These facts were confirmed in Taus' FBI investigations done in conjunction with the FBI New York office Joint Narcotics Task Force in the mid-1980s. Taus' informant, a Hispanic Washington Heights drug-dealer, later reinforced this information.

Once the drugs arrived in New York State, they were delivered to Albany New York. The FBINYO had two Joint Narcotics Task Forces in the mid-1980s. JNTF I was supervised by SSA Lou Schiliro (promoted to FBI



Assistant Director in 1998).

Because Schiliro's task force had its hands filled with the Pizza Connection investigation, JNTF II was organized. The problems with the Pizza Connection investigation and prosecution rose from the CIA obstacles as the CIA was given the responsibility to conduct investigation of the overseas part of the investigation.

The two primary informants that testified against the Sicilian Mafia faction were CIA sources. (See "Pizza Connection Case"; CIA's Involvement in the Pizza Connection Case.")

Since Taus worked part of the Pizza case, he was reassigned to Schiliro's squad in 1981. However, Taus was soon transferred from JNTF I when he learned of the cover-up involving the FBI and CIA and voice concern about the obstruction of justice. Taus became "personal non grata" with JNTF I. Taus was still an FBI agent who had friends with the other task force, JNTF II, and other federal agencies. Among those agencies were the DEA.

The New York DEA chief, Robert Stutman stated, "Albany, the first port of call for the United Fruit Company's boats out of Central and South America...(boats) regularly docked to smuggle drugs to be refined (at a nearby Albany farm)." (see Richard Esposito's *Dead On Delivery*.)

#### **Drug Smuggling Involved CIA, Armed Forces, NSC**

Under President Reagan in the late 1980s, Vice-President Bush emerged as an anti-drug crusader with his South Florida Task Force. However, the American Public was never told about the diversion measures to get drugs into the U.S. through such covert operations as Operations Sea Spray, Operation Watchtower, etc. These operations were drug-smuggling operations involving the CIA, the U.S. Armed Forces, the National Security Council and others, with drugs moving through Central America.

The development of the FBI's Joint Narcotics Task Forces signaled an end to any dutiful and innovative FBI agents who could work a real case against these corrupt forces. As the JNTFs targeted certain groups, they also protected others from being investigated and exposed.

In 1986, Taus was working with JNTF II on drug-related investigations. Taus had already discovered the CIA-Dominican drug connection from his dealings with George Hebert and the CIA K-team member. JNTF II had a list of vehicles observed during their investigations in Washington Heights concerning the Dominican Republic drug ring. One truck license plate was related to Freeport's Castle Securities. The truck was observed in the Bronx neighborhood as its driver and passenger negotiated with known Dominican drug-traffickers.

The description of the men in the truck matched the three Hispanic men who worked for Castle Securities. George Hebert had already identified his three Contra members who were involved with the Dominican Republic's drug trade. All three were former members of the National Guard under the former Nicaraguan President Somoza. Hebert told Taus an interesting story about these men.

Back in 1965, they participated in the U.S. forces landing in the Do-

minican Republic. By the mid-1980s, one of them, Enrique Bermudez, was a Contra colonel with strong ties to the Dominican Republic, where he met his wife in 1965. The second man was Britolde Cruz, who served with Bermudez. The third man was Jose Benito Centeno.

Initially, Taus had been told that the Village of Freeport was being used as a rest and recreation center for Contra soldiers. But this made no sense since there were closer areas to accommodate Contra forces. Taus decided that these men were experienced and trusted Spanish-speaking operatives, being used to further drug-trafficking operations. Financial frauds and weapons shipments were among Castle Securities' other criminal activities.

In 1985, CIA operative Terry Reed's name came up in Taus' FCI squad at the FBI New York office in conjunction with a Hungarian firm located in Mexico that was engaged in drug-trafficking and weapons shipments.

Terry Reed wrote a book, *Compromised*, in which he tells about joint CIA and U.S. military programs that masked covert flights entering and leaving U.S. airspace. According to Reed, these operations provided cover for drug flights. One of the programs was termed "Operation Sea Spray."

DEA Chief Stutman mentioned an international money exchange corporation, Sociedad Commercial Financiera Promocion Empresarial, S.A., known as FINAPE. (See *Dead On Delivery*.) Unfortunately, Stutman may have thought little about any financial operations and certainly DEA did not have the financial and accounting wizards to decipher such an operation. However, a well-connected financial firm with worldwide connections and a power-base could manage the operation: Castle Securities.

Castle Securities' CIA accountants and financial people fit that need, according to statements made by George Hebert to Taus during the initial meeting at Castle in 1985, when Hebert handed Taus portfolios and prospectuses on businesses organized by Castle. Most of them were dummy or shell corporations designed to hide the money sources. Some of the prospectuses by Castle were printed in Spanish for its Latin American clientele.

In a possible attempt to bribe an FBI agent and curtail his investigations, Hebert stated that his Freeport team of financial advisors and accountants could make Taus a rich man. It was with such incentives that the CIA would use Taus as they had done with others, to provide them with other FBI information.

Taus continued to probe Hebert for information about the CIA drug trade and its Dominican connections. Hebert stated that the K-team was the official delegation to the Dominican Republic. The K-team raised campaign funds for a Dominican by the name of Balaguer who ran for President. Taus believed that these funds came from drug trafficking and financial operations of FINAPE and Castle Securities.

The K-team article mentioned keeping in contact with disaffected emigrant groups such as the Dominicans in Washington Heights, New York. The FBI's JNTF II reported Castle's truck being present during their surveillance, along with the Freeport CIA station chief's Volvo sedan. The K-team and George Hebert had freely admitted to Taus their involvement "in the presidential campaigns of Haiti and the Dominican Republic."

Hebert also stated to Taus that the K-team met with the National Security Council staffer, “every two months over a three-year period” concerning Haiti and financial fraud by Castle in an “oil diversion scheme with soon-to-be disgraced financier Mark Rich in the Dominican Republic.”



### U.S. Intelligence Community and Criminal Operations

**F**ive major aspects concerning unlawful operations and criminal activities of the CIA are listed below, followed by a more thorough explanation on each subject:

- (1). The Intelligence Community, a review of the structure of the intelligence community, particularly the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA and the National Security Council (NSC);
- (2). Iran-Contra Arms Initiative Affair, a review of the scandal, hereafter referred to as Irangate;
- (3). The Iraqi Commodity-Weapons Loan Diversion, a review of this scandal, hereafter referred to as Iraqgate;
- (4). The Cover-Up of Irangate & Iraqgate, attempts by senior government officials to limit damage from revelations about these scandals;
- (5). Unlawful Operations & Criminal Activities, the greater breathe and depths of unlawful and criminal actions perpetrated by a cabal formed by senior government officials, organized crime members, influential political and business leaders, and the instigation and cooperation of the CIA;

#### **The Intelligence Community**

**The National Security Council.** There are several independent agencies within the United States Intelligence community. This review will primarily focus on the NSC and CIA due to their covert operations. Under the Truman Administration, legislation established by the National Security Act of July 26, 1947 created the National Security Council and the Central Intelligence Agency. The primary mission of the NSC was “to advise the President on all matters relating to the national security.” President Reagan expanded the NSC to a colossal bureaucracy. There is a difference between the staff itself, often called the NSC Advisor’s staff and the NSC, which is the select group of Presidential advisors.

Oliver North was a member of the NSC Advisor’s staff working for the National Security Advisor (NSA) John M. Poindexter. North represented a part of the NSA staff that became operational, allowing the President to ex-

cute and direct policies using a small close group of associates. In this way, President Reagan could bypass the State and Defense Departments and other traditional cabinet departments and federal agencies.

By 1985, twelve different divisions or directorates existed in the NSC Advisor's staff. Unlike their State and Defense Department counterparts, covert operations could be accomplished on orders of the President. Reagan had effectively duplicated many government offices, which he now could simply ignore or avoid in order to implement his policies. President Reagan's Executive Order 12333 was issued on December 4, 1981. It codified the intelligence community. The NSC received sweeping authority. This order also gave the CIA responsibility for covert operations.

**The National Security Agency.** This is the largest intelligence agency located at Fort Meade, Maryland. It has two main functions: protecting U.S. communications and intercepting foreign communications. The NSA protects U.S. government communications by enciphering messages along with other security measures; and, it uses a vast number of intelligence analysts to monitor, decipher and translate foreign government communications. Established in 1952, it comes under the Department of Defense. (The initials N-S-A could stand for either the National Security Advisor in Washington, DC, or the National Security Agency in Fort Meade, Maryland.)

**The Central Intelligence Agency.** With its headquarters at Langley, Virginia, the CIA is one of several organizations responsible for gathering and evaluating foreign intelligence information vital to the security of the United States. It is also the coordinating agency working together with the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) and the National Security Agency (NSA). By 1980, there were over 200,000 employees and a budget exceeding \$1 billion.

Its tasks includes: advising the President and the NSC on international developments; collecting intelligence on international terrorist activities and drug/narcotic-trafficking; conducting counter-intelligence activities outside the United States; doing research in political, economic, scientific, technical, military and other fields; monitoring radio and television broadcasts; and, engaging in more direct forms of intelligence gatherings.

The CIA quickly evolved into an organization largely conducting covert and clandestine operations. Widespread implementation of these concepts was achieved in 1981 by the NSC and the CIA with a covert program in Central America designed to destabilize and overthrow the Nicaraguan government. A great amount of attention has been focused on the Iran-Contra Arms Initiative, but the CIA's covert operations existed long before this entanglement.

Attempts to limit such clandestine activities against Nicaragua were introduced into Congress by Democratic Representative Edward P. Boland on December 8, 1982. Referred to as the Boland Amendment, it did not stop the President from conducting covert operations

On January 7, 1984, the CIA used explosive mines in Nicaragua's harbors. This information was conveyed to FBI Special Agent Richard Taus a few years later by one of the CIA's operatives, Steve Lopez, an American

citizen and former U.S. Marine. However, in early 1984, Congress reacted bitterly to this action by DCI William Casey. Senators Barry Goldwater and Daniel Patrick Moynihan were indignant they were not informed since they were the chairman and vice-chairman, respectively, on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. They were supposed to be informed about significant covert operations. This furor affected funding for the anti-Sandinista activities.

Such funds were provided to a group known as the Contras, led by Enrique Bermudez who was a Colonel in the former Nicaraguan Army commanded by Dictator Anastasio Somoza. The rebel forces were led by Daniel Ortega who leaned towards communism and termed his group the Sandinistas after the revolutionary leader Augusto Cesar Sandino. Beginning in 1926, Augusto Sandino conducted guerrilla warfare against the occupation of Nicaragua by U.S. Marines. In 1934, the Nicaraguan National Guard hunted down and killed Sandino. The National Guard's Commander was General Anastasio Somoza, the patriarch of the Somoza dynasty. On July 17, 1979, Ortega ousted Somoza. Hence the name Contras emerged for those who opposed the new revolution.

**The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).** Established in 1907, the FBI is charged with enforcing federal laws. The FBI has two main divisions, one handling numerous criminal investigations including organized crime groups such as the Italian Mafia and the other handling foreign counter-intelligence matters. There are other divisions: Administrative/Personnel; Technical Support Services and the Identification and Forensic Laboratory divisions at FBI Headquarters (FBIHQ) in Washington, D.C.

The FBI also conducts background investigations for security clearances. With the large FBI New York Field Office (FBINYO), there are five main divisions: Division I-Administrative; Division II-Criminal; Division III -Soviet Foreign Counter-Intelligence (FCI); Division IV-Soviet Satellites and Terrorists; and Division V-Technical Services. Division V conducts special operations involving surreptitious entries, taps, physical and electronic surveillances, etc.

The FBI Academy located on the U.S. Marine Corps Base at Quantico, Virginia conducts extensive training courses. There is a 16-week program for newly hired FBI applicants called the "New Agents' Training Course. A parallel 11-week course is given to law enforcement officers from local Police Departments and agencies who come to Quantico from around the country. There are also many classes given for additional or specialized training of FBI agents, known as "In-Service Training."

**Other Intelligence Agencies.** The following agencies are part of the overall intelligence community: The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO), State Department's Bureau of Intelligence & Research, Treasury and Energy Departments' Intelligence sections, and the separate Armed Services' intelligence agencies. Yet this list is not all-inclusive. Intelligence comes from many agencies and sources. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), U.S. Customs, Internal Revenue Service (IRS), though they claim information is confidential, and the various

state and local Police Departments can, and often do, provide intelligence.

### **Irangate Review**

There were two major and separate secret operations that violated U.S. laws in the Iran-Contra Arms Initiative Affair. The first operation, involving the sale of weapons to Iran, was publicly exposed in October and November 1986 by the publication of a story in a Lebanese periodical, "Al-Shiraa" in Beirut. This story concerned a secret deal between the U.S. and Iran where the U.S. provided weapons to Iran in exchange for an Iranian promise to support "liberation movements in the world." The "liberation" mentioned by Reagan authors was the freeing of American hostages. In short, the U.S. was negotiating with terrorists. U.S. Officials in the Reagan Administration announced in late November 1986 that some of the proceeds from the sale of U.S. weapons to Iran were afterward provided to the Contra.

The second unlawful operation concerned the provisions of assistance to the military activities of the Nicaragua Contra rebels during the October 1984 to 1986 prohibition on such assistance.

With the exposures of these affairs, the U.S. Attorney General Edwin Meese III, asked for the appointment of a special prosecutor to investigate and prosecute any crimes. Lawrence E. Walsh was appointed as the Independent Counsel on December 19, 1986. To infer that Walsh's investigative efforts would be biased, is an understatement. Walsh was a life-long Republican, investigating a Republican Administration. His investigative offices and his staff's were on FBI premises. Of course the FBI Director, William Sessions, was another Republican crony, appointed by Reagan as a political payoff. The greatest payoff was to the Republican investigators, which amounted to more than \$35 million, a cost charged to the American taxpayers.

Whenever Walsh's investigation produced results, it was stifled by claims of national security secrecy or classified matters. When the "Final Report" was finished, its Volume III was classified and never released.

Walsh investigated the following five aspects:

- (1). Any sale, shipment or transfer in 1984 and beyond of weapons, military equipment or funds to Iran or persons or entities connected to Iran;
- (2). The sale, shipment or transfer of weapons, military equipment or funds to any government, person or entity as an intermediary in any transaction mentioned above;
- (3). The financing or funding of any sale, shipment or transfer;
- (4). The diversion of proceeds from any transaction described above for any person, government or entity in any foreign country;
- (5). The provision or coordination of support for persons or entities engaged as military insurgents in armed conflicts with Nicaragua since 1984.

### **Irangate Investigative Findings**

Resulting prosecutions revealed high-ranking Administration officials violated laws and Executive orders. Further, the sales of arms to Iran contravened U.S. policy and violated the Arms Export Control Act. Provision and coordination of Contra support violated the Boland Amendment's ban on aid to military activities in Nicaragua. The highest levels of the Reagan Admini-



stration worked on the policies towards Iran and the Contra operations. The NSC did not object to these actions.

Also, the Iranian operations were known to Reagan and Bush, Secretaries Shultz (State) and Weinberger (Defense), DCI Casey, National Security Advisors McFarlane and Poindexter.

There were large volumes of highly relevant, contemporaneously created documents that were systematically and willfully withheld from investigators by several Reagan Administration officials. Many people construed this to mean that materials were shredded by North in his office and that classified materials were initially withheld. There was more. A massive cover-up prevented other materials developed in parallel official investigations from being disclosed. Such was the situation for FBI Special Agent Taus, whose investigation on Long Island into the CIA's Freeport Station operation was stymied and halted.

There was deliberate deception by the Reagan-Bush administration and its officials towards Congress and the American public. It was further stated by the Independent Counsel "that the off-the-books nature of the Iran and Contra operations gave line-level personnel the opportunity to commit money crimes."

#### **Basic Facts of Irangate.**

There were two secret policies coordinated by the NSC staff: the Contra operations involving military support despite congressional prohibitions and the Iran operation to obtain the release of American hostages in the Middle East through the sale of U.S. weapons to Iran despite an embargo. The diversion referred to concerned the use of funds raised by the weapons sales to Iran being sent to support Contra operations in Nicaragua.

Besides the news story in *Al-Shiraa*, another event occurred on October 5, 1986, which revealed the secret operations. It was the downing of an American cargo plane carrying military supplies to Contra forces by Nicaraguan forces. The surviving crewman, Eugene Hasenfus, said he was employed by the CIA.

The withholding of material evidence by the Reagan Administration was addressed in Special Prosecutor Walsh's report that "much of the best evidence of the cover-up in the final year of active investigation was discovered too late for most prosecutions."

#### **The Flow of Funds.**

The identified funding sources were: donations from foreign countries, contributions from wealthy Americans sympathetic to the Contras and the diversion of proceeds from arms sales to Iran. A network of corporations and banks were used to launder and conceal the financial transactions. An organization termed "The Enterprise" handled the flow of an estimated \$47 million. However, further investigations that were never allowed to be included in the Iran-Contra Final Report disclosed a far more extensive criminal manipulation of financial transactions and securities.

"Two secret operations circumvented normal Administration accountability and congressional oversight associated with covert ventures and presented fertile ground for financial wrongdoing." This was from the "Iran-

Contra: The Final Report” by Lawrence E. Walsh, circa 1994, Times Books.

Further Conclusions: Special Prosecutor Walsh concluded “that the governmental problems presented by Iran-Contra are not those of rogue operations, but rather those of Executive branch efforts to evade congressional oversight.” Also there is the irreconcilable conflict in the case of high-level

Executive branch wrongdoings and the competing roles of the Attorney General as chief law enforcement officer and presidential advisor. Congressional oversight alone cannot correct these conflicting roles of the Attorney General. To complicate matters, the Attorney General has broad discretion in releasing classified information protected by the Classified Information Procedures Act (CIPA).

Before proceeding to the briefing on the Iraqgate cover-up, item (3) below, a review of an article entitled “Cover-Up” would be beneficial. It was published in the October 26, 1982 issue of *US News & World Report*:

A ranking FBI official... recalls only one instance in more than 20 years at the Bureau when agents were ordered not to pursue an investigatory lead. That was in October 1986 when a plane illegally supplying the Contra rebels in Nicaragua with U.S. arms was shot down.

Then Attorney-General Edwin Meese ordered the FBI to delay its investigation of the carrier for ‘national security reasons.’ The man who authorized the illegal flight, it turned out, was retired Air Force Major General Richard Secord, and he was busy at the time ferrying U.S. missiles to Iran. FBI agents waited two weeks before Meese finally allowed them to proceed with their investigation of the Nicaragua supply mission and what would come to be known as the Iran Contra affair.

### **Iraqi Loan Diversion Cover-up**

A *U.S. News & World Report* story concerned an Iraqi diversion through a corrupt banking system that secured loans for American farm goods. Iraq was given a loan to purchase agricultural commodities; instead Iraq stole the funds or misused them to purchase weapons. This particular scam started at least in 1987, but these fraudulent financial transactions date back long before the 1980s. In the same issue, there is another related side-story, entitled “Undone Deal: The Gunrunner From Macy’s,” both articles were written by Brian Duffy.

“Undone Deal,” appearing with the article, concerns the 1983 attempt to obtain the same kinds of loans through the CIA’s “Enterprise” operation in Freeport, New York. In Freeport, a CIA secret team ran many of the various illegal activities and operations. It was known as “The K-Team” for its alleged leader Kevin Kattke. A more recent “Washington (DC) City Paper” article written by Ken Cummins was published on December 4, 1992, entitled “The K-Team.” Kevin Kattke and his subordinates appear in this article that also states that Kattke is an Army Reservist. Kattke is a Lieutenant Colonel in the Military Intelligence Branch and was assigned to the 77<sup>th</sup> Army Command stationed at Fort Totten, New York: the same unit that LTC Richard Taus was assigned during the 1980s.

The earlier 1983 financial scam violated not only U.S. banking laws and regulations, but it violated the Neutrality Act along with other violations of federal laws. “The K-team” was a professed team of free-lance covert opera-

tors who involved themselves in a myriad of unlawful and criminal activities. What really occurred were the “Special Operations” of the CIA. It’s covert operations that were also conducted domestically.

According to the K-team’s own story, they were merely private citizens who happened to engage in various functions reserved for high-ranking government officials. “The K-Team” article attempts to build up the team’s credibility with fantastic stories about their unauthorized exploits. They claim no regular government offices, but it quickly becomes apparent that the K-team members are CIA agents. In fact, CIA’s Freeport Station Chief Dan Priscu informed FBI SA Richard Taus in 1985 that the K-Team was only one part of CIA’s Long Island operations.

The unusual business dealing with the Iraqis was to give a \$200 million loan for Iraq’s purchase of U.S. agricultural goods. In effect, the U.S. Government provided Iraq credits of that amount. In their own words, the K-team tells the story about how they secured the loan for Iraq. Somehow, without any knowledge of how to go about securing such a loan, the K-team goes to Washington and, incredibly, returns with a U.S. authorization for the Iraqi credit. A congressional investigation followed regarding the deal and the one reported in the “Cover-Up” article that started at a later time than 1983, perhaps in 1987.

The mid-Summer of 1989 saw FBI agents and government prosecutors descending on an Atlanta branch of Italy’s Banca Nazionale del Lavoro (BNL). There were some \$5 billion in fraudulent loans to Iraq. These loans were to assist Iraq with its war against Iran. The CIA, and hence the U.S. Government, supported both sides in the killings and devastation. Billions of dollars were given to Iraq after the war ended in 1988. These loans continued after the discovery of the fraud and evidence that the American monies were used to buy and build nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) weapons. Another \$2 billion was provided up until the day Iraq invaded Kuwait.

To gain a better understanding of how these illegal loans worked, a review of the steps involved in the 1987 Iraqi loan diversion is presented below.

The CIA had evidence that would have been useful to law enforcement agents investigating the bank-fraud case, but it was not provided. Here’s how the loan worked:

- (1). The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Commodity Credit Corporation (C.C.C.) approves millions in loans for the Iraqi purchase of American farm goods. U.S. taxpayers are liable for any Iraqi loan defaults.
- (2). The Atlanta Branch of Italy’s BNL bank makes loans authorized by the C.C.C. in excess of the price of goods purchased.
- (3). Some of the grain shipments were diverted for money and weapons or both at Aqaba, Jordan.
- (4). Another overseas location involved in the grain deal is at Istanbul, where food shipments may have been sold or bartered for weapons.
- (5). BNL headquarters bank in Rome provided capital to its Atlanta branch for the Iraqi loans which were lost.
- (6). In Geneva, the corrupt Bank of Credit and Commerce International

(B.C.C.I.) loaned BNL's Atlanta branch millions in short term loans to cover any shortfalls due to the illegal loans to Iraq.

- (7). Weapons were purchased by Iraq from the excess money generated by the inflated loans for U.S. farm goods.

Perhaps one should ask from whom were these weapons purchased.

Alas, it would require an investigation, but any investigations into these matters were halted by the CIA. In the early 1980's, Taus reported on meetings between the CIA K-team members and the Iraqi delegation which negotiated the fraudulent loans. The further details of the Iraqi Commodity-Weapons Loan Diversion, known as Iraqgate will be covered later.

#### **Cover-Up by Senior U.S. Officials**

It seems appropriate to start with the NSC staffer, LTC Oliver North. There were several admissions by North that he told FBI officials to stall or halt any investigations into these scandals. To confirm this interference with duly appointed law enforcement officers, and the complicity, at higher levels in the FBI of more senior government officials, one needs only to review North's own books and statements. "*Guts & Glory: The Rise and Fall of Oliver North.*" Published in 1988 as part of the Administration's defense of North, this book contains a disclaimer of sorts from the author Ben Bradlee, Jr. that North, himself, did not assist in writing this book. However it is quite evident that the facts contained within the book had come from North's mouth, if not his pen. The wealth of intimate details and personal family pictures adequately shows North condoned and assisted in this work.

In its chapters, the infamous K-team is mentioned. The FBI was investigating an alleged Iraqi prince whom the K-team and North were soliciting large financial donations from to support the Contra operations. In an effort to stymie the FBI's investigation of the prince (who was a fraud, according to the CIA), North contacted FBIHQ claiming national security interests were at stake. He asked the FBI to stop its investigations which it did in July, 1985. In October 1986, North again appealed to FBIHQ to halt another investigation into the Hasenfus shoot down (the C-123K cargo aircraft involved in Contra resupply). The story concerning the Iraqi prince is important because the prince is a CIA contract agent and the funds exceeded those known to be involved in the Irangate scandal. North's stalling and interfering with the FBI investigations is repeated in "The K-Team" article of 1992.

Attorney-General Edwin Meese III played a crucial part in obstructing the lawful investigations into Irangate and Iraqgate. Shortly before he was fired on November 1986, the National Security Advisor, Rear Admiral John Poindexter, called AG Meese asking him to delay the investigation by the FBI and U.S. Customs into the Hasenfus shoot-down and Southern Air Transport company which was the owner of the C-123K. FBI Director William Webster obliged Poindexter.

**Prosecutions of Officials in the Irangate Scandal.** Successful prosecutions ensued after the revelations in the news media and congressional hearings. The prosecutions were concerned with two kinds of crimes: Operational crimes, involving the illegal use of funds generated by the Enterprise operations; and, Cover-Up crimes, dealing with false statements, perjury and

obstruction of justice. The following is a list of prominent senior government officials who were involved and their respective charges and dispositions:

Oliver L. North, NSC staffer from August 1981 to November 1986. Convicted of altering and destroying documents, accepting an illegal gratuity, aiding and abetting in the obstruction of Congress. His conviction was reversed on appeal based upon a technicality, the U.S. Government refused to release classified materials about him.

Rear Admiral John M. Poindexter, the National Security Advisor 1985-1986. Convicted of conspiracy, false statements, destruction and removal of records and obstruction of Congress. Conviction reversed on appeal based on the same grounds as the North's defense, not allowed to present classified materials.

Robert C. "Bud" McFarlane, the National Security Advisor 1983-1985. Attempted suicide. Plead guilty to four counts of withholding information from Congress.

Casper W. Weinberger, the Secretary of Defense, 1980-87. Charged with four counts of false statements and perjury. Pardoned before trial by President Bush on December 24, 1992.

Elliott Abrams, Assistant Secretary of State 1981-88. Plead guilty to two misdemeanor charges of withholding information from Congress. Pardoned by President Bush.

General Richard V. Second, Part of the Enterprise operation. Plead guilty to making false statements to Congress. Two years probation.

Duane R. "Dewey" Clarridge, CIA Director of Operations for Latin America 1981-1984. Indicted on seven counts of perjury and false statements. Pardoned by President Bush.

Alan D. Fiers, Jr., Chief of CIA's Central American Task Force 1984-1986. Plead guilty to withholding information from Congress. Pardoned by President Bush.

Clair E. George, CIA Deputy Director for Operations 1984-1987. Convicted on false statements and perjury to Congress. Pardoned by President Bush.

Also tried and convicted were Carl R. Channell and Richard R. Miller, allegedly two private fundraisers who both plead guilty to conspiracy to defraud the United States. Thomas G. Clines, a retired CIA agent, convicted on four counts of underreporting his income and falsely stating he had no foreign accounts in 1985 and 1986; sentence served.

Albert Hakim, an Iranian-born American citizen. Plead guilty to illegally diverting U.S. funds; two years probation.

The one dismissal in the case was for Joseph F. Fernandez, the CIA Chief of Station in Costa Rica. Indicted on five counts of conspiracy to defraud the US, obstructing justice and making false statements. Fernandez case was dismissed because of venue reasons, but primarily due to Attorney-General Richard Thornburgh blocking the disclosure of classified information ruled relevant to the defense in 1989. Also not included above were President Ronald Reagan and Vice-President George Bush both of whom,

according to Oliver North, knew of the conspiracies and cover-ups and misled and obstructed the congressional investigation.

The prosecutions by Independent Counsel Walsh represented a small fraction of the legal fallout and turmoil generated by the crimes of the CIA and NSC. SA Richard Taus was charged with false federal allegations and, later, prosecuted and convicted under New York State criminal laws to discredit and forever silence him. Taus' only activity in the Irangate and Iraqgate scandals was his lawful investigation into the CIA criminal operations.

There were others who were permanently silenced about their knowledge of these CIA scandals. Among them were Steve Lopez, a New York City Firefighter and former U.S. Marine; Ritchie Roberts and Thomas Ziegler, both CIA Technical Services employees. These three CIA men were assassinated by different means during 1988-1989. There were also mysterious deaths connected to the investigations of individuals who were aware of the scandal. The most notable tragedy was the death of FBI Assistant Director Manual Gonzalez in 1993, immediately after he informed Taus he would assist and vindicate Taus. ADIC Gonzalez died of cancer at 50-years old.

### **The Iraqgate Scandal**

There were few federal indictments in the Iraqi Commodity-Weapons Loan Diversion scandal. Mainly bankers at the Atlanta branch were prosecuted. However, while William Clinton was on the presidential campaign trail, he vowed to appoint an independent prosecutor to investigate U.S. involvement in the BNL fraud. When Clinton was elected President, his new Attorney General, Janet Reno, refused to appoint a special counsel to investigate the Iraqgate scandal. In effect by 1995, AG Reno had billed the American taxpayers with the cost of the defaulted loans. Equally injured with the Italian taxpayers who had to pay for their BNL losses. The burden for the crime was shouldered alone by the Atlanta branch bank manager, Christopher P. Drogoul. He was charged with defrauding his bank by disbursing \$5 billion in loan proceeds without BNL (in Italy) home office knowledge and approval.

The U.S. District Court Judge, Marvin Shoob, who heard Drogoul's testimony and reviewed the evidence stated, "The five defendant employees of BNL were pawns or bit players in a far larger and wider-ranging sophisticated conspiracy that involved BNL-Rome and possibly large American and foreign corporations and the governments of the United States, England, Italy and Iraq." Judge Shoob could not believe that Drogoul acted alone.

"*The Wall Street Journal*" of January 27, 1994 ran a story about the Italian Parliamentary Commission that produced a 340-page report on the illicit loans to Iraq from BNL. The report noted the loans were part of a U.S. policy to channel military aid to Iraq, under President Bush. It read, "That the political direction of the whole operation was always firmly based in Washington is evident. Personalities in the Italian government and of BNL were aware of what was happening, or had received authoritative advice not to look too closely at the Atlanta branch operations. It is now evident...that the affair constituted an American political scandal."

### **The Greater Cabal, Unlawful & Criminal Operations**

With so many people involved in these scandals, reports began to surface about the dubious transactions, irregularities, criminal activities and unlawful operations. This should have come as no surprise to most Americans. The very fact the CIA conducts “special activities” which have come to be known as clandestine or covert operations paves the way for many kinds of illegalities. Initially greedy and corrupt individuals took advantage of their freedom to engage in such nefarious actions. But the gateway to such crimes was on a broad highway that had been traveled extensively in the past by senior government officials, influential politicians and business leaders and members of organized crime syndicates.

The Irangate and Iraqgate scandals opened the lid on such devious practices for law enforcement officials to investigate. Some would say that “the ends justify the means” in these two affairs. America was acting for her greater interests. To see the error in this kind of thinking, one can look at the deaths and devastation that both widely separated wars have caused mankind. Considering just the magnitude of lives lost in the Iranian-Iraqi War, the aftermath did not achieve anything positive for either side. Even if there were no deaths, which military authorities estimated to be in the hundreds of thousands, nothing was accomplished. And American kept the conflict raging by fueling both sides with arms and equipment to carry on the carnage.

On the opposite side of the world, tensions festered in Central America. The followers of the oppressive dictator, Anastasio Somoza, fought to overthrow a leftist government in Nicaragua. Again the figures are unclear as to the amount of deaths and casualties sustained in the struggle. In Washington, there was the old incorrect notion that communism would spread in the Western Hemisphere. Cuba was sighted as an example. Yet, in the past 40-years, since Castro’s takeover, communism has not had the “domino effect” which was first proposed to occur in the Far East.

A most unusual alliance informally aligned itself in Central America during the time of the Contra war. It did not concern Nicaragua. It occurred in El Salvador. It was a strange union between the Catholic Church and the communists trying to ferment an insurrection against the ruling oligarchic regime.

A short review of events shows the peasants in Central America being dispossessed of their lands, while the ruling class, the oligarchs prospered, supported by American funds and interests. The Archbishop of El Salvador spoke out, criticizing the dictatorial right wing government. Archbishop Romano was assassinated at a Sunday Mass before his entire congregation by men later identified as members of a rightist death squad. This process of taking the peasants’ land has not changed, nor has the results of wars and insurrections brought about any measures of relief. Only the rich have benefited, but at a great cost to all mankind.

Focusing on these two conflagrations, one can see an insidious spree of criminal activities and illegal operations that supported the separate wars. The revelations of such sinister activities occurred by diligent investigations and happenstance. It disclosed an ongoing criminal enterprise that infected

our own government. The web of misdeeds and illegalities extended well beyond any alleged national security interests. In short, not even the ends could justify the means when those very ends resulted in criminal gains for a few select elitists who ran this country's government and economy.

An alliance of another kind was unearthed by some resourceful investigators, both law enforcement agents and journalists when they probed some notorious operations and infamous figures.

The Mafia criminal associations in the FBI's Pizza Connection Case of the early to mid 1980s and related investigations brought attention to a worldwide drug-trafficking operation. Its tentacles reached out to business leaders and government officials. Surprisingly, the very government that was trying to prosecute such wrongdoings was intimately involved in them, and others.

With the deregulations of the Savings & Loans Thrift Associations, wholesale fleecing of the banking industry occurred, as expected by con men, scam-artists and crooks. Somewhat unforeseen was the involvement of government officials and agencies in this wholesale looting. The CIA engaged in economic disorder, reeking havoc with fraudulent financial transactions, dummy or shell corporations, unsecured loans and unauthorized securities, all designed to reap great profits for operations and corrupt leaders. Funds generated would be used by "the company" (CIA) in its unlawful and unfunded operations throughout the world. These affairs, or more appropriately termed scandals, were undertaken for the benefit of a few elitists.

Agents who negotiated, operated or executed these criminal plans and operations knew who would ultimately gain from these ventures. In turn, these operators, agents and executors took their cut-of-the-action.

Duly authorized, officially sanctioned investigations into these matters were all suppressed, delayed or terminated by powerful and sinister government leaders. From a different direction, information was collected about the criminal associations of organized crime members, government officials and business leaders by a variety of methods. Investigations into their private lives through the use of divorce proceedings, discovered assets never disclosed by them, except to their, now, belligerent wives. These separating marital partners would provide the investigators with a trail of illegal business transactions and associations.

These two separate investigative groups, honest law enforcement agents and investigative reporters could compare information tracing and linking together criminal ventures and elements. Unfortunately, the powerful wheeler-dealers implicated were able to circumvent or avoid any prosecutions by calling upon their friends in government.

In many cases, there were no attempts to recover the funds looted from the U.S. savings and loans (Thrift) industry. Millions of dollars, in fact, billions, could have been recovered by law enforcement agencies. Assets that were acquired illegally could have been confiscated and resold. The people committing the frauds got away with the greatest heist ever, leaving the American taxpayers to pick up the bill. Law enforcement, at least in the white-collar crimes area, was a total failure.







## CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

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### Presidential Crimes of Iran-Contra

**T**he Iran-Contra scandal involved misconduct upon the part of high government people and cover-ups, with blowback consequences and butterfly effects far beyond the original corrupt activities. The misconduct occurred during the Reagan-Bush administrations.

Government officials in the White House blocked an investigation into the misconduct, which included denying congressional investigative people access to numerous classified documents when the Independent Counsel, Lawrence Walsh, was appointed on December 19, 1986 to investigate this matter. National security considerations were invariably cited to shield sensitive information. Nonetheless, it is constructive to review the underlying facts developed in the official investigation termed Iran-Contra prior to including many of the undisclosed facts, unlawfully kept from Congress and the American Public in order to obfuscate the criminal and illegal activities and operations of the infamous Irangate scandal.

On November 26, 1986, an FBI investigation, called “Operation Front Door,” was begun, focusing on the Iranian arms sales and the Iran-Contra diversion. The Independent Counsel expanded its investigation by reviewing the aid provided to the Contra rebels.

President Reagan appointed his own select review board to whitewash the situation. On December 1, 1986, President Reagan signed Executive Order 12575 establishing the “Tower Commission” to review and study the procedures and roles of the National Security Council staff in the wake of the Iran-Contra disclosures. This was a one-sided board. Named for its chairman, Senator John Towers, it included retired General Brent Scowcroft and former Senator Edmund Muskie. Scowcroft would become President Bush’s National Security Advisor in 1989, holding that position throughout Bush’s presidency.

Two other congressional committees were formed to investigate Iran-Contra. On January 6, 1987, Senate Resolution 23 formally established the Senate Select Committee on Secret Military Assistance to Iran and the Nicaraguan Opposition. On January 7, 1987, the House Select Committee started to investigate covert arms transactions with Iran.

These committees discovered much of the misconduct by the White House politicians and CIA people. Attorney-General Edwin Meese III confirmed there had been a diversion of Iranian arms sales proceeds to the Nicaraguan Contras, but covered up for the massive drug smuggling involved in Iran-Contra.

Among the key people Meese interviewed were Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North, a National Security Council staff member, and Admiral John M. Poindexter, the National Security Advisor. President Reagan, Vice-President Bush and Reagan's cabinet members falsely denied knowing about this arms diversion. The news media developed additional facts, which included disinformation about the role of senior government officials. By early January 1987, it was apparent a cover-up was underway since many of the major players in this situation invoked their Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination and refused to testify.

### **President Reagan's Contra Policy**

During a congressionally authorized prohibition period between October 1984 to October 1986, which banned any government people or entity from providing military aid to the Nicaraguan Contras who were seeking to subvert the Nicaraguan government, the Office of the Independent Counsel (OIC) looked into criminal activities associated with these violations.

When the Sandinista regime gained power in Nicaragua in 1979, Reagan embarked upon his crusade to subvert the elected government. He sided with the former members of the right-wing Dictator, Anastasia Somoza's National Guard, known as the Contra or the Nicaraguan Democratic Resistance.

To counteract the Republican President's support for the subversion of the Nicaraguan government, the Democratic Congress in 1982 passed an amendment to the Fiscal Year 1983 Defense Appropriations bill. It was called the Boland Amendment, after its author, U.S. Representative Edward P. Boland. This initial Boland Amendment (there would be others), prohibited the CIA from funding and supporting military aid "for the purpose of overthrowing the government of Nicaragua." A compromise was reached on the level of funding, which was capped at \$24 million in December 1983, and ostensibly for humanitarian aid.

Foreseeing a financial crisis, Robert McFarlane, Reagan's National Security Advisor, suggested receiving support from other foreign countries. Saudi Arabia was the first to donate \$1 million per month, beginning in May 1984. McFarlane's NSC staff assistant, Oliver North, set up a covert bank account so the Contras could secretly receive the money. In April 1984, it was revealed the CIA had secretly mined the Nicaraguan harbors.

This revelation ruined Reagan's attempts to have Congress increase the capped funding limit. Reagan then pressed his NSC staff to find ways to keep the Contras alive. A June 25, 1984 meeting of the National Security Planning Group (NSPG) discussed extending third world countries contributions to the Contra to fill the funding void. The NSPG members were President Reagan, Vice-President George Bush, DCI William Casey, NSA Robert McFarlane, Secretary of State George Schultz, Secretary of Defense Casper

Weinberger, UN Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General John Vessey and Presidential Advisor Edwin Meese.

Reagan's Attorney General, William French Smith at that time, said third country funding was permissible, a point Secretary of State Schultz strongly took issue with, saying such actions could be viewed as an impeachable offense.

By August 1984, Congress again restricted Contra aid, prompting Oliver North to increase his efforts in assisting the Contras. To circumvent Congress' knowledge of CIA involvement, DCI Casey withdrew personnel from Central America, and appointed Alan D. Fiers as his new Chief of Central American Task Force (CATF) in the CIA's Latin American Division. (Duane R. "Dewey" Clarridge formerly occupied that position.) Fiers and North would coordinate their activities. The appearance here was to show the NSC staff as providing the Contras with funding and assistance rather than the CIA. In his quest for power, North shouldered responsibility for the operational activities.

#### **North's Fund Raising**

Oliver North did not have the knowledge, experience or contacts from his Marine Corps service to enjoin a worldwide web of financiers to support the Contras. That came from DCI Casey who worked with North. Casey gave North retired U.S. Air Force General Richard V. Secord to assist Contra leader Adolfo Calero to purchase weapons with Saudi money. Another private citizen, Robert Owen, was enlisted by Casey and North to provide the Contras with intelligence, supply money and learn of their other needs. Here North and the CIA passed military and other intelligence to the Contras.

General Secord had become an arms-broker for the Contras.

Another source of funds came from CIA Operations Director Clair E. George, who recommended that North enlist retired Major General John K. Singlaub. In February 1985, the Saudis had doubled their contributions. Two other private fundraisers, Carl Channell and Richard R. Miller, were used by North to acquire donations.

#### **Using Foreign Aid to Strong-Arm Other Countries**

Reagan and McFarlane pressured other Central American countries to assist, implying their U.S. foreign aid grants might be affected. Honduras became susceptible to the implications of this linkage between foreign aid and Contra support.

#### **The CIA and the Southern Front**

Most U.S. efforts and aid were directed to the Contra rebels along Nicaragua's border with Honduras, known as Nicaragua's Northern Frontier. By mid-1985, the CIA wanted to augment this effort and apply more pressure to the Sandinista regime by opening a southern front on Nicaragua's southern border with Costa Rica. Commanding this southern force was Eden Pastora. He was an ex-Sandinista whose political charisma received significant political support from the U.S. Congress.

For various reasons, the CIA disliked Pastora, and sought to discredit him, claiming he was involved in drug smuggling. When just the reverse was true. Fiers so noted in his deposition to the Congressional Select Com-

mittee on May 1, 1987, that Sandinista spies and drug smugglers were involved with Pastora, making him a security risk.

### **The La Penca Bombing**

Not found in the unclassified portion of the official Iran-Contra Report was the attempt to assassinate Pastora that occurred on May 30, 1984 at his La Penca camp. During a press conference, an unknown assassin exploded a bomb, intended to kill Pastora. Instead, it killed eight others and wounded many more. Pastora was not killed. One of the seriously wounded was an American journalist, Tony Avirgan, who with his wife, Martha Honey, was investigating the Contra operation.

The Washington-based Christie Institute, a Jesuit supported public policy organization and think-tank, was headed by attorney Daniel Sheehan and his wife. Sheehan filed a civil lawsuit under the Racketeer-Influenced and Corrupt Organization (RICO) Act, naming as defendants, among others, Secord, Singlaub, Owen and Calero. In a separate foreign lawsuit, the two journalists, Avirgan and Honey, were being sued for their story implicating John Hall.

A federal judge protected the Reagan-Bush administration by dismissing the lawsuit in clear violation of legal protections, and then ordered the Christie Institute to pay huge legal fees to the defendants, putting the institute out of business.

### **Involvement of John Hull in Contra Operation**

In 1968, John Hull left Indiana and opened a citrus and cattle ranch in northern Costa Rica and eventually became embroiled in the Contra scandal. In 1984, Hull was involved with the CIA, allowing his ranch to be used for aircraft flying weapons and drugs that were major parts of the Reagan-Bush operation against Nicaragua. Many CIA contract pilots later testified that drug-carrying aircraft flew used Hull's ranch for weapons and drug shipments.

Avirgan asked Jack Terrell, a CIA contract agent, to testify at the Costa Rica trial, which led Sheehan to ask Terrell to testify at the RICO trial in Washington. It also led to Terrell's fall from grace with Oliver North and the CIA. North started a campaign against Terrell, using the services of Secord and former CIA agent Glenn Robinette.

### **Jack Terrell**

Oliver North describes Jack Terrell as "a former Alabama correction officer who had gone on to 'dabble' as both a mercenary and a businessman, including a stint as a regional sales manager for General Electric in the early 1980s.

Large numbers of mercenary pilots joined in the illegal shipment of arms and drugs that played key roles in the Iran-Contra affair. Playing a major role in these corrupt operations was the Alabama-based Civilian Military Assistance (CMA) group. This knowledge was provided to Taus in a meeting with CIA agent George Hebert, a member of the Freeport K-team in 1985. Hebert said Terrell was a CIA agent with a false background, operating in an undercover capacity to avoid any connections with the CIA.

**Joseph F. Fernandez, CIA Station Chief**

The CIA Station-Chief in Costa Rica, Joseph Fernandez, was indicted for crimes committed in the course of his duty as a CIA officer. Protecting the criminal activities of White House politicians, the U.S. attorney general invoked his power to prohibit the introduction of classified materials at trial, resulting in the dismissal of the charges against Fernandez. This deprived the Independent Counsel of much needed information on the Contra resupply operations and constituted obstruction of justice by the attorney general.

Fernandez neutralized Pastora's influence among the Contras in Costa Rica and persuaded the military commanders to join the United Nicaraguan Opposition (UNO). The UNO was a Contra organization with Alfonso Robelo, Adolfo Calero and Arturo Cruz, created in 1985 under the auspices of the CIA and State Department to unify the various elements of the anti-Sandinista forces.

In June 1985, several problems were solved in supplying the Contra efforts. No longer would Calero pay for his Contra weapons; Richard Secord would handle all arms transactions. Also, Secord would hire airplane crews, acquire or lease aircraft, arrange for storage and secure landing rights in the region. Simultaneously, reorganization began in the State Department's Central American offices. Among the new people was Elliot Abrams who became the Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs.

Through the propped-up support provided by the CIA, North was used as the designated trouble-shooter whenever Congress put a roadblock in the CIA's way. Casey, director of the CIA, promised the Congressional Intelligence committees that the CIA would follow the letter of the law. Whenever he had to break his promise, Casey turned to North. The official report seems to accept the fact that North and his NSC staff could handle affairs normally accomplished by the CIA and several U.S. Departments and other federal agencies!

When Congress approved \$27 million in August 1985 for humanitarian aid to the Contras, to be controlled by the State Department, the CIA improperly took over the task. This program was known as the Nicaraguan Humanitarian Assistance Office (NHAO). This congressionally sanctioned office and operation soon merged with the private benefactors solicited to aid the Contra rebels continue to subvert the Nicaraguan government.

Using the airbases at Ilopango, El Salvador and Tegucigalpa, Honduras, North's supply enterprise was a U.S. Government program unwittingly providing cover to a private covert operation.

Funding for Contra activities in 1986 was gathered from money raised by Carl "Spitz" Channell and Miller, the Saudis, and with funds diverted from covert sales of arms to Iran. On May 14-15, 1986, North's Enterprise received \$15 million from an Iranian arms sales payment. Felix Rodriguez, a former CIA operative, used his influence to assist the NHAO operation. Interestingly, Rodriguez objected to many of the people involved with the Enterprise, particularly Secord, Clines (another former CIA agent) and Quintero. Rodriguez suspected they were profiteering at the Contra's expense.

### **North's Perjured Testimony to Congress**

Both Congress and the Media demanded more information about the Contra efforts and their resupply, which North provided through false testimony. Congress, through Representative Ron Coleman, asked President Reagan to answer questions concerning NSC staff contacts with (1) private persons or foreign governments involved; (2) any Contra military activities; (3) Robert Owen, General Singlaub and John Hull, the American expatriate living in Costa Rica. Poindexter answered for the president with the usual, "We are in compliance with both the spirit and letter of the Boland Amendments." He lied in the name of the president.

On August 6, 1986, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence met with North, who again perjured himself, repeating the lies previously stated by Poindexter, denying raising funds, offering military aid or contacts with Owen.

A Costa Rican official disclosed the existence of the Enterprise's airstrip in northern Costa Rica on September 25, 1986. He publicly linked the Contra resupply and Udall Resources, Inc., an Enterprise shell corporation, which was followed by North giving misleading information.

### **Scheme Unraveled: Hasenfus and the C-123K Shoot down**

The Sandinistas were aware of the increased resupply activities from Ilopango and set up anti-aircraft guns and radar units in southern Nicaragua, where the air resupply drop-sites were located. On October 5, 1986, Nicaraguan government forces shot down a Southern Air Transport C-123K Fairchild that was carrying military supplies to the rebels. Only one of the three-man American crew survived: Eugene Hasenfus.

Documents recovered from the wreckage implicated the NHAO and other Americans. The injured Hasenfus told the Sandinistas he worked for the CIA and two CIA officers were responsible for the crew's services. He gave the name of Max Gomez, the alias for Felix Rodriguez. With this confession, Oliver North shut down the operations at Ilopango Airport. Reagan Administration officials falsely denied any illegal CIA operations. Despite all this, Congress voted to continue funding on October 17, 1986.

A CIA Special National Intelligence Estimate (SNIE), drafted in May 1985 by CIA Director Casey, described increased Soviet influence in Iran and recommended that restriction on weapon sales to Iran be lifted. Secretaries Shultz and Weinberger opposed the SNIE in the form of a National Security Decision Directive (NSDD).

### **Secret and Illegal Arms sales to Iran**

In the mid-1980s Israel sent weapons to Iran that were supplied and directed by the Reagan-Bush White House, in clear violation of law. These were payments to bring about the release of hostages seized in Lebanon, which resulted in the September 1985 release of one American hostage in Lebanon. The seizure of hostages was therefore profitable, and as expected, more hostages were seized in Lebanon. There were three shipments in 1985 and five shipments in 1986. Four more Americans were seized and held as hostages in 1985: David Jacobsen, Thomas Sutherland, Terry Anderson and Father Lawrence Jenco. Two others kidnapped in 1984 remained hostages:



Reverend Benjamin Weir and CIA Beirut Station Chief William Buckley.

The 1986 shipments resulted in the release of two more hostages.

### **One of the Lies by President Ronald Reagan**

Contrary to the facts, President Reagan's public announcement on June 18, 1985, stated:

*That America will never make concessions to terrorists. To do so would only invite more terrorism. Once we head down that path, there would be no end to it, no end to the suffering of innocent people, no end to the bloody ransom all civilized nations must pay."*

Despite Reagan's assurances, for the next 18 months arms for hostage shipments continued.

The Reagan-Bush administration used as a middleman in the arms deliveries Manucher Ghorbanifar. In a July 1984 CIA document Ghorbanifar was described as a prevaricator; and recommended that no government agency have any dealings with him. Despite this CIA warning, the White House used him in a major role in 1986 with covert transactions involving the United States, Iran and Israel. In the summer of 1985, 96 TOW missiles were sent to Iran from Israel. Since no hostages were released, Ghorbanifar explained that the TOWs had fallen into the wrong hands and subsequently asked for another 400 missiles. On September 14, 1985, 408 more missiles arrived in Iran aboard an Israeli aircraft. On September 15, Reverend Weir was released.

### **HAWK Missile Shipments, November 1985**

When the TOW missiles were shipped, Reagan issued a Presidential Finding, which was sent to the Congressional Intelligence Committee, justifying, in advance, all covert operations concerning terrorism, narcotics or counter-intelligence. This time the Iranians asked for anti-aircraft (HAWK) missiles, again through Ghorbanifar. Another Presidential Finding was issued regarding the November 24, 1985, shipment of HAWK missiles to Tehran, but this Finding was signed on December 5, 1985.

Israel, probably at U.S. insistence, decided to cover up the origin of the delivery by flying the HAWKs to a third country in Europe and then loaded onto another aircraft and flown to Iran.

An initial shipment of 80 missiles were to be sent, but as many as 600 were requested. The third country in Europe asked for a letter from the U.S. as to its purpose, which could not be done since the shipment of arms to Iran was illegal. The U.S. decided to use a CIA propriety airplane to fly the missiles to Israel for delivery to Iran. Only 18 HAWKs arrived in Iran, and these HAWKs were not to the specifications Iran requested. They were incapable of downing high-altitude aircraft. Also, each had an Israeli "Star of David" marking which upset the Islamic Iranians.

None of the hostages were released. To make matters worse, the Presidential finding was signed *after* the shipment occurred, and included the following statements: (1) The CIA's activities were part of an authorized effort to secure the release of American hostages in exchange for shipments of weapons; (2) It directed that Congress not be notified; and (3) It reactively sought to approve the CIA activities already completed. Nearly a year

later, Poindexter would secretly destroy the signed Finding, feeling the language of arms-for-hostages” would embarrass the President.

### **TOW Shipments in February 1986**

After more meetings in December and January and two more presidential findings, another shipment of 500 TOW missiles was prepared for Iran.

Again the members of the NSC got together: President Reagan, Vice-President Bush, Secretaries Shultz and Weinberger, DCI Casey, AG Meese, NSA Poindexter (who was appointed to McFarlane’s position) and White House Chief of Staff Don Regan.

Only Shultz and Weinberger opposed the transfers. Weinberger cited the Arms Export Control Act, saying the transfer was illegal. Meese held that the president could authorize the weapons transfers from DOD to the CIA, and by the CIA to the Iranians.

Two other problems occurred involving pricing discussions: Any U.S. shipment of TOWs to Israel that exceeded \$14 million had to be reported to Congress. And any resale by Israel required prior notice to Congress and an eligible buyer, which Iran was not. Another legal ploy was utilized on January 16, 1986; Meese approved the sale under the Economy Act and the National Security Act without notice to Congress.

With several earlier planning and policy meetings, organizational meetings took place after the second presidential finding of January 17. During that time, North had secured an important position in negotiating and administering these transactions. Another 500 missiles were delivered to Iran on February 18, 1986.

Here’s how the transfer worked: Funds were deposited by Ghorbanifar, which were borrowed from Saudi businessman Adnan Khashoggi. These funds were placed in a Swiss bank account controlled by Richard Secord. In turn, Secord transferred the price fixed by DOD to a CIA account. After the CIA purchased the TOW missiles from the U.S. Army, Secord contacted Southern Air Transport to ferry the missiles from the U.S. to Israel. An Israeli chartered aircraft then took them to Iran. On February 27, 500, more TOWs were sent to Iran for a total of 1000 TOWs. Still no hostages were released.

### **The Diversion**

North and Secord discovered their Enterprise had \$800,000 left over from the Israeli deposit used to facilitate the abortive November 1985 series of HAWK missile shipments. This money was then applied to the Contra resupply operation.

North’s NSC Iran operation with Secord allowed North to structure funds so he could skim off profits for his Enterprise operation. Knowing the Iranians were willing to pay \$10,000 per missile, North negotiated a DOD purchase price of \$3700 per missile and kept the excess funds. In turn, these profits were used to support the Contras rebels who were undermining the Nicaraguan government.

On March 7, 1986, in Paris, North met with CIA officials; an Iranian official, Kangarlu; Ghorbanifar and Amiram Nir; and the Israeli Prime Minister’s advisor. Ghorbanifar wanted 240 HAWK spare parts, while the CIA

group focused on a broader political dialogue and the hostages. After another meeting, an American delegation was sent to Iran on May 25, along with a pallet of HAWK spare parts. The remainder was in Israel pending some form of hostage release. The Iranians were in no position to arrange for the immediate release of all American hostages. Though the Iranians admitted they could only hope to facilitate the release of a few hostages, they demanded all of the HAWK spare parts and additional weapons. After three days, the American delegation left without any results.

On June 23, 1986, an Iranian representative, Kangarlu, contacted George Cave, a retired CIA officer who was at the Paris meeting. Kangarlu complained, saying he had acquired a DOD pricing list that reflected the Iranians had paid up to six times the list price for the TOWs and the HAWKS spare parts. When North found out about this complaint, he blamed Ghorbanifar.

North had previously told McFarlane, who led the American delegation to Tehran, that some of the arms sales proceeds were going to the Contras. CIA officials acted perturbed, claiming North had padded the weapons price. North claimed it was a simple mark-up to cover overhead. On July 24, another hostage, Father Jenco, was released. By August 4, Secord arranged the delivery of the remaining HAWK spare parts. All of these negotiations were referred to as "The First Channel."

#### **The Second Channel**

On September 9 another American, Frank Reed, was taken hostage in Beirut. Although North wanted to use Ghorbanifar, Poindexter instructed North to make use of a second channel to negotiate with a nephew of Rafsanjani. Two days later another person, Joseph Cicippio, was taken hostage in Beirut. The net result after working a full year with Ghorbanifar on the Iranian arms sales, after repeated shipments of TOWs, HAWKS and HAWK spare parts, two hostages were released and two new hostages were taken. North continued with the second channel, sending another 500 TOW missiles to Iran on October 28. On November 2, hostage David Jacobsen was released.

#### **The Al-Shiraa Story**

On November 3, a Lebanese newspaper, *Al-Shiraa*, reported on McFarlane's visit to Tehran. Several days later, administration officials, the CIA and NSC scrambled to assemble a story of what had occurred. This strategy session resulted in a White House press release on November 10 saying, "No U.S. Laws have been or will be violated and our policy of not making concessions to terrorists remains intact."

During a congressional hearing on November 21 Casey and Poindexter gave perjured testimony, stating that they were unaware of the November 1985 shipment of HAWKS until January 1986; relating to presidential approval; the flow of funds in the arms sales; and knowledge of the NSC's operation.

To develop a coherent story by senior government officials, Meese gathered a team together on November 21 to coordinate the lies that would be made. A major problem was President Reagan's retroactive signing of the

December 1985 finding that stated the HAWK shipment was an arms-for-hostages deal, Poindexter destroyed the finding to avoid embarrassing Reagan, along with the destruction of other documents.

### **The Cover-Up**

North shredded stacks of communications in his NSC office that evening. Meese conducted interviews of senior U.S. officials. Justice Department attorneys went to NSC and discovered a document that North had failed to shred: a copy of the April 1986 memorandum explaining the diversion.

When Meese discovered this, he interviewed North, who lied about his knowledge of the cargo shipment of November 1985 HAWKs, saying he thought it was oil-drilling equipment. North also denied the retroactive finding covering that shipment. Meese reported his investigation at a November 24 meeting with Reagan and his senior advisors, including Bush, Shultz, Weinberger, Casey, Poindexter and Regan. Meese told the assembled group the president did not know in November 1985 that arms were being shipped to Iran

### **The Next Day**

Reagan and Meese held a nationally televised news conference announcing proceeds from the Iranian arms sales had been diverted to support the Contra, and that Poindexter had resigned and North had been reassigned to the Marine Corps. The criminal investigation into the Iran-Contra matters by the FBI began the following day, November 26, based upon the order of Attorney General Meese. However, the original beginnings to an FBI investigation into criminal operations and activities of the CIA and NSC dated back to the early 1980s when Taus commenced his investigations in Freeport, the site of the CIA Station that ran the Enterprise

### **Some Conclusions in the Iran-Contra Report**

Independent Counsel, Lawrence Walsh, stated that the executive branch tried to evade congressional oversight and that congressional oversight alone could not correct the deficiencies that result when an attorney general openly violates the laws that he is duty-bound to uphold, and is instead, protecting the criminal acts of the president of the United States.

The competing roles of the attorney general, as advisor to the president and the top law enforcement officer, came into irreconcilable conflict in the case of high-level executive branch wrongdoings.

Independent counsel Walsh asked Congress to review their grants of immunity to principals in such highly exposed matters since those grants ruled out successful prosecutions. Also, under the Classified Information Procedures Act (CIPA), the attorney general has unrestricted discretion regarding declassification of materials vital to trial. His discretion is inconsistent with the office of independent counsel, "particularly in cases in which officers of the intelligence agencies that classify information are under investigation. This discretion gives the Attorney General the power to block almost any potentially embarrassing prosecution that requires the declassification of information.

### **Classified Information Report**

The official "Iran-Contra: The Final Report" by Lawrence E. Walsh, consisted of three volumes. A brief classified report known as Volume III is unavailable. It contains references to materials gathered in the investigation that could not be declassified or concealed by some substitute form of discussion. Coupled with these omissions was the even more startling stories told by former intelligence officers, agents and operatives about other activities of North's Enterprise, also, the CIA operations that engaged in illegal and criminal activities, including drug-trafficking, financial frauds, the looting of American's Savings & Loans Associations, politically-inspired assassinations, etc.

### **The Dangerous and Unconstitutional Government**

Crimes were committed, laws were broken, but virtually no one involved in the Iran-Contra affair paid the consequences for their misconduct. If anything, some of those who were involved had been rewarded and continued in government positions. And the unsophisticated public continued in its blissful ways. No changes were made, insuring that the culture would continue to spread throughout government and into society.

Today this culture continues, with people in the three branches of government openly engaging in corrupt activities, aided by their protective shills in the media.

Operating under the protective umbrella of national security, they continue to undermine the laws and Constitution of the United States, and continue to corrupt major government institutions, including the courts, the Justice Department, the Congress, and possibly the most dangerous of them all, the Justice Department.



## CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX

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### The Eastern Bloc Businessman

A lengthy FBI written communication was dropped in Taus' suspense file near the secretary's desk. It had the usual little yellow note sticking to it. "See me," it read with undecipherable initials at the bottom. It could only be Patrick Groves. The Bureau requires a signature on everything or at least one's initials. This action of initialing paperwork could be used against an agent if he claimed he never got the "written word." The trick employed by the agents was to scratch out their initials differently each time or make them as illegible as possible. For some time that was no trick at all. Even the supervisors were past masters of this feat.

Before one sees the supervisor, read the communication. Prepare yourself. Why does the supervisor want to see me? What are my excuses going to be? How can I get out of this whatever it is? Generic questions flashing through an agent's mind. Taus was busy. Groves was getting ready to go to the Big Apple Gym for his daily two-and-a-half hour workout. Taus continued to scan the communication as he walked into Grove's cubicle. "You wanted to see me on this?"

Looking into his gym bag. Groves did not know what Taus was talking about. "This what? Ah, here's my locker key!" Waving his right hand for Taus to come closer. Groves said, "Let me see it." A few seconds pause as he glanced at it, reminded him of the contents. "You read it?" Groves asked. "The businessman is here in New York. Contact him, he may be a good 'One-Thirty-Four.'" (FBI case title number for a subject who is an informant.)

Reading the entire airtel, Taus found it had been sent to the FBI New York office by the FBI Washington Field Office (WFO). An international business conference had taken place in Washington, D.C. several weeks ago, and several Soviet Eastern Bloc countries were in attendance. It was designed to promote trade between the United States and the Soviet countries in attendance. An FBI informant, who was among the group posing as an interested western businessman, notified his control agent about the affair.

At the same time, a person with the alias of Melvin Kaminsky called the Washington Field Office and informed the agent who wrote the airtel about

his business involvements with the Eastern Bloc nations.

Kaminsky stated:

*I want you people in the FBI to know what I am doing. I am running a legitimate business activity with these communist countries. As a commercial representative and trade consultant, I work for various western businesses that want to get involved with the Soviets. I also represent the business interests of several Eastern Bloc countries that want to export their products to the West.*

*It's strictly industrial and consumer goods, nothing that I know of is considered classified or restricted. I felt a need to notify the FBI of what I am doing. I am an American citizen and patriot, and I do not want the FBI to think I am doing something wrong. I am willing to help the FBI in any way I can."*

The lead request from Washington Field Office to the FBI New York office listed Kaminsky's Manhattan business address and phone number, suggesting he could be of assistance since he was acquainted with several members of the official delegations from the Eastern Bloc countries.

Taus' squad secretary, Wahida al-Hamid, had just answered the telephone and after listening to the caller, she asked if an agent on the squad would care to speak to "a man asking for an agent." This was the kind of call a clever agent avoided. It could often turn out to be another head case looking for trouble or a caller who would waste an agent's time on the line with nonsensical complaints.

Wahida waited for an agent to respond, which never came; everyone had already headed for cover within their paperwork bunkers on their desks, acting oblivious to the call. Wahida's eyes slowly drifted over to Taus. "Yes my love, I'll take the call. Transfer it to 4242," Taus could not resist her endearing looks. "Who am I speaking to?"

The voice at the other end of Taus' receiver answered without saying his name. Tell the unidentified caller your name and maybe see your name appear on a subpoena a few months down the pike. Taus had been there before, in court, because of another head case that had an axe to grind against the Bureau. "Michael Murphy," replied Taus as he smiled across his desk at the real Murphy who had pretended to be too busy to take the call. Murphy whispered, "I'll get you for that!"

"May I have your name, sir?" Taus believed in a quid pro quo. "Melvin Kaminsky, I spoke to another FBI agent of yours in Washington, D.C. a few weeks ago." Kaminsky's explanation paralleled the airtel given to Taus in the last half hour. Kaminsky was articulate and did not sound like any head case. Pretending to transfer the call, Taus then correctly identified himself to Kaminsky.

The reason Kaminsky called was to inform the FBI about his future trips to several Eastern Bloc countries. He wanted to be sure the FBI was aware of his activities. A meeting was scheduled by Taus for a more extensive interview upon his return. Both Taus and Kaminsky's schedules had divergent courses. Several weeks passed before they met. But with numerous phone calls in between, Taus felt Kaminsky would be an excellent source for the



## FBI.

One disturbing characteristic Taus noted in Kaminsky's personality was his habit of name-dropping. He always mentioned someone important that he knew. Kaminsky was giving the impression he was influential. On many occasions, informants used this device to lend credibility to their stories.

Taus would soon learn that Kaminsky was not exaggerating.

Their first meeting took place in Trans World Airlines Ambassador's Club located at JFK International Airport. TWA's flying first-class businessmen could seclude themselves away from the tourist customers at this club. Inside the double doors labeled "Ambassador Club Only," was a large bar and dining area. Private conference rooms were available and Kaminsky reserved one. Taus arrived ahead of schedule, a habit he had from being in the military. He wanted to know the territory before any confrontation. As he sat in the deep plush velvet armchairs near the lounge area, a harried gentleman in a three-piece gray herringbone suit appeared at the reception counter. The receptionist escorted Kaminsky over to where Taus was seated.

Curly black hair, done by a hair stylist, surrounded his forty-year old head that sported a full beard. Taus sensed he had met the individual before and asked him. "I don't believe we have," Kaminsky said slowly as he looked Taus over carefully. "Many people say I look quite a bit like the movie actor, Elliot Gould."

They both went over to the adjacent conference room. During the interview, Kaminsky explained how unfamiliar he was with foreign espionage and what he described as spy work. He noted that he was intrigued in meeting an FBI agent and preceded to ask Taus many questions, slowly probing what work Taus did on the squad. Then as if to apologize, Kaminsky would say, "I know I should not have asked you about that." Whenever Taus asked him a question, he responded with qualified answers. As the interview progressed, it was clear Kaminsky wanted to assist the Bureau and find out what the FBI was doing in certain areas.

Taus was uncertain about Kaminsky's motivation, whether he was more intent upon working for another master. That would not have been so unusual; after all he was a business consultant. Taus could use him as an informant but needed to first know his loyalty. Kaminsky was not concerned about payments. Most informants working for the FBI do it for revenge or money. There was no sign of a revenge motive.

The constant chord sounded by Kaminsky was that the FBI should be aware of his business operations because he was a patriot. Throughout the discourse, Kaminsky dropped names, "I knew Jacob Javits; I know his son; my friends in Congress tell me; etc."

Checking his timepiece, Kaminsky noted his schedule flight departure time. He was anxious to arrive at a point in the discourse. Kaminsky finally said he would help the FBI, but did not want any of the people with whom he did business to know of his relationship with the Bureau. He was acting like an ideal informant and Taus was stunned when Kaminsky suggested the very plan Taus had labored over to try a pitch for Kaminsky's assistance.

"I can introduce an undercover FBI agent to my business contacts with

the communist countries. You can do whatever you want as long as you don't say either of us works for the FBI. It would ruin my business."

An undercover scenario was mentioned by Pat Groves and developed by Taus. This was the suggestion Taus would pose to Kaminsky, but Kaminsky had suggested it first. Unless there was another reason, Kaminsky seemed to have some sort of extra-sensory perception or had worked for other intelligence agencies. Though the man was an intellectual who easily comprehended ideas and amplified them, Kaminsky's keen understanding could only come from dealing with others in intelligence matters. Kaminsky denied it, "I know many politicians. They told me about protecting this country's national security interests."

The announcement by the club's receptionist curtailed the interview.

TWA Flight 304 would depart in ten minutes. Kaminsky was going to a business trade conference in East Germany and, then to Poland. He would return in two weeks and tell Taus what occurred. Further discussions of the proposed undercover operation using Taus as a business associate would have to wait. Before leaving JFK, Taus checked the passenger manifest for the TWA flight to London. Kaminsky's name was not listed, though Taus had seen him board the aircraft.

Back in the FBI office Taus briefed Groves and noted Kaminsky was untruthful. Nonetheless, Groves thought Taus' plan, to use him as an informant, was a good idea and encouraged Taus to proceed. This was unusual for Groves. He always hesitated, arguing every minute detail. When Taus noted Kaminsky's itinerary to East Germany and Poland, he suggested

Groves contact the supervisors of the FBI East German and Polish FCI squads in the FBI New York office. However, Groves emphatically told him not to do so. This time things were unexpectedly different. Groves was eager for Taus to get started. Within a week, Groves asked Taus again to get the plan operational. Taus reminded him that Kaminsky was still in Europe. Taus could only wonder why Groves was so anxious to use this new untested informant.

### **The West German Affair, October 1988**

At least three notes were scattered across Taus' desk. Another three or four hid in the sign-in register near the squad secretary's desk. Operating five active informants was a problem. Good informants can keep an agent very busy. Rarely would an agent have a good informant reassigned to another agent. The most important investigative tool an agent has is an informant.

Though most of Taus' caseload had been reassigned, working five informants required a great deal of time and effort. Taus prioritized his work. On this day, he wanted to work on the United Nations sports organization, an undercover operation directed against the diplomatic corps. Bureau administration was delaying his program. Some requests for support were lining inboxes at FBI headquarters because administrators did not know how to deal with a novel situation. Faced with a new problem, they would let it linger, hoping it would go away or be overcome by events. Taus would have to rattle their cages.

The four notes from Kaminsky worried him. Perhaps he should call Kaminsky first and allay his fears. Taus felt Kaminsky was given to excessive concern over the undercover operation. For the past few months, Kaminsky called Taus on every small detail. A recent conversation concerned a Trade Fair that was planned at the new Jacob Javits Convention Center in Manhattan.

Part of the undercover operation with Kaminsky would involve an initial introduction of Taus in a meeting with foreign business associates. Unfortunately, Taus was not prepared; the Bureau had not issued him any phony identity cards. It would be difficult meeting any foreign representatives without some fake documentation. He sensed Kaminski's messages were about the Trade Fair.

His desk phone rang. It was Kaminsky. "I've been trying to get you all week. It's very important. Can we meet today?"

This would interfere with Taus' priorities. "Can you give me an idea of the problem?"

"No, not on the phone. It's important. I've got to let you know!"

"Fine," Taus knew that when an informant insisted on a meeting, you have one. "What time and place?"

"Is eleven this morning alright at Louie's coffee shop?"

"It's good. Do you need anything else?" asked Taus, trying to show an interest. He felt part of his day would be less productive. Some things would have to wait.

Taus arrived five minutes ahead of Kaminsky. Dashing into Louie coffee shop, Kaminsky noticed Taus was seated at the rearmost table. As he took a seat, Kaminsky looked around the "I," making sure no one could overhear them. "This is really important. I have some sensitive information for you."

Gone from Kaminski's usual descriptions were any qualifiers. At previous meetings, he always left room for doubt. He would say such things as "I think I may have some possibly important news about something you could be interested in." This time Taus saw Kaminsky was nervous. "How have you been?" asked Taus.

Without replying, Kaminsky repeated himself, "This stuff is very important. I've been trying to contact you for a week. As you know, I went to Europe last week. In West Germany, I met Rudolph Kaufmann; he's an old friend of mine. I've done business with him for a long time, nothing recent though. He's employed by Hauser-Werke, a large construction firm, one of the giants in West Germany. They have worldwide contracts."

"One night we went out to a few beer halls with a friend of his, another employee of Hauser-Werke. They got pretty well plastered. I kept talking about business and Kaufmann's friend, Otto Grauff, mentioned some heinous scheme involving his company. Kaufmann hushed him, giggling from too much beer, but Grauff continued his story. Grauff was upset since he was not promoted in the company. With enough drinks in him, he became angry. You know, the kind of person who becomes a hostile drunk. Kaufmann, on the other hand, is laughing at everything."

"Well, Grauff persisted with his rage against Hauser-Werke, criticizing

them on several of their contracts. An anti-Semitic side was revealed when he called them the Jewish moneymakers of Germany. He said they would do anything for money. Then, he mentions several domestic construction contracts in West Germany, saying there were numerous political payoffs.

Grauff said the scandal in the United States with the WedTech Company from the Bronx is small potatoes compared to some of the corruption he's witnessed at Hauser-Werke."

The I waitress came over, making Kaminsky pause as he picked up a menu to order. They ordered a continental breakfast. When the waitress left with the order, Kaminsky looked side-to-side and continued his story.

*Then Grauff mentions the sensitive defense contracts that Hauser-Werke has with the West German Armed Forces, part of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization). Kaufmann hushes him again, only adding to his displeasure. Grauff pointed an accusatory finger at him, saying he's involved in the affair. Kaufmann leans over to me, nearly spilling his beer, and tells me not to repeat anything Grauff said.*

*Kaufmann is still giggling and almost encouraging Grauff's ill temperament. Grauff continues on about other sensitive areas in which the company is involved with several western nations, including the United States. The powerful German company has a number of U.S. subsidiaries. It's a large corporation. A giant octopus, but unlike a conglomerate, all of its companies are related, working in the construction fields.*

*Grauff adds the U.S. subsidiary has sensitive defense contracts with the U.S. government and contracts for the construction of American embassies and consular offices around the world.*

Kaminsky pauses again as the waitress brings over two cups of coffee. Once she departs, he continues:

*Grauff laughs for the first time, saying who do you think is building Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi's chemical plants?" The ones that will be used to produce chemical warfare munitions. To make money, Hauser-Werke will do anything. And then, he asked me if I don't think that is wrong. I try to act polite and concerned, gathering whatever information I can for you."*

Taus replied, "Yes, of course. Why did he tell you these things? He hardly knew you, except through Kaufmann?" Kaminsky hesitated and looked puzzled, then answered, "I told you, because he was not promoted in the firm."

"But why complain to you, a complete stranger? What role does he see you playing with the company?"

"Grauff knows I am a U.S. Trade Consultant looking for foreign business deals. He was trying to discourage me by bad-mouthing the company that did not promote him."

The answer did not satisfy Taus, but he nodded his head as if to indicate it did. "Did you find out the names of the U.S. subsidiaries and what sensitive contracts they have?"

"I wrote them down," Kaminsky said, "but, I left them back in my apartment." A curious thing to do, thought Taus. Kaminsky was anxious to

tell Taus this story, yet he forgets to bring along important bits of information. Perhaps it was accidental or perhaps that information would come with a higher price. "What's the name of the firm constructing Qaddafi's chemical plants?"

"George Hamm Construction Company, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Hauser-Werke. They have a location in Virginia, near Washington, DC." The information was written down by Taus who had not expected any important news. Then, Kaminsky started asking him questions about his job.

*What are you going to do with this information? You work for the Executive branch, surely they are aware of these contracts. This stuff is politically damaging news for Reagan and Bush with the Presidential elections in a few weeks.*

"How's that," asked Taus?

*I'm sure the President is aware of these sensitive government contracts. He could be found dealing with another terrorist country like Iran and the Contra affair. This time it's Libya and these construction firms."*

"You are saying a lot, but it's unclear to me, especially the stuff about the Presidential connection. Why would he knowingly permit the U.S. government to employ a firm that has connections with Libya?"

*There are many reasons," Kaminsky knew more about political science than business administration. "First there are many ways that payoffs and kickbacks can be manipulated. Funds can be funneled through other channels for uses such as the Contras."*

Seeing Taus was a bit skeptical, Kaminsky continued his list:

*There's a vast oil supply there. Did you know that 2000 American citizens work for the Libyan oil interests? Qaddafi likes American oil technology. In 1980 alone, U.S. oil imports from Libya were worth over \$7 billion."*

"The United States has an oil boycott on Libya," Taus noted.

*Yes, now. We also have an embargo against Iran, yet arms shipments have gone there. George Bush's family in Texas is involved in the production of the oil industry's hardware. It's technology. Bush has something to protect."*

"If Bush has an interest in Libya's prosperity," reasoned Taus aloud, "Why did President Reagan order the raid on Libya? Qaddafi was nearly killed in that raid. I remember the Libyan Press claiming his palace was bombed, resulting in the death of his 3-year old daughter."

*You believe everything you read? The fact that Qaddafi, remarkably, was not in the palace that night, of all nights, seems to have been overlooked by everyone. He was safe, out in the dessert, away from where the American bombers hit. He knew about the planned raid!"*

"Still, his daughter was killed," responded Taus.

*It may have been a terrible mistake that she was there. Maybe it was not his daughter at all. Perhaps the Libyan Press used this tragedy for propaganda purposes?"*

There were many questions to be raised. Nonetheless, Taus felt he knew more than he was saying. Taus needed to know Kaminski's motivation and

why a so-called trade consultant, who handled consumer items, became involved with a large construction outfit. Patriotic duty? An old friend? They seemed likely answers, maybe too likely. Some pieces were missing from the puzzle Kaminsky presented.

Impatient since Taus had not answered his original questions, Kaminsky added that he had friends in Washington, DC who would be interested in this story.

"I'm glad you came to me first," Taus said, "We cannot have you telling other people sensitive information if you want to be effective for us. As I mentioned when we first met, any such information should only be brought to my attention. I'm glad you did. Now you must trust me in how I handle it.

By the way, who are your friends in Washington?"

"There are many. Democratic congressmen and senators would be interested, particularly in light of the upcoming elections. I am personally acquainted with..." The litany of name-droppings covered a host of prominent congressional leaders. "I know several top level administrators in the State Department who would jump on this information. You know what liberals they are!"

"Let me take care of this. Bring me those notes from your apartment next time. I'll talk to the bosses here and see what they want to do. Taus was concluding the meeting. Who could he persuade to listen to Kaminsky?"

There was no doubt Kaminsky was stable, but Taus wanted to know his motives. "You'll let me know? Call me right away! Can I speak to Terrance Inman? He's with the Inspector General at the State Department."

"What for? Haven't we agreed you should only deal with me?" Kaminsky responded:

*Well, I've given Inman information for several years. He's an old friend. Besides, the West German construction firms, there's a terrorist group that operates out of Germany. Last year, the Frankfurt Police arrested one of the terrorists who planned on placing a bomb aboard a U.S. passenger aircraft.*

*I know the West German Police are going to place another terrorist under arrest now. These terrorists are working with your government, I think. They have access to a drug route which allows them to do what they want."*

Why did Kaminsky mention the State Department? Why wasn't he dealing with CIA whose name never surfaced in his conversations? Taus pondered these questions. There was one answer that Taus recalled from an informant back in 1985 that disclosed the CIA drug route out of the "Golden Crescent, through the Near East, into Europe, Frankfurt, London and then New York.

That informant specifically identified the CIA as the responsible agency. Knowing such sensitive matters, why did Kaminsky want to tell "State," or for that matter the FBI, unless he was masking CIA activities.

Taus stated, "Your friendship aside, please do not involve them in these confidential matters unless the FBI deems it necessary. Wait until I call you."

FBI SSA Groves had gone to the gym late that day. Taus waited anx-

iously for his return to discuss his meeting with Kaminsky. It was not quite 4:00 p.m. when Groves returned with a bag-lunch. He had a heavy workout. Taus did not wait for him to take off his overcoat, "I need to tell you about my meeting today with Kaminsky."

Frowning as he reached into the small brown bag. Groves pulled out a soggy tuna salad sandwich. Taus was not sure if Groves' frown was due to his news or a leaking coffee cup in the lunch bag. "What meeting!" Groves was upset.

As Taus told the story, Groves' attention focused on him. He forgot about the sandwich, which, now, was drawing a persistent fly. Groves' mouth drooped as Taus related the story about the West German firm.

"You got something here." Groves leaned forward in his chair and reached for his phone, calling the ASAC. "Is Mr. Eposito in?" A negative response prompted Groves to redial, asking for the SAC. Groves was told, the SAC would call him back. At 6:00 p.m. Groves walked over to Taus' desk and told him to delay any future meetings with Kaminsky until he heard something further from Groves.

At 9 a.m. the next morning, Taus called the office. "Hello, Wahida? This is Richard Taus. Would you please put me on the books this morning?"

"Don't tell me. You had a flat tire on the way in?" Wahida was used to hundreds of excuses that agents provided when they were going to be in late.

"Actually, I just finished cleaning my revolver." Wahida said, "Oh! You were not scheduled for firearms training today?"

"No, I shot my girl friend. She wasn't listening to my excuses and started acting wise with me last night."

"Very funny!" She obliged Taus who had a late night meeting with George Hebert, one of the CIA agents in Freeport.

By noon, Taus arrived at the office. Groves had not gone to the gym. He called Taus into his office. Looking angry, he raised his left index finger and waved it at Taus. "Leave Kaminsky alone! What's the matter with him? He's trying to cause trouble."

Responding to Groves, Taus said, "What are you talking about? Kaminski's provided reliable information in the past. He's certainly credible.

Why would he lie? What have you found out?"

They both asked each other multiple questions, answering each other with more questions. Not a very smart procedure for a brick-agent to question his supervisor. But few FBI agents had Taus' combat background. After Vietnam and Central America, Taus would never accept something on blind faith alone.

### **Another FBI Supervisory Agent Blocking Actions That Would Expose FBI-Mafia Links**

Finally, Groves explained. "This guy is dangerous. He's volatile. You cannot control him. He thinks he's a super-spy." None of Groves' reasons were responsive to Taus who insisted that Kaminsky was a valuable informant. "Let's use him and see where he takes us."

"No, drop him. Don't contact him again. This was not the first time in ten years that Taus heard a supervisor tell him not to continue a viable inves-

tigation with an informant. In 1984, there was the Gambino Mafia case in Middle Village, Queens when SSA Lindley DeVecchio told him to close a case when CIA connections became apparent. (In 1996, DeVecchio was charged with aiding a Mafia Capo, covering for the Capo's criminal activities.) And in 1985, there was the Romanian informant who told about the U.S. air carrier that the CIA used as a drug-trafficking route in the Middle East, Europe and the United States. (On December 21, 1988, 270 people were killed aboard that flight. Pan American 103, when a bomb was placed in luggage placed into the cargo compartment.)

Taus knew that even informants who were acting as double agents against the Bureau, could be utilized in some capacity, such as a disinformation campaign. Why not Kaminsky, if the facts showed he was dangerous?

Taus added, "He's going to call me and he expects an answer."

"When he calls, don't answer your phone. You are not here! I'll talk to him."

Had a CIA agent contacted Groves after last night's meeting? Taus thought. Hebert did ask him about a European construction firm which Hebert's company, Castle Securities, wanted to use for expansion. Taus had not responded, except he told Hebert he would review office indices and files to see if the FBI had any information.

For the next several days, Taus did as instructed and avoided contact with Kaminsky. He was busy enough handling the other informants. But he knew something was wrong. Hebert called several times inquiring about the European construction company. Wahida told Taus that the SAC had called FBI headquarters on Kaminsky. It was obvious that whatever the Bureau told the SAC that day, Taus received a lecture from Groves.

While doing some paperwork at his desk, Taus' phone rang. Anticipating a call from another informant, Taus answered, forgetting about Groves' admonishment. It was Kaminsky. "I thought you were going to call me? I contacted Terrance Inman at the State Department."

"I told you not to contact anyone else!" Taus was furious. "You also said you would get back to me on this matter. It's been a week. I mentioned it in passing while speaking to Inman. He said he would contact you on it. I gave him your number. "How long ago was that?" asked Taus.

"A few days ago," Kaminsky was lying, Taus knew by his inexactitude. Kaminsky always kept accurate records. "I need to know with certainty. He has not called me so far." Taus was pleading with Kaminsky for the right time. Finally Kaminsky said, "Last Monday evening." Taus thought about the lapse of time. He wondered why Inman had not called him. "Just how did you explain it to him? Did he seem very concerned?"

"Exactly as I told you and he was most concerned. Inman told me, he would pass the information onto the top man and call you Tuesday." There was no doubt that a very delicate situation had developed. No further conversation was safe over the telephone. They were being tape-recorded. Generally, all office phone conversations are recorded, though not saved. Taus was certain this one would be saved.

It could have been due to Taus' attitude towards him that Kaminsky did



not give up and take his business elsewhere. Perhaps he already had. He said as much when speaking with Inman. Yet, he persisted with Taus, wanting the FBI to take a role. Again he repeated his request. "What are you going to do? I think we're running out of time on this matter." Kaminsky was also aware of the telephone bugging and he avoided using key words. "Let me find out, I'll talk to Inman too. I'll call you back as soon as I find out something."

"When?" exclaimed Kaminsky who had been put-off before. "By this evening." Taus' mind raced as he saw Groves walk into his cubicle. Normally, Groves said hello or nodded his head. Taus would have to tell him about the phone conversation. Groves would soon find out from the recordings. He braced himself for the confrontation with Groves.

Predictably, Groves' reaction would be quite hostile. He would be upset to learn that Taus had spoken to Kaminsky. So what, Taus felt. Something was fishy here. Taus always resented the lack of trust that the FBI placed in its personnel. If they cannot trust a person with his record of service, both in the Bureau and in the Army, then a real problem existed, not with Taus, but with the FBI. Groves motioned Taus to step into his office. Feeling he was walking into the Dragoon's mouth, Taus could almost feel the heat. Nervously, as if expecting trouble. Groves asked, "What's happening now?"

"Kaminsky just called me." A loud "What!" echoed in the cubicle with Groves exhibiting an equal amount of anguish on his face. "Relax, I did not contact him. No one else was here to answer a ringing phone, so I picked it up." Taus beat around the bush not answering the main issue.

"I don't care. I told you to leave him alone." Taus was concerned since Groves did not address the issue either. "Look," said Taus, "It's obvious there's a problem here you have not told me about. What did the SAC say about this matter? I think I should at least be told. I do have a top-secret clearance. I'm working for the same FBI. Aren't I?"

Even under the best of circumstances, asking the supervisor a question by posing a lecture first never yielded a proper response. This would be no exception. "That's right, Taus! You work for the FBI. And if I tell you to do something, you do it or resign! You cannot conduct investigations to satisfy yourself. You are conducting investigations for the Bureau."

### **Signing that No Criminal Activities Are Known**

The United State Code, Title 18 and 28 covers government corruption and obstruction of justice, as well as procedures for reporting felonies. To insure FBI agents reported all criminal activities, there was a biannual FBI form, stating there were no unreported criminal activities an agent was aware of in his investigations. Groves was attempting to shove this paperwork over to Taus for his signature. "By the way, you haven't signed the form," Groves nonchalantly said.

Now, it was uniquely obvious to Taus that criminal activities were known to Groves, or at least to the SAC who was covering up for them. Two equally opposite thoughts crossed Taus' mind on how to handle Grove's displeasure. He elected the less argumentative approach while still trying to convince Groves of the latest developments. However, Taus would absolutely ignore the FBI biannual form lying on the desk before him.

lutely ignore the FBI biannual form lying on the desk before him.

“Kaminsky let me know he contacted Terrance Inman at State. Now, before you explode again, let me finish. That’s his friend at State. Inman was to call me last Tuesday. I guess he never did. I think it’s a shame that we cannot use Kaminsky. He has not showed me that he’s a problem.” In spite of Taus’ second attempt at pursuing Groves to change his mind or explain the situation more clearly, Groves responded:

*You’re causing a lot of trouble here. I don’t know why you cannot leave the situation alone.” Groves was warning him about some preplanned actions ahead. “You have raised a hornet’s nest.”*

“I don’t understand how? I am doing my job! In fact, I’m doing a job five times better than some of the other agents around here that visit graveyards and use the names on tombstones as their informants. I’ve seen some of Bernie’s and Bob’s informants. The information those people supply the Bureau can be found at the local public library. No, in a comic book store!”

Since Groves sat back and made no further comment, Taus pushed the blank form back on the desk and dismissed himself. He knew the situation was still unresolved. Kaminsky was still expecting a phone call.

FBI Agent Ann Nicholas-Sturm returned from outside. She saw Taus sitting at his desk. “What’s going on Rich? You look upset. Can I do anything for you?” Though such a question was meant innocently enough, Taus had heard it on several other occasions, and would have raised his eyebrow, giving her a lustful smile as to what he had in mind. This time, he just said hello. She knew he had a problem and wanted to help.

After placing her purse by her desk, she sat near Taus. She was used to his moods. They came from hard work, not always Bureau work. She knew he was active in the U.S. Army Reserve and directed the undercover sports program. While many other agents squandered their spare time, as well as the Bureau’s time, she saw in Taus a person who established goals and pursued them. She had done the same.

Ann came from a first generation Greek family that had earned the American dream. Hard work and long hours for her family resulted in the ownership of a small rural diner in Upstate New York. When she was a teenager, she worked as a waitress in her family’s diner. Working long hours and being around food kept her isolated from her contemporaries. Her beautiful blond hair and green eyes did not attract any dates since the first thing men noticed was a 170-pound figure. She had plenty of time to do her schoolwork. Social distractions would not be a problem in her younger years.

Excelling in scholastic pursuits, she completed college and went on to law school. Her immigrant family had learned its lessons the hard way. Knowing the law would help. Becoming an attorney was her goal. The family business thrived and she was free to do whatever she wanted. The years away from the diner had trimmed her figure.

Though she was a very attractive person in her early adulthood, she lacked any satisfaction on her job, working initially in an insurance law office. All the senior partners were older men, not of any interest to her. She yearned for another goal. Highly intelligent and capable, she could achieve

anything she put her mind too. The FBI looked interesting. She enjoyed spy stories. Why not? Again she pursued her ambitions and became an FBI agent.

In high school, her friends were the beautiful cheerleaders and the shapely coeds who married early in their lives. Now they were getting divorces, most all of them were heavier and less beautiful than in their youthful school days. But Ann was very attractive now and was looking for a spouse. At one time, Ann had met a U.S. Naval Aviator who served as a carrier pilot with the fleet somewhere in the Mediterranean Sea. She was concerned about his safety. The letters, which her boyfriend sent her, expressed love and fear.

Knowing Taus had seen war, she would often read those letters to him. If either Ann or Rich had any romantic thoughts for each other, they were expressed as a friendship rather than a love affair. Both did so for the sake of the Naval aviator. Since Taus had received a "Dear John" letter while serving in Vietnam, he would not be the cause of one more, not even to a stranger. She knew that.

"You may feel better if you tell someone," Ann softly whispered, not wishing to pry. Sensing her concern, Taus pivoted in his swivel chair and faced her. "That's the problem, I've been talking to Groves." Taus explained the situation, neglecting to include the shadowy details that really haunted the story. And he never told anyone in the FBI about his past work for another intelligence agency.

Larry Franken (alias), who was Ann's alternate agent on an informant, came over and said, "I've got to talk with you about the "Bookworm," an obvious code name for their informant. "Would you come with me to the library now?" They could more freely discuss the informant in the little utilized FBI library located on the same floor.

Ann and Larry headed for the library with a cloud of smoke marking their trail. Larry's chain smoking became even worse when he was nervous and could not get a drink of booze. He had patches of his head hair missing from his condition. The Bureau never addressed Franken's alcoholism.

Groves had just completed a phone call, probably to the SAC since he was now hurriedly walking over towards the SAC'S office. The phone rang on Taus' desk. It was George Hebert; more trouble. "Say, I have something interesting to tell you about," Hebert's voice sounded intense. Taus recalled the warning from Groves and Carmine Rivera, Hebert's handling agent. They both told him to avoid dealing with Hebert saying he was unstable and volatile, the same expressions now being used to describe Kaminsky.

Then it suddenly dawned upon Taus; was there another relationship between Kaminsky and Hebert. Dan Priscu, the Freeport CIA Chief of Station, pretended to be simply an FBI informant. That did not fool Taus who used him as a source of information. Priscu was Kevin Kattke's boss, and Kattke was Hebert's supervisor.

Recalling Hebert's involvement with NSC staffer Oliver North and the Iran Contra Affair, as well as Hebert's eagerness to cooperate with the FBI, Taus saw a parallel with the situation reported by Kaminsky. The tie-ins

were missing.

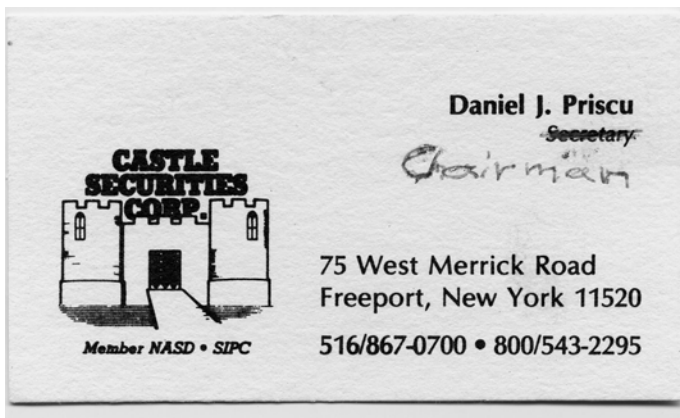
Reviewing his notes on both cases, Taus noted an interesting date, November 25, 1986. According to Kaminsky, that was the date he initially contacted the FBI office in Norfolk Virginia. The Norfolk office referred the case to the FBI New York office where it was assigned to Taus. Taus always marked the date; it was his former girl friend's birthday. Pamela Thompson had worked for Information Sciences, a New Jersey corporation back in 1974 where Taus met her. Taus also remembered that Hebert was interviewed by him again on that date in Freeport.

Events were beginning to come together; chronologically at least. The Iran-Contra Affair was unfolding in the World Press back in late November 1986. That was the November when President Reagan's monopoly in controlling the U.S. Senate ended. The Democratic Party won in the National General Elections held that month. Their win could be attributable to the developing Irangate scandal. Only a few days before the general election, a Lebanese weekly, "Al-Shiraa," revealed the US-Iranian Contra Arms Initiative. The illegal arms sales to Iran for hostages shocked Americans.

Opening his desk drawer, Taus found literature provided to him by Hebert from Castle Securities. The papers consisted of financial prospectus developed and written by Castle's CIA staffers in Freeport. Then it struck him, that these companies were not merely small businesses. Many had international connections. Castle itself was deceptive. Locating itself in a small town. Castle maintained a very low profile. However, its fiscal figures from the booklet showed tremendous financial resources. But from where, thought Taus.

Castle was located in a town with a population of 45,000. Hebert and Priscu claimed they put together financial packages for neophyte companies.

A prospectus on Weaver International Arms Imports reflected it had cornered the international arms market that purchase weapons from Red China. In very small print, the prospectus noted their overseas operations, contracts with other countries, including several hostile Middle Eastern countries.



Hebert's relationship with Oliver North was well known, along with

Hebert's associates, Sal Imbergio, Kevin Kattke and David Studer all working in Freeport. Was the National Security Council operating through Castle?

Priscu had admitted to Taus that he worked for the CIA back in the 1950s. The FBI file maintained on Priscu showed he was only an informant for the CIA. This was nothing more than the CIA's disinformation campaign at work. Since CIA could not hide all the information and sources (still alive) from the FBI, they decided, instead, to disguise it. If a careless slip were made by anyone, CIA could claim that they knew him, but only as a minor source or informant.

It was a perfect cover; even another Philip Agee could not expose Priscu as a CIA station chief. His FBI file and records were doctored. Dates in Priscu's file from the CIA did not correspond to the dates he personally supplied to Taus. Priscu was still human and could make mistakes, but his insistence about some of these erroneous dates demonstrated that he was lying.

The handwritten notes Taus had taken showed these discrepancies. Though Priscu had sworn to Taus that he no longer had any contacts with the CIA, a letter was sent to CIA Langley. The reply stated, "Priscu was terminated some time ago because he was not effective and was quarrelsome."

The FBI report was anything but an accurate appraisal of the man Taus had met. Priscu was polite and cordial. He displayed some uncanny business knowledge and diplomacy. CIA's reason for his phony termination did not matter. Intelligence agencies never provided the real reasons.

Content to play the role of a lower level source for the CIA, Priscu claimed he also worked as an FBI informant in the 1960s. The Bureau placed his files in the Confidential Informant File Unit (CIFU).

Taus explained that FBI agents are truly novices in the intelligence field and are eager to acquire informant that can supply reliable information without any difficulties. Most agents have only been to a few states and have little worldly experience. Very few had served in the Armed Forces. An agent's entire working career could be spent in the FBI, with its tight purse strings, administrative bureaucracy and the resistance to innovation, few agents had any incentives beyond those they used to get hired as a junior-level government employee.

Taus explained that FBI agents lacked credible training and had no comparable experiences that could only be found in the more sophisticated intelligence services, such as Mossad of Israel, Stasi of East Germany and parts of the CIA. These shortcomings were all too apparent in FBI investigations. What the FBI accepted as interagency jealousy and rivalry with the CIA was far more sinister. Contrived by the CIA, the jealousy was designed to mask the real reasons why the CIA did not cooperate with the FBI. The crafty CIA easily out-manuevered the slow FBI hound dogs.

Priscu's file would never have been closed by the CIA based upon his experience and influence in the international marketplace. The world was heading towards a unified economic system, a new world order, and men like Priscu had helped shape the new enterprises.

Taus had decided to reopen Priscu's FBI file in the early 1980s because of Priscu's associations and connections with the Mafia. When Taus introduced himself, Priscu was quite surprised to learn his FBI dossier was opened again. He was edgy during the initial interview for good reason. Taus was not interested in simply using him as an asset; rather Taus wanted to know about Priscu's ties to the mob and to the CIA which a parallel FCI investigation was developing.

In North's *Guts & Glory*, North inadvertently implicated the Freeport secret cabal as he described Hebert, Kattke and Imbergio. Ironically, none had any civilian occupations except as janitors and custodians, and appeared to be on the U.S. government payroll as intelligence agents.

Another booklet slipped off Taus' overcrowded desktop. It was a comic book given to him by Hebert, published by the CIA and entitled "Operation Urgent Fury: The U.S. Invasion of Grenada" dated October 25, 1983. It was during that operation that Hebert and his associates helped North. They were later received in Washington as super-patriots and praised for their generous support.

Hebert had no family wealth to sustain his globe trotting escapades. He had received his Political Science degree from the same university that Taus and many other CIA agents attended, Widener University, formerly Pennsylvania Military College. Instead of being a wealthy businessman, Hebert was unemployed and never established any connections to the lower echelons of the Republican Party's Steering Committee. But, he did secure a job with the CIA.

CIA employed them and protected the operation in Freeport. A new wrinkle was added by Kaminski's revelations. The CIA did not need a paper trail connecting them to anything criminal. They seemed to have forgotten Taus' past when one of their own, a Steering Committee executive employed an Army veteran and helicopter pilot to be their secret warrior in Latin America.

At that time, General Sturm directed Taus while Taus was a captain in the U.S. Army. With Sturm's unexpected death and Taus' immediate supervisor, Nestor Sanchez' shift from the CIA to the NSC, Taus lost valuable connections. Further, the death of FBI Assistant Director William C. Sullivan ended the only remaining power contacts Taus had acquired in the late 1970s. There was one other powerful contact Taus knew, the New York Army National Guard Commanding General, Bernard Ehrlich.

But having been stung in the WedTech/Defense Department investigation during the early 1980s, General Ehrlich could not help Taus. At least three of Taus' informants had met an untimely death.

Things were coming to a head in October 1988, with little time remaining to silence Taus. When Taus was not working in the FBI, he was an active duty Army Reservist and used his remaining free time at the Freeport soccer program. There was little chance for an assassination team to make a successful hit without any witnesses.

In October, Kaminsky disappeared; Taus was unable to get hold of him. And with Kaminsky's disappearance, gone were the links between West

Germany and several hostile countries, including terrorist organizations that found safe refuge in Germany. Not until a thorough investigation into the crash of Pan American Flight 103 were terrorist who planned the downing of that flight connected to West Germany.

### **FBI Criminal Cover-ups Caused Continuing Problems for Taus**

Every FBI agent understood that. Why make waves? Sign the statement. For the Bureau to claim that every one of its special agents dutifully signed the statement periodically, staggers even the most baroque imaginations. Undercover agents alone were never brought in to sign the statements. Most assuredly, there were borderline cases where legality and illegality met. Given such circumstances, an honest FBI agent would have signed the form with an explanation.

There were no explanations accompanying the signed forms. Add to these qualifications, that the FBI had a deadline to submit the administrative red tape, forged signatures were often forwarded to Congress. Remember that not every FBI agent was available to sign the statements, some were undercover. And if they were not, what kind of investigative operations was the FBI running? Undercover agents, criminal informants, the world of crime, subversion and espionage definitely colored any productive investigations. Yet, Congress always received the acknowledgements, "There are no unreported criminal activities."

Taus was aware of the pitfalls in signing. He was not aware of the problems that would result if he did not sign or if, as he did, offer his own written statement about criminal operations.

The statement was circulated among his squad members on a quarterly basis. Usually, the squad secretary would chase down any malingerers who did not sign the form, if they were available. Often they were not. Many agents only signed the form twice a year, others once, and some never at all. Occasionally, Taus was unavailable to sign-off. It was never a problem. His signature somehow managed to appear on the form.

After Thomas Pierce's informant, Steve Lopez, came into the FBI New York office, Taus felt a change of heart. He had witnessed several of his friends, Vietnam Veterans like Lopez, succumb under the rigors of their current positions.

If a crack appeared in Taus' own armor, it came from his investigations that uncovered CIA criminal activities and operations. In a way, Taus expected that the CIA did "bad things." But when his own agency, the FBI, became complicit by covering up CIA criminal activities, it was too much. Finally, Taus spoke to his supervisor, Patrick Groves, about the CIA's continuing criminal operations. Groves responded, "Why the hell are you both-ering me? Just sign the damn form!"

The intelligence men Taus knew in the past were not indifferent. Men such as Assistant Directors William C. Sullivan and Tom Scheer, Generals Taylor and Sturm, and many other FBI agents such as Greg Lawson, were interested in accomplishing some good for society. The present crop approached their jobs as a nine to five occupation. For those more ambitious, they became swept up in the conspiracies and cover-ups or they perished by

the wayside, some opting to enter private enterprise after being disillusioned by the system. There were no counseling sessions, of any sort, for FBI agents at that time.

When the confrontation occurred with Groves, Taus decided not to sign the statement. He sounded no outright refusal, but merely procrastinated every time he was asked to sign. Groves later tried to excuse ordering termination of the West German/Libyan affair by discrediting Taus' informant.

**Continued Corrupt Activities of Covert  
CIA Operation Made Possible by DeVecchio**

The Freeport CIA station continued to function without any hindrance, with major blowback consequences. Other corrupt activities of the CIA that Taus had discovered on DeVecchio's squad continued to prosper. And there was the informant's information about the CIA drug route from Cyprus to Frankfort, London and New York.

"Listen!" Groves directed. It was late October 1988. "You're adding nails to your coffin. I told you, you were going to get burnt with the Freeport CIA situation. Now you are making things more difficult for yourself and me!" Groves was mostly concerned about his own career.

"How's that?" asked Taus. "I'm doing my job according to the FBI Manual of Instructions. I am not inventing these cases." Grove ordered, "You will handle the cases and your informants as I direct!" Taus appealed his situation to SAC Tomlinson who simply backed Groves. Taus continued up the chain of command to an equally uncaring Assistant Director James Fox. Finally, Taus phoned FBI headquarters seeking an audience with FBI Director William Sessions. Taus knew how Admiral Stansfield Turner must have felt, when as DCI, he tried to reform the CIA.



### **Taus Pays Heavy Price Defending National Interests**

**T**aus' persistence in continuing the investigations into these corrupt activities involving major national interests made him a threat to many people in government, including White House politicians during the Reagan-Bush administrations. Despite their responsibilities to pursue these criminal activities, Taus' supervisors warned him to halt investigating and reporting these matters.

Instead, he continued to carry out his official duties. He continued his investigations, receiving reports from informants, and making official reports. He also reported the criminal activities to members of Congress, unaware that members of Congress routinely covered up for reports of crimes from government insiders.

He joined the ranks of many other government agents, including myself, who suffered heavily for trying to protect national interests from the rampant Trojan horse corruption in government offices.

#### **Using Government Power to Destroy an FBI Agent**

Justice Department officials put into motion a scheme to charge Taus with a misuse of a government credit card. Then, when that failed, pressure was applied at the state level, causing Nassau County prosecutors to file sham charges against Taus. When it was over, the judge sentenced Taus to 30 to 92 years in prison, almost insuring that disclosure of the high-level crimes against the United States would never be revealed, and that Taus would die in prison.

#### **This is How the Scheme Started**

In accordance with FBI authorization, Taus used his personal vehicle in official government work to carry out an investigation. While using his personal car on a government assignment, Taus purchased \$9 of gasoline, with the government credit card—as he was authorized to do. The government car assigned to Taus was damaged several days earlier when Taus rammed the escaping vehicle of a drug trafficker in Freeport, Long Island.

This happened while Taus was assigned to the Criminal Division that was then investigating the Bonanno Mafia family. While on that assignment,

Taus heard on the FBI-provided radio the Freeport Police Department pursuing a drug dealer, Hector Hernandez, who had a long criminal record. Upon seeing the fleeing car evading the pursuers, Taus chased and rammed it, thereby bringing it to a stop and resulting in the capture of the fleeing felon.

**Waiting Five Years to Charge Taus with a \$9 Federal Crime!**

Five years earlier, in 1983, a scheme was put into place to silence Taus and discredit his reports. In November 1988 FBI agents arrested Taus and Justice Department prosecutors charged him with a federal crime, based upon the \$9 credit card charge. They had known about the credit card charge throughout this entire period and had earlier *approved* the charge! Justice Department prosecutors now charged Taus with embezzlement and theft under Title 18 U.S.C. § 641, for that \$9 gasoline purchased on the government credit card.

**Metropolitan Correctional Center, New York**

FBI agents made the initial arrest (November 5, 1988), the same agents with whom Taus had worked for years. They kept Taus for eight hours at the FBI's New York office (FBINYO), and then at 3 a.m., in handcuffs, as if he were a criminal, he was taken to the nearby Metropolitan Correctional Center (MCC) in lower Manhattan.

**\$1 Million Bail for a \$9 Credit Card Charge: Something was Fishy!**

After being incarcerated for 20 days in the Metropolitan Detention Center (MCC) in New York, and having gone through a bail appeal, U.S. District Judge Leo Glasser granted bail in the amount of \$1 million. Such a sum was totally beyond Taus' reach. However, Taus' entire family posted their private houses to meet the minimum bail requirements. The high bail insured that Taus would not be released and able to provide information on the corruption involving White House officials and the CIA. However, bail was later reduced and provided by friends.

Conditions for Taus' release on bail included house arrest, wearing a device on his right arm to monitor his activities, and requiring him to answer phone calls made every fifteen minutes to his home, day and night, 24 hours a day by an automatic machine. During the next several months Taus spent several thousand dollars for legal assistance.

**Earlier Arrest Plans Thwarted by Giuliani**

Six months prior to the arrest by FBI agents, a May 1988 letter from U.S. Attorney Rudolph Giuliani, for the Southern District of New York, to Louis Freeh, who was an assistant U.S. attorney at that time (AUSA), stated that "there does not appear to be any appropriate action which can be taken at this time." The case against Taus was being planned months before it actually occurred.

**Discouraging any Congressional Action on Taus' Disclosures**

Had that been a *legitimate* investigation and interrogation into an agent's misconduct, the FBI would have acted internally, to avoid publicity. Instead, the FBI raced headlong into manufactured allegations and fabricated criminal charges to insure Taus' story would never be heard. Normally, such matters were kept confidential and as low-keyed as possible. The method used would discourage any congressional response to the report made by Taus to

members of Congress about the criminal activities that Taus discovered during his official duties.

Taus' arrest helped protect Republican politicians involved in the secret funding and arming of Iraq during the 1980s by the Reagan-Bush administrations, along with the other criminal activities involved with drug smuggling related to the subversion of the Nicaraguan government and arming of rebels.

### **Media People Eagerly Became Pawns for FBI Officials**

The news releases from the FBI were eagerly copied by the CIA-influenced national media. Beguiled by the easy headlines, the news media printed every charge without any investigative reporters checking the matter more closely. Simultaneously, they covered up for the serious charges of corruption in government that Taus had earlier revealed to members of Congress. The presidential election was scheduled for Tuesday, November 8, 1988, and it was prudent to insure that Taus was silenced and discredited.

If any media person had published Taus' charges concerning White House involvement in the corruption related to Iraq, it could have changed the election outcome.

### **Incarcerated With Inmates Taus Had Earlier Arrested**

Taus was buried deep within the bowels of the Metropolitan Correctional Center (MCC) in New York City. He was in a prison tier consisting of eight isolation cells that housed the most notorious criminals. Among them were Larry Davis, accused of shooting at eight New York City police officers and escaping; Benito Casamento, accused of killing another New York City police officer in the Bronx and then escaping to Puerto Rico; and Pappy "King-Pin" Mason, accused of ordering the assassination of New York police officer Bryce while the officer was protecting a witness' house.

Many thoughts went through his mind. "Is this just a tactic to intimidate me for exposing high-level wrongdoings? What will happen tomorrow?"

That night, the FBI called an impromptu press conference to inform the news media that they had arrested Taus, starting the process of discrediting what Taus had discovered as part of his official duties.

A bang on the cell door at 6:00 a.m. woke Taus as he brushed some lingering roaches off his blanket. A voice from outside the cell door said, "Are you going to take your food tray or not?" Taus accepted the breakfast tray through the narrow slot. It contained a packet of decaffeinated coffee, two slices of white bread, a small box of cereal, milk and some watery scrambled eggs. Taus ate some and flushed the rest down the toilet rather than invite the roaches to breakfast.

Another bang on the cell door from a correction officer (CO) informed Taus he was being arraigned before a federal judge and told to get ready for his appearance. At 9:30 a.m. Taus was taken upstairs and given back his civilian clothes for his appearance in the Southern District of New York (SDNY) courthouse.

A hearing officer introduced Taus to the public defender who would represent Taus at the arraignment. Government officials knew Taus could not afford an attorney; and most court-appointed lawyers carefully preserve

their relationship with the prosecutors and judges who hire them and provide them their livelihood.

The arraignment was short; criminal charges were presented against him, followed by the presiding magistrate ordering the “administrative detention” requested by the U.S. attorney’s office.

**“We’re going to get you!”**

It was early afternoon when Taus arrived back in his prison cell. The tier porter, Larry Davis, was sweeping the corridor. Davis approached Taus’ cell, calling him to come to the door while looking out for any Cos in the vicinity. As Davis rested his chin on his broom, he said, “We know who you are, F-B-I. There’s a prison contract out on you. We’re going to get you!”

Surprised, Taus asked Davis exactly what he knew.

*You are in all the newspapers, on radio and TV, F-B-I. The “man” upstairs placed a contract on your head.*

The FBI had told Taus before taking him to MCC that there would be no publicity, that his family would not be exposed to any problems. They had lied. “Who are you and who placed a contract on me?” asked Taus.

The porter was surprised that Taus did not recognize him. Davis stepped back swinging his broom handle away from his chin and said, “Man, don’t you recognize me? I’m Larry Davis! Mason put a \$100 contract on you.

Some inmate is gonna collect it soon.”

Taus responded:

*Listen Davis, you tell Mason he’ll be doing the U.S. government an even greater favor. My case has nothing to do with any criminal charges against me. They were contrived, made-up. The government itself is involved in criminal operations and massive cover-ups. You inmates are being used by the feds to complete their dirty work. Go ahead, do what you must. I don’t care.*

Placing his broom handle back under his chin, Davis leaned forward towards the open tray slot and asked, “What you mean, do the government a favor?” The feds had imprisoned Davis too. He was willing to listen to Taus’ story. “How are we doing the feds a favor, F-B-I?” demanded Davis.

**Taus replied:**

*Do you think that they would expose themselves in such a way. Couldn’t they have covered up the situation with me and imposed another form of punishment. In this case, the FBI was willing to ruin their own image.*

*They are giving themselves a black eye before the American public by saying one of their veteran agents committed crimes. Why would the FBI rip open their soft underbelly to the world?*

Intrigued, Davis said, “Tell me why, F-B-I man!” Taus replied:

*There are national security issues at stake. That’s the reason I’m here now. A few days before the presidential elections they charge me with some outrageous crime.*

Taus proceeded to describe the Irangate scandal and his Freeport investigations into CIA criminal operations. Davis’ dark brown eyes glared at Taus for the first few moments. Then he softened, “You know man, I believe what you say. I’m going to tell Pappy upstairs.”

A prison guard approached as Davis started pushing his broom again. Chatter boomed throughout the prison corridors as some of the inmates yelled from the tray slots in their cell doors. There was talk about the FBI agent on the tier. It wasn't nice. The minutes passed like hours as Taus remained secluded in isolation. Finally, it was dinner time and Davis delivered Taus' food tray, calling him over to the cell door, "Hey F-B-I, you don't have to worry man." Acting unconcerned, Taus responded, "Worry about what?" Davis replied:

*About the contract, it's been cancelled. We're not doing the feds any favors. Mason believes your story. It makes sense man. But you gotta tell me more.*

Although depressed over the circumstances, Taus realized he had to survive and tell his story to the world. Davis was the first person to listen. Taus was willing to talk. Davis asked: "What do you mean by national security issues and the upcoming elections?" Taus proceeded to explain:

*I worked as a criminal investigator and a foreign counter-intelligence agent at different times for the FBI. Before that I flew missions for the National Security Council. The CIA was involved in some very messy operations. Some of the worst ones were created by the present Republican Administration, which is trying to cover up its trail. You remember the Watergate Affair and you did say you were aware of the Iran-Contra scandal?"*

Davis nodded; he read the newspapers every day since his own arrest and was attuned to current events, unlike many of his fellow inmates. He intently listened to Taus' story, having Taus repeat essential information that he needed to pass onto Mason. Davis was protecting himself too. It was Davis' initial conversation with Mason that got the contract on Taus' life canceled. He had to be certain.

"So what's those things got to do with you?" queried Davis. Taus continued to explain:

*As I said, the Reagan-Bush Administration is engaged in other operations, some dealing with criminal figures, terrorist leaders and merchants of death, If the public knew about it, they would vote the Republicans out of office.*

*Part of the problem they faced was my knowledge of their secret operations,. One involved CIA drug trafficking. Having lost soldiers in Vietnam due to drugs imported by the CIA, I was not going to stop my investigations. In fact, I reached out to several Senators and Congressmen for help. Later, I discovered that these elected officials were also involved in aiding and abetting illegal CIA activities.*

*The sad fact is that they all received paybacks and avoided threats on their political careers and their lives. So the Government decided to silence me and God knows how many others were silenced permanently."*

Davis asked: "Then why didn't they take you out all together man?" Davis thought the FBI or CIA could have arranged an accident, eliminating Taus in the process. Taus replied:

*Perhaps they did. A lot of strange things have been happening recently. Maybe they simply failed to pull off an assassination on me and decided to try this route, in discrediting me. Back in early November 1963, the CIA failed to whack President Jack Kennedy when he visited Miami. Few people ever knew about that attempt. Three weeks later, they got lucky. It was November 22 in Dallas.*

Davis responded: "That's the conspiracy theory about Kennedy's death; How would you know what really happened?" Taus replied:

*I was an FBI agent, friend. I dealt with those who investigated the assassination. FBI forensic experts accepted the story given to them by the CIA. They had no choice. Hoover told them so. It's not the FBI that runs this country. It's a powerful and secret elite that controls U.S. all."*

Davis pondered the Kennedy story, and asked, "Then what about them assassinating you?" Taus replied:

*I didn't say they tried; I only said they might have. They did kill two of my informants, so far, who were going public on the Irangate scandal. They set me up and discredited me. It became a character assassination. You and Mason were ready to kill me. No? That's part of their plan, I suppose."*

The next day the usual tier chatter had nothing to do with the "FBI Man." Instead, the inmates spoke of a corrupt government.

By early December, Taus' family had secured an attorney who managed to get bail set at an extraordinary \$1 million. The exorbitant federal bail was achieved by placing the entire family's houses as collateral. However, Taus was constantly monitored and under house arrest with a wristlet band designed to keep track of him. It was after the presidential election and George Bush, who had been vice-president under President Ronald Reagan, was the president-elect. The Power Elite could ease off on Taus for a while. The major media never asked Taus his side of the story, nor did they listen to him as he reached out trying to tell the facts about corruption in government offices. Taus experienced what I experienced for many years, starting while I was a government agent; media people kept the lid on the scandals despite the continuing tragic consequences.

### **Seeking Help**

Law enforcement professionals were interested in Taus' predicament, wanting to know why the U.S. government would take such a harsh stance against a former war hero and law enforcement officer on such a minor matter. Even if the allegations had some merit, the actions taken against Taus were unprecedented. Someone in a high government position obviously wanted Taus discredited and his reports halted. There were serious political issues at stake that involved the CIA and the politicians in the Reagan-Bush White House.

### **Federal Charges Dismissed and Another Scheme Commenced**

Before the sham charges against Taus in federal court were dismissed, another scheme commenced, involving the Republican district attorney in Nassau County. Several months after Taus' initial arrest, the Nassau County district attorney charged Taus with inappropriate behavior with boys at the

Freeport Sports Club, which the FBI was using as a front to obtain information on criminal elements in the New York area.

Freeport was a socially integrated and depressed community and there were numerous cases involving various offenses, including family abuse and criminal neglect. These were ripe conditions for obtaining cooperation of witnesses against Taus. From the large Freeport Sports Club membership rolls, the district attorney found several hundred social services cases that included misdemeanor and criminal offenses. By cooperating with prosecutors, the charges would be dropped or not filed. This tactic has been standard procedure by state and federal prosecutors for decades. It was easy to convince people to cooperate with prosecutors.

### **Astronomical \$2,500,000 Bail to Insure Taus' Silence**

A Nassau County grand jury indicted Taus on sex abuse charges. Taus was again arrested; this time by county authorities. A county judge, Abbey Boklan, was appointed to handle the trial, and she immediately imposed an additional \$1,500,000 bail to the federal bail of \$1,000,000, which now totaled \$2,500,000. The obvious intent was to keep Taus from media contact and reduce chances for mounting an effective legal defense. Taus was then taken into Nassau County Jail and held in an isolation cell, away from other prisoners.

Judge Abbey Boklan soon recused herself, not wanting to become involved, possibly because she recognized the fabrications. The next judge, Edward Baker, was more cooperative with the prosecutor during the entire trial, blocking Taus' lawyer from presenting a proper defense.

### **Using Their Influence Over State Officials**

Taus had discovered during his years with the FBI that when people in control of power in the federal government try to silence someone, they can control state prosecutors and state judges—in addition to most federal judges. This occurred in New York State as state prosecutors and judges carried out the wishes of people in the U.S. Department of Justice. I also discovered that over a period of many years.

### **Prosecutor's Double Standard**

The Nassau County prosecutor that prosecuted Taus was subsequently reported as engaging in sex with below-age girls and solicitation of sex in the district attorney's office. "Prosecutor Ousted: Solicited girl at courthouse," was the hearing on an article in the Freeport newspaper, stating:

A veteran Nassau County prosecutor, who a Queens high school girl said wanted to be her "sex slave," was forced to resign yesterday because he offered the 17-year-old \$150 to let him kiss her feet while she wore high-heeled pumps, law enforcement sources said.

According to law enforcement sources, Littman is heard on the tape telling Kelly Charron of Rosedale that he wanted to go to a nearby hotel and kiss her feet.

Charron said she made a formal complaint to Nassau police Monday because she was offended that Littman solicited her for sex. "He made me feel so dirty, so cheap, like a whore, and I'm not a whore," Charron said. "I couldn't understand it, and I was confused and scared, scared even for other girls who might run into him at the courthouse. Littman is known for prosecuting several

high-profile cases, including Richard Taus of Freeport, a former FBI agent who allegedly molested eight boys on the soccer team he coached.

Charron said she met Littman in the lobby of the district attorney's office. "He said he had to talk to me in private and he kept repeating to please talk to him alone," she said. They walked downstairs and she said Littman mentioned that she could make \$150 very week or two for a half hour's work. "I said, 'What are you talking about?'" She said that's when he proposed going to the hotel for the assignation.

"He said he wanted to be my sex slave," Charron, said Littman told her. She said he bragged of sexual escapades when he was in college "and that he lived to be a sex slave for women. I told him I was only 17 and he said, 'You're not under age,'" but he added that he had been with underage girls, she said. The conversation ended when Charron's sister walked over. Charron said she walked away crying and spotted a Nassau County Detective whom she told about the incident.

### **Being Tried In a County With Highly Irregular Politics**

Nassau County, the New York county in which Taus was prosecuted by the district attorney, was known for its corruption and politics in government offices, including the district attorney and its representatives in Congress.

The book written by Leonard Lurie, *Senator Pothole* (Senator Alfonso D'Amato),<sup>1</sup> the author described the dirty politics of the senator, district attorney Denis Dillon, and Drexel Burnham Lambert.

### **Dillon Noted for Cover-Ups and Selective Prosecution**

Nassau County District Attorney Denis Dillon was noted for his protection of political corruption and sensitivity to political considerations. Taus' prosecution would fit in perfectly with this culture, seeking to silence and discredit him and protecting high-level government people involved in corruption.

The book describes the shady dealings of Senator Al D'Amato, his role in the savings and loan and Wedtech scandal, the deals and betrayals, the repeated signs of payoffs for using his senate office to provide particular benefits for certain companies. It was into this climate that Denis Dillon, a former New York City policeman became district attorney, beholden to political interests. Referring to District Attorney Denis Dillon, the book described how Dillon protected crooked politicians:

Nassau district attorney Denis Dillon's lack of response to any allegations of Republican corruption had ceased to surprise Democratic leaders. ... Denis Dillon, Nassau's district attorney, who in his eight years in office had been unable to detect anything irregular.

Local prosecutor Denis Dillon was not concerned with charges that D'Amato had tried to use his office to get the Nassau Medical Center janitorial contract for his father's firm, that he was extorting money from contractors who wanted to get garbage-plant contracts, or that he was demanding a 1 percent annual salary kickback from anyone wanting government work or raises.

Referring to the Drexel Burnham Lambert firm, the book refers to the firm's heavy involvement in junk bonds and the firm's ties to Ivan F. Boe-

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<sup>1</sup> Alfonse Marcello D'Amato was a Republican senator from 1980 to 1999.



sky, who was sentenced to prison. Also, the firm's large financial contributions—or thinly disguised bribes—to Senator D'Amato, Chairman of the powerful Senate Banking Committee.

**D'Amato's Attempts to Halt Prosecution of Top Mafia Figure**

The book describes how Senator D'Amato asked U.S. Attorney Rudolph Giuliani not to prosecute Mafia Godfather Paul Castellano. Giuliani described the disturbing request by Senator Alfonse D'Amato not to file charges against Castellano. The author wrote:

D'Amato is a man capable of using formidable persuasive powers, and the topic itself was freighted with ominous, if not threatening, overtones. D'Amato warned of what he considered the likely loss of the case and the "embarrassment" that it would cause. Giuliani found the conversation so disturbing that he delivered "a lecture" to D'Amato, warning him never to make such an approach again."



## CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT

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### 9/11 and the Pakistani

The usual early morning noise in the prison block was interrupted by a few inmate voices, “They said a plane just crashed into the World Trade Center! It’s on TV new!” Other inmates who had small black & white televisions in their cells turned on their sets. A cloud of black smoke and debris tunneled out of one of the two World Trade Center towers. The talk “on-the-gate” Tuesday, September 11<sup>th</sup> was about the news coverage of the World Trade Center disaster.

Throughout the morning, inmates and staff paid attention to the coordinated terrorist attacks: the two airliners that crashed into the WTC towers, the one jetliner that hit the Pentagon, and the missing airliner somewhere down in a rural Pennsylvania field. The talk about the unfolding tragedy continued among the inmates at the noon lunch in the prison mess hall.

Upon taking his seat in the mess hall, Taus’ attention was caught by the waving hand of Mian Farooq who sat at a nearby table. “I need to speak with you in the recreation yard this afternoon. It is most important!” Farooq’s voice, with his Pakistani accent, embellished what was already a nervous message. Taus agreed to see him.

The afternoon recreation period began as usual at 1:30 P.M. for inmates in the special segregated unit at Clinton Correctional Facility. As Taus went to the yard for his normal work-out routine, Mian Farooq approached him, “Rich, I need to talk to you in private. Let’s go to the back of the yard.” Farooq was troubled and most anxious.

Sometime in the summer of 2001 Farooq came into the special unit, which was composed of former law enforcement officers, and others who would have a difficult time in the general prison population given their backgrounds.

#### **Intelligence Officer For the United States**

Mian Farooq was an Intelligence Officer for the United States. In the 1980s, Farooq was a Pakistani Air Force Captain who flew the Lockheed A10 “Warthog” aircraft for United Nations’ missions over the Middle East.

He saw combat over Iraq.

Unfortunately for Farooq, he had committed a felony in New York State

that resulted in his arrest, trial and conviction for assault. Despite his position with the U.S. government, the CIA decided to back away from him given the state criminal charges. Farooq's CIA "Get-Out-Of-Jail" free card was ripped up by the "company." Of course, the CIA had gotten plenty of criminals out of jail in the past, and still do. Criminals who have committed far more grievous crimes than Farooq had been set free by CIA intervention.

According to Farooq's story, he was offered a position with the U.S. Customs after a crash in the A10 Warthog. He was working for the CIA in his cover position as a U.S. Customs Agent at John F. Kennedy International Airport. There, Farooq would conduct investigations on suspicious Middle Easterners who came into the United States. The explanation seemed a little confusing to Taus at the time. Why would the U.S. government help a former Pakistani Air Force officer? Things became clearer during the afternoon talk in the prison yard.

### **Mohamed Atta**

"His name is Mohamed Atta," Farooq said as he shook his head. "They were planning something, and they did it!" Taus could see that Farooq was visibly disturbed by the morning news. He knew more about the terrorists and began a clearer explanation to Taus about his duties with the U.S. government.

"The U.S. Customs Service answers to the CIA. That's whom I worked for as a Customs Investigator, not a baggage inspector. I did investigations, interrogations, interviews, speaking in my native language when necessary."

It was clear to Taus that Farooq was not just a former Pakistani Air Force Captain. He was an Intelligence Officer for the United States. Whatever the reasons for his arrival in the United States, Farooq was employed by the CIA, and mentioned that his CIA "handler" had distanced himself after his conviction. "They (CIA) will help with my appeal. They know the parties involved in these air disasters. Information I know about, maybe even more things than the CIA is familiar with."

Farooq wanted to tell Taus more, but needed to find out if Taus could be of any help to him. "Do you have any contacts with your former friends (the FBI) out there? Farooq inquired, while wrestling with the knowledge he possessed.

When Farooq first arrived at Clinton, Taus found his initial story as being credible, based upon Farooq's familiarity with the A10 warplane. Taus was also aware that U.S. Customs employees worked closely with the CIA. At that time, Farooq was silent about his intelligence background. With the events of 9/11, Farooq's conscience bothered him. He was now disclosing his past in detail, "I am telling you these things, hoping your friends in the FBI can be of help."

There appeared to be an equal measure of concern for the safety and welfare of all Americans and Farooq's own concerns for his family and himself that he wanted to do the right thing. He spoke about others from the Near East and Middle East. Concerning Atta, Farooq noted that Atta was a former acquaintance of his and that Atta lived in West Germany with an America wife of German-Irish descent and they had three children. He had

met Atta again in 1996 at JFK Airport. Farooq distinctly recalled the meeting because Atta dressed in an airline pilot's uniform.

During the airport meeting, Farooq said Atta explained that he operated a flight school in Florida, that being the excuse for wearing a pilot's outfit. Atta further said that he had undergone a very bitter separation and possible divorce from his American wife.

Speaking to Taus, Farooq added, "Check out this information with your friends. If they can help, then I will tell them everything." If Farooq's information were credible, Taus thought, then he would ask his friends on the outside for help. It would take a few days for the news to come out on those responsible for the 9/11 disasters.

On Wednesday night, the first news reports surfaced on Mohamed Atta, and some of the others involved in the air disasters. Taus knew it was time to contact his law enforcement friends on the outside with the expectation that Farooq would disclose more beneficial information. To prevent any problems with prison authorities, Taus had to seek their assistance. There could be other planned terrorist activities that Farooq knows about. The importance of the nation's safety and security required aggressive actions in response to what Farooq was telling Taus.

With Farooq's consent, Taus immediately contacted First Officer Randy Tourville, seeking his help in getting this information to the right people in government. Knowing Taus background and the seriousness of Farooq's disclosures, Tourville checked with his superiors and they gave Taus clearance to contact the FBI, NYCPD, and DOJ. Other New York State Department of Correctional Services personnel assisted.

Sergeant William Facteau also assisted. During a meeting on the weekend after 9/11, Facteau told Taus to continue contacting federal officials and not worry about any consequences. Facteau told Taus, "I speak directly for Clinton's superintendent, Taus. Contact your law enforcement people on the outside. I believe this information will help our country."

Also instrumental in getting Farooq's information passed on to the right authorities was Correction Officer Michael Vincent, a former U.S. Navy aircraft carrier veteran who understood the significance of this information.

By the weekend of September 15<sup>th</sup>, Taus had contacted retired New York City Police Captain Rudolph Blaum about Farooq's background and knowledge. Blaum then contacted the FBI in New York to report the information.

By that weekend, Farooq provided Taus more details about who was involved.

Taus was now convinced that Farooq's information was credible and he needed to know more about the details he had dismissed on first hearing Farooq's disclosures on 9/11. Taus asked Farooq, "You said on Tuesday afternoon that you expected more attacks on the U.S. When I asked you for specifics, did you say there will be an 'Amtrak attack'?"

Still wanting to cooperate, Farooq noted, "I said an Amtrak attack." Farooq's accent made it difficult for Taus to understand whether there was an attack being planned upon the railroad system, Amtrak, or an Anthrax disease outbreak. For the time being, future events were not as important as

information that could further corroborate Farooq's truthfulness. A cat-and-mouse game occurred. Before Farooq would supply any more information, he wanted to know whether Taus' contacts would help him.

Taus send letters out to the FBI and the U.S. Attorney General's office concerning what he had learned from Farooq. Blaum reported back to Taus that the FBI seemed to take the information in a routine matter, questioning Blaum as to its importance. Taus had to tell Farooq that people were willing to assist him, but they needed more information.

Two more weeks passed without any response. Blaum said they wanted more information, but Farooq wanted some guarantees. First, he wanted his freedom. He wanted to return to his work as a U.S. Customs investigator.

From his viewpoint, the CIA was not helping him. In fact, he was told to "calm-down" by his CIA handler. Finally, Farooq spoke to Taus while seated at a picnic table in the prison yard, and told Taus to take out paper and pen to copy the following:

*There are three medical doctors who contributed to a radical organization connected to Al-Qaeda. Mulana Tufaal is the chairman of the Gamat-Islame, an extremist Islamic party that has locations in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. In 1998, Mulana Tufaal arrived in the US, hosted by the three medical doctors who support his political party.*

*Doctor Butal Husani is in her early forties. Her husband is Dr. Moeen Husani, also in his mid-forties. Both own and operate two medical clinics in the Brooklyn-Queens area: The Coney Island Medical Plaza at Foster Street and Coney Island Avenue, and another clinic, name unknown, at 121 Hillside Avenue in Queens, New York. The third doctor is Saife Khan.*

*Khan is in his late forties and has no medical license to practice in the US. Khan was a former major in the Pakistani Intelligence Service, known as the ISI. He is missing three fingers on his right hand and two fingers on his left hand. This was due to an accident overseas. He owns and operates Dial Car Service located in the five boroughs of New York City. His hero is Osama Bin Laden. Khan is a naturalized U.S. citizen and has a debt of over \$50,000 for radio equipment purchased in 1999 for the Dial Car Service.*

*These three doctors support the Al-Qaeda network, which in turn supports terrorist organizations and cells. The three doctors also supported Ahmed Shad Massoud, the recently assassinated (early September 2001) rebel leader of the Afghanistan Northern Alliance. There is also a group known as Ciapa Shaba. Taraik Azim was Osama Bin Laden's teacher and father figure.*

*A fourth individual is a 22-year old known as Sameer Farooq who was trained by Osama Bin Laden and probably is in a New York based terrorist cell."*

Taus stopped Farooq at this point, asking if Sameer was related to him. Farooq gave a painful expression, but did not elaborate on it. He continued: *Sameer Farooq has a gunshot wound to his chest where a bullet entered and exited from his neck. That wound was incurred overseas under un-*

*known circumstances. In 1992, Sameer Farooq's name was Ahsen Farooq. Ahsen or Sameer Farooq attended a New York City public school located at 107<sup>th</sup> Street and 101<sup>st</sup> Avenue where he was in the fifth grade at the time. His present whereabouts could be obtained from the Husani doctors.*

Taus could only speculate on whether Farooq sought revenge, but the information he was giving to Taus would be passed to the FBI, which could check out the details. As far as any future attacks, Farooq noted there was the possibility of an Anthrax attack.

The FBI finally decided to interview Taus at the Clinton Penitentiary. Two FBI agents, Steven Weisknopt and Thomas Longerhan from the local Plattsburgh Resident Agency, conducted an interview. Taus described them as having an abrupt manner, dismissing the importance of the information Taus provided, and conducting a crude and disinterested interrogation.

Taus stated he had to remind them that they were "RA agents," a Bureau epitaph for lackluster agents who managed to get plum assignments away from the more active major FBI Field Offices. Investigative prowess or diligent performance of duty was never responsible for the transfers to the country club atmosphere, working in a low-pace Resident Agency. Taus stated to the agents, "We have some serious business here," explaining and imploring the agents to pay attention to the information and conduct a meaningful investigation rather than simply closing the lead that caused them to be there. Taus explained that "the FBI should have sent special agents trained in counter-terrorism or who have experience handling foreign counterintelligence matters."

Feeling insulted, the two Plattsburgh agents told Taus they each were in the FBI for twenty years. "But what did you do with your careers?" Taus asked. Continuing, Taus said, "Taking an RA assignment is tantamount to retiring! Do you men realize the seriousness of the information here?" As a former FBI Relief Supervisor, Taus knew that FBI agents could be both complacency and arrogant. However, there could be no tolerance for such an attitude, given the perils the nation was facing.

"Why aren't you taking any notes?" Taus asked as the interview progressed. It was apparent that the two agents were uninterested and incompetent. Their 20-year careers, along with many other special agents reflected a culture of apathy and lethargy within the Bureau. Taus could only warn them that a full report was already submitted to the new FBI director, Robert Mueller, and Attorney General Ashcroft, and that Taus would forward an additional report based upon the unsatisfactory conduct of the two agents.

After ninety minutes, Weisknopt and Longerhan ended the interview. Taus reminded them, "You have a solemn duty to thoroughly investigate these matters. Other men have died doing their duty to this country." The two agents looked sheepishly at each other and departed.

Taus sent a blistering indictment of the unprofessional way the interview was handled to the FBI Director and the Attorney General. A copy was also sent to the new head of the Office of Homeland Security, former Governor Thomas Ridge. President George W. Bush had created the new position in

light of the recent terrorist threats. New York Police Department Captain Rudy Blaum telephoned Mueller, Ashcroft and Ridge's offices reporting on the attitude of the two Plattsburgh RA agents. Nothing happened.

It was not until the second national terrorist alert in October that Farooq was finally interviewed separately by the same two FBI agents and by his CIA handler. Later that day in the prison yard, Farooq informed Taus, "My CIA handler came here and told me to shut-up and say nothing further, otherwise I will jeopardize my chances of getting out of jail." Taus surmised that Farooq expected the CIA to influence the appellate court handling his appeal.

Then Farooq told Taus about a separate FBI interview. "It was the same two agents, Weissknopt and Longerhan who interviewed you," Farooq said. "At first, they were obnoxious and rude towards me. And they did mention you, making bad remarks about you until I corrected them." Farooq knew of Taus' service to the country. "Taus is an honorable man who served his nation in war and peace. I respect Taus and so should you both despite his imprisonment!"

The two FBI agents adopted a more tactful approach interviewing Farooq. "Yes, we would like to know what 'Mister Taus' has said about the information you have." To Farooq, it did not seem like the FBI was really interested in anything Farooq had to say. As a result, Farooq clammed-up, telling the agents they were discourteous. Later, Farooq told Taus it would be senseless to say anything to the FBI. Farooq added:

*The FBI agents did not do their homework on me! They did not know my birth date. They did not know that I have an FAA pilot's license. They failed to check out the information that you had supplied them. They were so uninformed that they did not know I worked for U.S. Customs; and they know nothing about Middle-Eastern affairs. For example, they do not know who Robert B. Oakley is!"*

Farooq was speaking about the former Director of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and Emergency Planning. Oakley was also the former U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan.

Farooq was so annoyed by the FBI agents' lack of knowledge and background checks that he simply decided not to say anything. "They had a hidden agenda! They asked me to take a polygraph test and I refused!"

The polygraph test could have been designed to discredit Farooq. It was apparent that the FBI agents already knew Farooq was telling the truth since Longerhan told him, "We know you have more information and can confirm what we were given by 'Mister' Taus." Longerhan then handed Farooq his FBI card and told Farooq to get hold of him if he changed his mind on supplying information.

The CIA had the upper hand in intelligence investigations. Probably, the CIA told the FBI agents to leave their former employee (Farooq) alone. The FBI interview of Farooq was probably done only to cover the FBI's butt because Taus' reports went to several government agencies and congressional leaders. If necessary, the whole investigation could be whitewashed with deliberately unproductive interviews of Taus and Farooq.



Within days of Farooq's prediction, the Anthrax threat materialized and understandably, the country was not prepared. Even if Pakistan's intelligence agencies had alerted the nation, there were no measures in place for preventing the spread of Anthrax through the postal service. As usual, U.S. intelligence treated the symptoms and not the cause. Had this country's intelligence services reacted and investigated the information supplied by Farooq, would those who spread the Anthrax spores been arrested or, at least, neutralized beforehand? If the Anthrax was not part of an overall Al-Qaeda plot, that is probably the product of some individual acting alone, an initial alert by the FBI might have discouraged the person's attempts to release the spores.

Al Qaeda was not the only militant Arab group that hated the United States. There were many other loose associations of dissident Arabs, many living in the America or Western Europe, particularly in Germany. Many FBI Field Office investigations into these suspected terrorists were then being stymied and halted by the Bureau, FBIHQ in Washington, DC.

Though Taus was aware that the CIA had interviewed Farooq in early October 2001, Taus was not told the complete details. Farooq simply said that the CIA wanted him to work for them, but he was afraid of some kind of retaliations, particularly since his state criminal case was still pending an appeal. There was more to Farooq's story, Taus thought.

It would not be until much later that Farooq related all the details of the October 2001 interview to Taus. The following deals with those facts as Farooq told them to Taus on February 28, 2003.

#### **9/11 Aftermaths: The CIA Offer at Albany New York**

In October 2001, after the 9/11 hijackings, Farooq was flown by helicopter from the Clinton prison helicopter pad to Albany airport for interviews by CIA agents. Specifically, CIA wanted to recruit him (again) to interrogate imprisoned Al Qaeda suspects and perhaps other dissident Arab Muslim members. CIA said it would drop the NY State criminal charges and conviction against him if he would cooperate.

During the Albany interview, Farooq informed CIA about a Dr. Adaal, an Egyptian who was then a U.S. citizen, a microbiologist, and an Al Qaeda member. Farooq noted that after the initial bombing of the WTC in 1993, Dr. Adaal came to the attention of the CIA as a friend of the perpetrators. It was at that time that Farooq was ordered to develop a friendship with Adaal to obtain further information about the 1993 WTC Bombing and any other significant information.

Farooq became friendly with Adaal, obtaining for Adaal a bogus Social Security card and a driver's license from the CIA. Farooq stated that the CIA had a black-female operative introduced to Adaal for the purposes of a "green-card marriage" (an American citizen marriage to an illegal or foreign citizen to confer U.S. Citizenship upon that person). The unnamed black female would receive payments for the arranged marriage.

Dr. Adaal's scientific knowledge extended to other areas besides microbiology, including nuclear and electronic systems. On several occasions, Adaal expressed his deep-seated hatred for America and said he would em-

ploy whatever means were necessary to cause harm to the USA. One such idea Adaal stated was use of a dispensing cylindrical canister of Anthrax germs through a car's exhaust system while driving.

At first blush, Farooq thought such an idea, expressed by Adaal (circa 1995) was far-fetched until Adaal told Farooq about the effects of Electro-Magnetic Pulse (EMP) upon communications equipment. A few months later when Farooq read an article in *Popular Science* magazine dealing with the effects of EMP upon communication satellites, Farooq knew Adaal's proposal was not idle scientific theory and provided credence to the Anthrax canister attack.

The EMP attack was concocted by Adaal to disrupt U.S. communications by generating a harmful laser signal that would be beamed to the orbiting satellites. Since Farooq had befriended Adaal securing identify cards,

Adaal asked him to get electronic parts to build his EMP device.

Farooq discovered Adaal's contacts with other dissident factions in the United States. Prior to the notoriety of Al Qaeda as a terrorist organization, there were other groups of radical Arab Muslims who were against the US.

One was called Brothers of Muslims. Farooq said that Adaal told him its membership included a Wall Street Broker, a restaurateur, and a Juice-Cart Lot Owner (running many carts operating in NYC). Farooq was surprised that this group included successful businessmen and more surprised that they would have such hatred for America.

#### **CIA Ignoring Report of Alleged Terrorist by Former Pakistani Intelligence Agent**

Back in 1995, Farooq's boss at the CIA was Deputy CIA Director Robert Oakley, the former U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan. In 1997(?), Farooq submitted a 39-page report about Adaal to Oakley. After reading it, Oakley said Farooq's information was not credible and "threw the report back at me (Farooq)." Farooq copied that report onto a floppy disc, which he had at his Astoria Queens apartment. Although the CIA searched Farooq's apartment after his arrest, they failed to find the floppy disc. With his Albany interview on October 1, Farooq told the CIA the location of the disc, which the CIA then found. Farooq was surprised that the CIA had no knowledge of his Adaal report or had lost such investigative information supplied by him back in 1995.

After the 9/11 attacks, the unnamed black-female, who married Adaal, came to Farooq's second wife at the Astoria apartment seeking payments (for the arranged marriage to Adaal). Farooq said that the woman knew of Adaal's whereabouts and his associates. Farooq's wife was not asked about the woman or Adaal's whereabouts by the CIA at any time, before or after 9/11. Farooq concluded that even after the Albany interview of October 1, the CIA did not want to pursue these leads.

The Albany interview of Farooq was precipitated by the initial FBI interviews that Taus requested after Farooq told Taus about those involved in 9/11. It was at Farooq's request that Taus contacted retired Police Captain Rudy Blaum to have the FBI interview both Taus and Farooq at the Clinton prison.

### **Farooq to Pose As Al Qaeda Member**

The purpose of the October 2001 CIA interview at Albany was to offer Farooq a deal. The CIA wanted Farooq to pose as an Al Qaeda member and act as an informant, obtaining information from Al Qaeda suspects being held at the U.S. Naval Base in Guantanamo Bay Cuba. The CIA told Farooq they would release him from Clinton prison and have the state of New York remove all charges against him. Then the CIA would notify the major media that they CIA had arrested a prominent Al Qaeda figure, Farooq, so that the imprisoned Al Qaeda members would think he was one of them.

### **No Guarantee**

Given this scenario, Farooq reasoned that he would be going from one prison to another with little or no real guarantee for his eventual freedom. CIA people said that they would change Farooq's identity after he extracted information from the Al Qaeda suspects. This arrangement could not guarantee that Farooq himself might never be cleared of his, so-called phony, Al Qaeda involvement. Therefore, Farooq declined the CIA's offer.

Farooq knew that since the CIA had ripped-up his "get-out-of-jail-free-card" and never helped him with his struggles throughout the trial, that he should not expect the CIA to honor this new commitment.

During Farooq's initial disclosures to Taus immediately after the 9/11 attacks, he stated that all his relatives were in the United States; however, in February 2003, Farooq told Taus that he still has relatives in Pakistan, and in Saudi Arabia, and he feared reprisals against them if he provided any additional information.

### **Ensnaring Targets by Showing CIA Power**

The CIA could have interviewed Farooq at the Clinton prison back in October 2001 but chose to show its power by flying Farooq from the prison to Albany. This was not an unusual tactic used by the CIA. In one such tactic, New York State Trooper David Hardy was similarly enticed when he applied for a position with the CIA.

### **PR Tactic to Purify Its Image**

David Hardy was working for the state police when, like many other law enforcement officers, he decided to venture into what appeared to be a more romantic or adventurous aspect with the CIA in the early 1990s. At that time the CIA was being assaulted by the alternative media along with liberal elements from the major media, saying the CIA engaged in criminal activities. To purify itself, the CIA had to demonstrate to the American Public that it had choirboys with good intentions in its organization. When the CIA received Hardy's application the CIA already knew about problems with several New York state police investigations.

The start of the CIA scheme was to fly Hardy from upstate New York to Langley, Virginia in a private jet for an "applicant's interview." The jet trip obviously impressed Hardy and his desire to please the CIA interviewers.

During the interview CIA interviewers asked him if the ends justified the means in a criminal investigation and if he would do something illegal to gain a conviction. Hardy recognized that a "yes" answer would be beneficial to obtain a CIA position.

### **Admitting that New York State Police Planted Evidence**

When asked to give an example, Hardy said that he and his fellow officers had done that on many occasions to secure convictions. In particular, planting suspects' fingerprints at a crime scene. That was enough for the CIA to blow-the-whistle on corruption in the New York State Police Department.

By sounding the alarm and providing the U.S. major media with an exposé on police corruption, the CIA acted like the Boy Scouts they wanted the public to believe they were. The CIA would not tolerate any unlawful or illegal conduct by police authorities.

Hardy had implicated himself and several other fellow state troopers, including senior officers, in criminal charges, tampering with evidence. The media ran the CIA-supplied story for several weeks, praising the CIA for its investigation and criticizing the New York state police. Hardy would serve five years in Clinton Correctional Facility at Dannemora, New York.

The pattern of pleasing a recruit appeared to have been used on Farooq when the CIA flew him from the prison to Albany for an interview, hoping to gain Farooq's attention and cooperation. However, Farooq had worked for the CIA and knew of its dirty tricks. Another factor played a role in defeating the CIA scheme.

On Farooq's arrival at the Albany Airport, there was a large entourage of reporters, cameramen, and the public. Farooq shuddered at seeing the crowd, thinking they were there for his arrival and that the CIA was building publicity against him. A hasty consultation between CIA agents at Albany revealed that the Press was there for Governor Pataki's arrival and a news conference on the 9/11 disasters, not related to Farooq.

This information was relayed to Farooq; "Relax, the press is covering Pataki's arrival, not you." Though Farooq was greatly relieved, he did not want to ever face the press or be crucified by it.

The timing of Farooq's arrival in Albany was bad for the CIA. Farooq was reminded how the press could be manipulated by the CIA. This factor made him decide not to accept any CIA offer without a concrete commitment. The notion of going to a federal prison as a CIA informant was no guarantee at all, even if the state criminal charges were dismissed against him. Serving fifteen years in state prison was more acceptable to Farooq than a life sentence in a federal prison with suspected Al Qaeda members. Or worse, Al Qaeda prisoners could assassinate him while imprisoned in Cuba.

There were the early harbingers to terrorist activities as far back as 1986. The West German/Libyan Affair that Taus was investigating was halted by Taus's FBI supervisors at New York City.

When Taus tendered his FBI resignation in 1988, he had no expectation that he would continue his FBI investigations while imprisoned. Initially, Taus wanted to expose the truth, reveal the CIA conspiracies, cover-ups and scandals, and hopefully vindicate him. Little did Taus realize that extraordinary circumstances would make him continue as an investigator into terror-

ist activities; that occurred on the fateful afternoon of 9/11 when Mian Farooq asked to speak to him about the attack on the World Trade Center.

The information disclosed to Taus on 9/11 would trigger his own investigation to help U.S. Intelligence authorities and law enforcement to unravel another web of deceit and misinformation. Taus would eventually speak to SA Coleen Rowley, the Legal Counsel to the FBI Minneapolis Field Office who blew the whistle on the FBI's inept handling the several investigations leading to the 9/11 disasters. However, by simply complaining of attitudes, rather than corruption, she survived the standard retaliation suffered by other government agents.

### **Al Qaeda Background**

The forerunner to Al Qaeda was located in Peshawar, Pakistan and known as Makhtab al Khadimat, the Office of Services. This organization published a journal called "Al Jihad" (Holy War). The paper was circulated throughout the United States by the Islamic Center of Tucson in 1986. The director of the center was Wael Hamza Jalaidan. Another associate was Wadih El-Hage.

The Saudi Arabian World Muslim League was headed by Jalaidan. In 2001, U.S. Intelligence noted that Jalaidan was one of the founders of Al Qaeda. The name Al Qaeda in Arabic translates into "The Base," and Jalaidan was Al Qaeda's Chief Logistics Officer.

Wadih El-Hage's name would surface later in 1993. One of the perpetrators in the 1993 WTC bombing planned on buying weapons from El-Hage, El Sayid Nosair was an associate of El-Hage. As early as 1990s, El Sayid Nosair possessed bomb-making manuals. It was only after the 1993 World Trade Center bombing that those manuals were translated. In 1998, El-Hage was convicted in the 1998 American embassies bombing in Africa.

The CIA's counter terrorist center was not providing the FBI with much overseas intelligence; nor was the FBI coordinating or disseminating its own investigative results. Many terrorist activities were simply dismissed by the FBI and inept special agents.

On Sunday June 2, 2002, CBS-TV's *60 Minutes* program interviewed fugitive terrorist Ahmed Rahman Yassin, who admitted that Jewish communities in the United States were being targeted by Islamic terrorists. An attack prior to the 1993 WTC bombing should have alerted the FBI to the presence of an Islamic terrorism organization in New York City.

In 1990, Rabbi Meir Kahane, the founder of the Jewish Defense League, was assassinated in a midtown Manhattan hotel. New York City police notified the FBI that they had apprehended El Sayid Nosair who they believed to be the lone gunman. It was during Nosair's arrest that his apartment was searched and the incriminating bomb manuals were discovered. Those manuals along with a mountain of other Arabic documents were never reviewed by the FBI until the 1993 bombing investigation.

In 1994, there was a second event, an attack upon a van transporting Orthodox Jewish students from Manhattan to Brooklyn. Ari Halberstam, age 16, was shot to death. FBI legal counsel Robert Walsh insisted that the mur-

der of Halberstam “stemmed from road rage and was not an act of terrorism.”

Events in the Middle East showed that three days prior to Halberstam’s assassination, 29 Palestinian Muslims in Hebron were killed by Baruch Goldstein. Halberstam’s death was a planned act of terror in retaliation. The apprehension of Rashid Baz, Halberstam’s murderer, shed more light on this act of terror. (See “N.Y.C. Attacks Ignored,” *New York Post*, June 5, 2002)

Yet, the FBI never did any further investigation.

The Islamic Center of Tucson, Arizona may have been the base for more than radical Muslim journalism. In 1994, James Hauswirth, a special agent assigned to the FBI Phoenix Field Office, reported an incident. An FBI informant was used “to monitor a Middle Eastern man who had come to Arizona from New Mexico. The man was believed to be connected to Sheik Omar Abdul Rahman, the Islamic cleric now serving a life sentence for his involvement in a failed plot to bomb New York City landmarks.” (See “For Agent in Phoenix, the Cause of Many Frustrations Extended to His Own Office,” *The New York Times*, June 19, 2002.)

One day, the suspect drove the informer to a desolate stretch of desert and instructed him on using explosive devices. An FBI surveillance team was videotaping the encounter from atop a nearby mountain.

There was another radical Islamic group that was absorbed into the Al Qaeda “base,” and Tucson again became a focus for the FBI’s investigation into terrorism. Alkhifa was a Muslim group that recruited fighters and raised money for the jihad in Afghanistan. This jihad, in the 1980s was against the Soviet Union, which had sent troops into Afghanistan. One of Alkhifa’s three main U.S. offices was in Tucson. The Times article stated, “By 1990 after the Soviet’s retreated from Afghanistan, Osama bin Laden had absorbed Alkhida into Al Qaeda, his new terrorist organization.”

One of the terrorists believed to be a pilot on the 9/11 hijacked airliners was Hani Hanjour, who attended flight training school in Scottsdale Arizona. In 1990, Hanjour arrived in Arizona and became the subject of several FBI investigations. Hanjour started his flight training in 1996. The FBI agent investigating Hanjour was Kenneth Williams, who was hampered in his investigation because the FBI Phoenix office gave a low priority to counter-terrorism investigations.

Phoenix FBI agents reported that due to the close border with Mexico, anti-drug investigations had the higher priority. These same agents criticized the work done by the agents working on terrorism rather than drug trafficking and other less serious matters, such as chasing fathers who owed child support. Former FBI Agent Hauswirth noted that Williams was one of the best terrorism agents in the FBI, but was worn-out by internal politics.

Williams had been forced to close his terrorism cases for the other cases given priority by the office supervisors. By the time Williams reopened the terrorism cases it was late in December 2000. Earlier that same year, Williams had received a tip that the Arabs training at the Arizona flight school may be planning a terrorist attack. The FBI Headquarters Counter-Terrorism Unit coordinated none of this information.

Before turning to other anti-US terrorist activities in the 1990s, one other New York City attack in 1997 is worth noting since it was so quickly dismissed as not being of a terrorist nature. It occurred on the observation deck of the Empire State Building in New York City. A lone Palestinian gunman, Ali Abu Kamal, went a shooting rampage, and media people described his actions as a deranged individual who was distraught over losing his life savings. It was Mayor Rudolph Giuliani who pleaded with the press not to call the attack an act of terrorism.

Hidden from the news reports was the fact that Kamal carried a political manifesto in his pocket describing the Jews as bitter enemies and Kamal's desire to kill as many as possible. Kamal was trained by members of a radical Islamic mosque in Miami Florida. Mayor Giuliani's efforts seemed to have been directed toward preventing any further racial clashes between the Palestinian and Jewish communities in New York City. A cursory review showed that there were at least three attacks upon the New York Jewish community that were terrorist in nature: the 1990 assassination of Rabbi Kahane, the 1994 attack on a van of Orthodox Jewish students, and the 1997 Empire State building massacre.

The fact that the same names recur in different terrorist attacks appeared to link those individuals to Al Qaeda. There were many radical Islamic organizations, each with specific agendas, such as the Palestinians fight against Israel's occupation, the Taliban's rule in Afghanistan, and other so-called Muslim freedom fighters who strived to defeat what they perceived as western imperialism.

Osama bin Laden proclaimed a Jihad or Holy War against the U.S. after the African embassies bombings: Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in 1998. Although the media blamed the attacks on Al Qaeda, there is ample evidence that there were many separate and distinct terrorist fractions.

The same names appear, even training camps, which are connected to Al Qaeda, and the broad view is that many Arabic and Muslim countries deeply resent the West. They unite under a common cause and inflict terror worldwide.

### **The 1995 Manila Plot**

As remote as it can be from the Middle East were the terrorists in the Philippine Islands. A key figure in the Philippines was Ramzi Yousef, who coordinated the first bombing of the World Trade Center. In 1995, Yousef planned to simultaneously bomb a dozen U.S. airliners departing Far East locations. Newspaper accounts stated:

In early 1995, the Manila police investigated an explosion in an apartment occupied by two people linked to Ramzi Yousef, who was a fugitive after the 1993 WTC bombing. Investigators discovered a laptop computer that contained details of a plot to blow up twelve U.S. jets as they flew from Asia to the US.

According to a Jan. 20, 1995 briefing report written by Manila Police, Mr. Abdul Hakim Murad (who was arrested) said the idea (came up) during a conversation with Mr. Yousef. 'He will board any American commercial aircraft pretending to be an ordinary passenger. Then he will hijack said aircraft, control its cockpit and dive into CIA headquarters. There will be no bomb or any

explosive that he will use in its execution. It is simply a suicidal mission that he is very much willing to execute.

### **The German Terrorist Connections**

In 1997, German Intelligence officials had reports that two individuals, Mohamed Heida Zammer and Mahmoud Darkazanli, had fought in Afghanistan and had ties to Osama bin Laden. These two individuals lived in Hamburg and attended the Al Quds mosque, a gathering place for militants.

Hamburg Germany was also Mohamed Atta's home during the late 1990s. Atta, who piloted one of the jetliners into the WTC towers, was a central figure in the 9/11 terrorist attacks. According to Mian Farooq, Atta lived in Hamburg and was involved in a bitter divorce with his American-born wife

In 1998 there were well-coordinated terrorist attacks with links to Germany's Islamic communities. On August 7, 1998, Al Qaeda bombed the U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Among the 224 dead were eleven Americans. Hundreds of innocent people were wounded.

In September 1998, Mamdouh Mahmud Salim was arrested by German Police in Munich on suspicion of helping plan the bombings of the American embassies in East Africa that August. U.S. intelligence considered Salim a founder of Al Qaeda and the chief financial officer for Osama bin Laden.

Mahmoud Darkazanli, a Syrian citizen doing business in Germany, was financially involved with German citizen Salim, having a power of attorney over Salim's Hamburg bank account. All four Muslims, Atta, Zammar, Darkazanli, and Salim, attended the Hamburg Al Quds mosque. The German weekly magazine, *Der Spiegel*, reported that on February 17, 1999, in Hamburg, Zammar met with Atta and two other men implicated in planning the attacks, Ramzi bin al-Shibh and Said Bahaji. At least three of the 9/11 hijackers came the Hamburg terrorist cell.

Another Al Qaeda operative who emerged as a central figure in the 9/11 attacks was Khalid Shaikh Mohammed. The CIA and FBI claimed that Mohammed was the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks and that Mohammed worked with Mohamed Atta, Ziad al-Jarrah and Marwan al-Shehi, all of who lived in Hamburg.

Another suspected terrorist with connections in Germany was Zacarias Moussaoui. He was suspected to be the missing 20<sup>th</sup> hijacker. He was the flight student in Minneapolis where FBI Legal Counsel Coleen Rowley blew the whistle on the FBI's failure to properly investigate him. American officials claimed that Moussaoui was sent money from Germany by Ramzi Muhammad Abdullah bin al-Shibh, a close friend of Mohamed Atta.

With some confirmation of these terrorist activities by German authorities, the U.S. Intelligence apparatus pressed them for more information. Reported reluctance of German officials might have been efforts to deflect blame for their earlier indifference or failure to neutralize the radical Muslims. German authorities suggested that the FBI and CIA were themselves trying to deflect the blame for intelligence failures.



The greatest terrorist threats to the United States were Osama bin Laden, al Qaeda, and the many other groups angered over the policies of White House politicians. This anger was greatly escalated by the invasion of Iraq ordered by the second President George Bush.

### **One of Many Whistleblowers**

In its June 3, 2002 issue of *Time*, FBI agent Coleen Rowley appeared on the front cover in *Time's* lead story. She had been the legal counsel at the FBI's Minneapolis Field Office and a special agent for 21 years. On May 21, 2002, she wrote a 13-page memo to FBI Director Robert Mueller stating that her supervisors blocked efforts that could have foiled the 9/11 hijackings.

Specifically, Rowley wrote that FBI headquarters obstructed the investigation of suspected terrorist, Zacarias Moussaoui, the French-Moroccan operative arrested in Minnesota in August 2001. Moussaoui was the only person charged with conspiracy in the 9/11 attacks. Rowley's memo described how FBI headquarters systematically dismissed and undermined requests from the Minneapolis Field Office for permission to obtain a warrant to wiretap and search the computer and belongings of Moussaoui.

Further, Rowley wrote that the FBI did not share nor was privy to other U.S. intelligence agencies information on the terrorists. Again, there was FBI complacency and complicity in the failure to investigate the known and suspected terrorists. The *Time* article stated: "Rowley accuses Mueller and senior aides of having 'omitted, downplayed, glossed over and or mischaracterized' her office's investigation of Moussaoui."

During the evening of August 15, 2001, Rowley was contacted by FBI agents from her Minneapolis office advising her that Moussaoui was arrested by the Immigration & Naturalization Service and that there was evidence that Moussaoui was planning something. Instructors at the Pan Am flight school near Minneapolis had phoned the FBI on the previous day, reporting that Moussaoui wanted to learn to fly a 747 jet but was not interested in landing it. The Minnesota FBI agents did a thorough background check that led to requesting Rowley's legal assistance.

FBI agents wanted to obtain a search warrant for Moussaoui's property, especially the contents of his laptop computer. The agents needed Rowley's legal expertise to pave the way for obtaining the search warrant. She contacted FBI headquarters in Washington, and encountered roadblocks that scuttled the Minneapolis FBI agents' investigation. Rowley believed that the agents provided sufficient information indicating that Moussaoui was associated with a terrorist group,

A problem encountered by Rowley was the reluctant attitude of the lawyers at the National Security Law Unit, an FBI office that examines warrant proposals before passing them on to the Justice Department. It seemed that Justice Department had been burnt before on other warrant requests from the FBI that violated peoples' constitutional rights.

The FBI supervisor in Washington "deliberately further undercut the request by withholding 'intelligence information he promised to add and making several changes in the wording of the information.'" By August 28, the

NSLU rejected the Minneapolis FBI's request to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court, a secreted body in Washington, DC that review such warrant requests. When it was safe to speak out, eight months after the 9/11 hijackings, Rowley wrote the thirteen-page memo to FBI Director Mueller and then went public on the problems with the terrorist investigation.

In July 2001, two months prior to the events of 9/11, FBI Agent Kenneth Williams of the FBI's Phoenix Field Office sent a memo to FBI headquarters urging a nationwide check on Middle Eastern students at flight schools. Williams wrote that bin-Laden followers might be training at American flight schools for an attack inside the United States. Similarly, at the FBI's Chicago Field Office, FBI Agent Robert Wright had tried to go public with a manuscript concerning FBI investigations into terrorist activities. The Bureau refused Wright permission to publish his book.

The revelations from Rowley alone made national news. At the same time, reports were coming in from the Phoenix and Chicago FBI offices about their abortive attempts to investigate and prevent the 9/11 hijackings.

Within days of seeing *Time's* June 3, 2002 issue, Taus and Farooq spoke about the article. Farooq said, "If I could just speak to Coleen Rowley, I would tell her everything I know. I will only speak to Rowley!" Farooq had stated in prior conversations about U.S. intelligence agencies blocking efforts that would have prevented the tragedy. Taus challenged Farooq: "If I get Rowley to speak to you, will you tell her everything?"

"Yes," replied Farooq, "but only to her! I do not trust the FBI nor the CIA." Finally, Taus felt that Farooq would open-up with his knowledge that could help change some of the malfeasance in government. Taus said:

*You know, I have been telling you for a long time that the CIA is not going to help you out of prison," Taus strongly noted to Farooq. "The CIA could have gotten the criminal charges against you dismissed. Or they could have gotten you out on bail pending your appeal. The fact that they did nothing so far, except tell you to shut-up means they are simply waiting for the information you possess to become less sensitive with the passage of time. Your silence does not help anyone, including yourself.*

Farooq used his CIA pension while in prison for all the accouterments that would make prison life more comfortable for him. Most inmates were careful, even frugal, in spending any of their limited income. (Inmates' weekly salaries averaged \$7.00 (seven dollars), hardly enough for any frills. And Farooq was not making more by virtue of his prison job.)

There were people on the outside that sought to help Taus, and knew he was telling the truth about the scandals, cover-ups and conspiracies in government. One eminent law enforcement figure was retired New York City Police Captain Rudolph Blaum. Blaum believed strongly in Taus and provided money for Taus' federal appeal. Taus was completely broke after the huge legal expenses and Taus considered Rudy his guardian angel. Taus told Farooq that Blaum "will place us in contact with Rowley." After a few calls to the offices of several Senators and Congressman, a congressional staffer agreed to make arrangements with the FBI Director to allow Rowley to speak with Taus and Farooq.

Immediately upon hearing about the arrangements, Taus forwarded copies of the information he received from Farooq, along with both of their backgrounds. Taus made the initial phone call to Rowley at her Minneapolis FBI office. A long conversation followed, as Taus told her more specifics Farooq's knowledge. She was very receptive and agreed to speak to Farooq. Taus informed her about the prison protocols for arranging another phone conversation between her and Farooq. However, the subsequent conversation never took place.

A few times each week after Taus' initial call, he would ask Farooq if he had been contacted by Rowley. Farooq denied any contact, saying that it was just as he thought, "The Bureau is part of the problem. They will not do anything to help."

It did not make sense, why would Rowley not contact Farooq? She had nothing to lose and everything to gain. Taus had presented documents and a strong case showing that Farooq could add to the FBI's knowledge of the terrorists and the events leading up to the 9/11 hijackings.

### **London Subway Bombing**

Terrorists struck the London subway system in July 2005. Several of the perpetrators were terrorists that Mian Farooq had previously sought to report to FBI and CIA agents. Again, Farooq was taken from the Clinton prison facilities by the CIA and taken to the CIA facility at Plattsburgh, near the Canadian border.

Waiting for Farooq was the CIA's Northeast Regional Director, Jeanette Jefferies. Farooq was again offered a deal to pose as an Al Qaeda terrorist, being placed with other detainees at various prisons, including Guantanamo Bay Naval Air Station. The purpose was to be incarcerated with suspected terrorists and extract information.

Sitting behind her desk, she said, "You can go home today. Right now. I'll give you keys to a car outside and you can drive home to your family in New York City. Just be ready to answer out call later. Tonight you could be in bed with your wife."

Referring to the offer, Farooq said, "Put it in an official document. Give me a written contract. Place me back at my job [as a Customs agent]. I rather not be labeled a terrorist and sent undercover, especially with no written contract." Again the written assurance was denied. Jefferies said, "Non-sense Farooq, you will do what we tell you."

Upon Farooq's return to the prison, he told Taus that Jefferies had a hostile and demeaning attitude; he felt she could not be trusted. Taus commented, "If either of us could trust the CIA, we would not be here."

Farooq said, "I have information concerning the London subway bombing. I wanted to tell Jefferies, but she came across as such a bitch that I decided to be quiet. Now, I want you to contact your friends in law enforcement and given them this information." Taus then put into writing what Farooq was telling him:

Based upon the arrest of Hamil Isaac, aka, Hussain Ossmain, I have further information about those involved. Mian Tanweer is a naturalized British citizen; however, his identity is false. His real name is Mian Tabaseam Bashire from Pakistan. Tanweer is connected to Al-Qaeda and covertly engages in brining il-

legal aliens into Great Britain using false identities. Tanweer is also involved in drug-trafficking and money-laundering operations and other criminal activities.”

### **Farooq Interviewing Tanweer in London**

Farooq said that he met and interviewed Tanweer in London as part of the 1993 investigation into the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. Tanweer, in his early twenties, was already connected to the developing Al-Qaeda terrorist network. He said, Tanweer, an import and export dealer, was already known as a drug trafficker, a fact unknown to western intelligence people. In 1993, he was purchasing leather coats from Pakistan that had heroin hidden in the linings. He had them air-shipped.

News reports in late July 2005 stated that several suspects in the London bombings carried false identities and passports. Farooq told Taus that these false documents were prepared by Tanweer.

Taus immediately notified retired NYPD Captain Rudolph Blaum and also sent letters to FBI Director Robert Mueller; to Sir Tom Harris, British Consulate-General in New York City, and to Tom Blair, Superintendent of New Scotland Yard, London. None responded. Within a few weeks after sending these letters, Tanweer’s wife in New York City reported him missing.

Taus believed that one of the intelligence services picked him up and sequestered him somewhere. Since late August to the time of this writing, Tanweer’s location is unknown.

Farooq knew of this fate all too well. Farooq, a naturalized U.S. citizen, worked as an investigator for U.S. Customs and the CIA. During his earlier military career, Farooq flew United Nations missions over Iraq for U.S. intelligence. Like many others working for the United States, he found himself deserted and unreasonably imprisoned when it suited the CIA.

### **Political Prisoners—Silencing Those Who Expose Corruption**

In the United States, Taus never thought there could be political prisoners. Surely, the First Amendment to the Constitution guaranteed freedom of individual speech and the press. Understanding that some information must be secretive or classified to protect the nation still does not diminish this freedom, particularly when criminal activities and operations that are harmful to all Americans have been officially sanctioned and protected by a nefarious veil of secrecy. Taus had done all that he could; and during his imprisonment, he was still trying to help this country.

### **Corrupt Judicial System in New York State**

In my various books I go into great detail, with considerable documentation, about judicial corruption. One book, *Lawyers and Judges: American Trojan Horses*, focuses entirely on this subject. And New York State judges, the system that sentenced former FBI agent and military hero to as many as 82 years in prison, was no different.

One newspaper article addressing one element of the corruption was titled, “Rebuking Party Leaders, Court Halts System of Picking Judges,” and appeared in a *New York Times* article (January 28, 2006). The article stated:

A federal judge yesterday struck down the system that has given state political party leaders a stranglehold over the way top trial judges across New York State have been elected for decades.

Judge Gleeson of the United States District Court in Brooklyn found the system unconstitutional and ordered it halted immediately. Judge Gleeson barred the State Board of Elections and Republican and Democratic Party officials from the practice of selecting candidates for State Supreme Court justice at sharply controlled nominating conventions that effectively robbed voters in the state of their say in who made it to the bench. He ordered that they instead hold primaries until state lawmakers pass legislation setting up a new system.

It will eradicate a system that has allowed political party leaders in some cases to treat selections the state's highest trial court like classic patronage positions.

Judge Gleeson said that the plaintiffs had shown that local political party leaders, rather than the voters or the delegates to the judicial nominating conventions, control who becomes a Supreme Court justice and when. New York, he wrote, is the lone state in the nation to elect judges in exactly this way.

"The highly unusual processes by which that extremely important office is filled perpetuate that control and deprive the voters of any meaningful role," the judge wrote in the decision. "The result is an opaque, and undemocratic selection procedure that violates the rights of the voters and the rights of candidates who lack the backing of local party leaders."

### **[Bribery, Corruption and Cronyism]**

The lawsuit, filed in 2004, followed a series of judicial scandals in Brooklyn, where allegations of bribery, corruption and cronyism brought intense scrutiny to the judicial selection process.

The lawsuit argued that the judicial convention system undermines fundamental democratic principles, serving as a rubber stamp for party leaders, many of whom had taken political contributions from the candidates seeking their favor and positions on the bench.

### **Real-World Conditions in the Courts**

In real-world conditions, the system that destroyed the career and life of Richard Taus was a system that corruptly misused the courts to silence a dedicated government agent and prevent the public from learning about the corruption that FBI agent Taus had discovered as part of his official duties. This culture adds to the many things that continue to undermine the United States, its institutions, and the life and liberties of its people.

### **Typical Prosecutor and Witness**

#### **Fraud and Conspiracy, As in Taus' Case**

The number of people sentenced to prison, some for life, due to prosecutor and witness fraud is endless. One example occurring in New York State was reflected in a *New York Times* article (February 16, 2006) that stated:

A man whose attempted murder conviction was overturned after he served nearly a dozen years in prison is planning on filing a lawsuit charging that Queens prosecutors have withheld evidence and misled juries in a broad pattern of misconduct that has led to dozens of wrongful convictions.

The suit, which is expected to be filed today in federal court in Brooklyn, details 84 instances in which criminal convictions obtained by Queens prosecutors were reversed by higher courts for prosecutorial wrongdoing, according to a copy provided by the lawyer filing it. The lawsuit says that the Queens district

attorney, Richard A. Brown, and his predecessor, John Santucci, have not punished prosecutors for their misbehavior.

The suit accuses prosecutors in some cases of presenting false testimony by witnesses about their deals for leniency in exchange for cooperation. It says prosecutors withheld evidence that could be seen as motivating witnesses to give false testimony, and also accuses prosecutors making false or misleading trial presentations to juries.

“These cases are just the tip of the iceberg,” said Joel B. Rudin, who is filing the suit.

The plaintiff, Shih-Wei Su, was released from prison in 2003 after a federal appeals court ruled that a Queens prosecutor elicited false testimony against him and misled the jury during his 1992 trial. Mr. Su’s conviction was overturned after a Legal Aid lawyer, Katheryne M. Martone, took his case after he represented himself in two unsuccessful attempts to appeal his conviction.

M. Martone gained access to a previously sealed transcript documenting the deal that prosecutors made with a witness.

In the pool hall shooting, prosecutors said members of a street gang shot members of a rival gang, on Mr. Su’s orders. Prosecutors relied on the testimony of a witness. The witness was facing attempted grand larceny charges in a separate case and agreed to a plea deal in which he was offered probation in exchange for testifying against Mr. Su.

But prosecutors never told the jury about the deal, the appeals court found. The court found that the lead prosecutor, Linda Rosero, told the jury, that “there was technically no agreement” concerning the conditions of the witness’s testimony. Ms. Rosero asked the witness in the trial whether he had been promised anything concerning the case against him, and he responded, “Nothing at all.”

### **Catch-21 For Courageous FBI Agent**

What a movie this would make. A true hero, a true patriot, seeking to protect vital national interests against corruption in government offices, and then jumped upon by criminal misuse of multiple government offices. First, the sham charges by the U.S. prosecutor on the nine-dollar use of a government credit card. Then the corrupt misuse of the prosecutor’s office in the State of New York, bribing witnesses to testify against Taus in an alleged sexual abuse matter.

A state judge then misuses his office to insure that the scheme succeeds, committing multiple due process violations. The corruption then has the cooperation of federal judges—an experience that I have personally documented several times—and then when Taus exercises his right to go to the U.S. Supreme Court, the federal judge blocks Taus from raising the serious due process violations and limits the appeal issues to juror misconduct, thereby protecting the long line of corruption by state and federal prosecutors and judges.

That scenario I have documented and detailed in several of my books. It isn’t only Taus, and the countless other falsely imprisoned people and their families that are affected by this scam; the corruption metastasizes throughout government and throughout society.

Many of the problems now threatening and inflicting harm upon the United States and its people are the result of misconduct in government offices. The source of these ripple effects is not recognized by the people.

And this scourge and the tragic consequences will continue until enough good people get off their asses and show some sign of outrage and courage, and held fight the scourge!





## CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE

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### Staten Island Assassination

There are various methods to silence or discredit people seeking to expose corruption in government offices. Discrediting a person, charging him or her with a crime, indicating a person has a psychological anomaly, exposing past indiscretions are all actions, which can prevent the truth from being believed. There are other methods: disappearance, or death. Taus believed that assassination was the method of choice in one case, as he described the details to me. It happened Sunday morning, October 1, 1989, on a Staten Island pier.

A New York City fireman, Steve Lopez, became the target of an intelligence assassination plot. Lopez had an excellent record as a New York City firefighter and as a former U.S. Marine, and also worked for the FBI in various operations. Lopez became a problem for his FBI and CIA handlers. One problem was that he knew too much about some highly irregular FBI activities. He became a liability. Lopez had been involved in a number of corrupt activities by the Reagan-Bush White House, including the mining of Nicaraguan harbors

Taus said that a plan was devised to eliminate him, using his scuba diving hobby against him. The type of scuba diving Lopez did for the FBI was high-risk, where mishaps could easily occur underwater. An “accident” during such underwater operations could be easily accepted as possible by the public.

Lopez was part of a group called the Restricted Interagency Group (RIG) or Core Group, and this was created by Secretary of State George Shultz under President Reagan. RIG assembled the following policy-makers: Duane “Dewey” Clarridge, Deputy Director CIA; Admiral Arthur Mobrau, Jr., Joint Chiefs of Staff; Oliver North, NSC staffer; Lanhome “Tony” Motley, State Department; and Nestor Sanchez, DOD. At different times, there were different members. It was Dewey Clarridge, upon DCI Casey’s advise, who organized a small clandestine navy to disrupt the Nicaraguan government’s flow of petroleum.

After an abortive speedboat attack in October 1983, Clarridge decided

to mine the Nicaraguan harbors. The idea was to frighten oil shippers from Nicaragua and place a stranglehold over the Nicaraguan economy. The CIA used non-lethal magnetic mines. In January and February 1984, these mines were placed in Corinto, Puerto Sandino and El Buff by the CIA mercenary force. Its membership consisted of soldiers of fortune from Latin America and the United States, and a former U.S. Marine, Steve Lopez.

There was little reaction to the mining, even after a few smaller ship sunk due to mine denotations. When a Soviet oil tanker was damaged by a mine, The *Wall Street Journal* edition of April 6 reported the mining was a U.S. operation. Congress was upset; a crisis of trust arose again between Congress and the Executive Branch.

On April 9, Nicaragua sued the United States in the International Court of Justice in The Hague for compensation due to the mining. The U.S. refused to recognize the court's jurisdiction in the matter. However, the U.S. House Intelligence Committee concluded that the CIA had illegally used humanitarian funds for the mining operation.

As the Iran Contra Arms Initiative Affair began to unfold, Steve Lopez became concerned about his involvement with the CIA and the FBI. He had managed to secure a position on the FBI New York Field Office's scuba-diving team.

#### **Lopez's Involvement with FBI NYC Office**

With three other FBI special agents, Lopez was engaged in various secretive operations for the Bureau. When members of his group became involved in the Irangate scandal and were called before Congress, Lopez grew increasingly nervous. In the late 1980s, Lopez frequently called FBI Agent Thomas Pierce in the same FBI New York office where Taus was assigned.

On one occasion, when Pierce was away from the office, Taus answered Pierce's squad phone. Having read newspaper accounts of the widening Irangate scandal, Lopez was panicking. Since Pierce was Taus' assistant on the Freeport-CIA Station investigation, Taus told Lopez he would take a message. Lopez started blurting out sensitive information concerning the Freeport K-team operation, Irangate and the FBI Scuba Team.

Taus tried to tell Lopez to wait until Pierce returned, but upon learning of matters pertaining to his own cases, Taus suggested they meet right away. Pierce had withheld information and Taus was going back to get to the bottom of it. Within a few hours, Lopez arrived at the FBI New York office.

A lengthy interview followed, during which Lopez and Taus found a common ground in their Vietnam experiences. Lopez confided to Taus that he worked with the CIA since the late 1970s, spoke about his role in the mining of the Nicaraguan harbors, described how the mines were delivered to the harbor by mechanical means, with frogman standing by in the event of unforeseen difficulties.

Taus learned of CIA activities that Pierce had withheld from him, and realized that he could no longer trust Pierce. The information about CIA unlawful activities that Lopez disclosed was sufficient for Taus to bring to the assistant director (ADIC) in New York. However, Lopez declined, at Taus' suggestion, to speak with the ADIC. He was very concerned about

what his CIA handler would say and wanted FBI protection. Further contacts between Taus and Lopez were halted when the FBI suddenly filed the sham charges against Taus. Shortly thereafter, Lopez's life would come to a sudden end.

Lopez told FBI Agent Pierce that he might go public with his information. This warning prompted breaking into Lopez's apartment and removing any writings that could contain information harmful to the intelligence agencies with whom Lopez was working. Lopez' telephone line had also been tapped.

The wiretap in Lopez' residence made FBI agents aware that Lopez was upset and presented a serious threat. A break-in at his residence occurred on Friday night. By early Saturday morning, the agencies knew that Lopez would divulge their secrets. CIA maintained a 24-hour surveillance on him.

Pierce asked Lopez to wait until Sunday morning when they could discuss the matter at the pier before their diving session. Lopez was festering, but reluctantly agreed. The surveillance team would insure that no secrets would be revealed if it became evident that Lopez would call anyone, his phone would be quickly disconnected. If he decided to personally visit anyone, the team would close in and apprehend him.

#### **FBI Agents Murdering FBI-CIA Asset?**

According to what Richard Taus stated to me, this is what happened next. As part of the FBI scuba diving team, it was possible to carry out the scheme of eliminating Lopez without incurring any suspicion, thereby eliminating the threat posed by Lopez of exposing crimes implicating FBI and CIA people and the Reagan-Bush White House.

The elimination would occur while FBI agents and Lopez were scuba diving. The initial schemes included changing the air mixture in Lopez' oxygen tanks and entrapment during an exploration of an underwater wreck. The FBI agents could handle those conditions and return to the surface with their whistle-blower dead, and no one would know what really happened.

FBI and CIA personnel arranged a meeting late Saturday afternoon in New York City to decide upon their final and fatal course of action with Lopez. As part of the plan, weapons would be secreted afterwards in Lopez' personal vehicle to show that he had a malicious intent. A standard Remington Model 870 pump shotgun would be planted in Lopez' Jeep. The shotgun contained double-o buckshot, an ammunition used by law enforcement agents but not sportsmen.

Two of the members of the Scuba team arrived earlier than usual and waited for Lopez, who was being tailed by the CIA surveillance team. The scene was set with the intention that the Scuba team would go out to sea and accomplish their elimination mission. It was 7:00 a.m. on Sunday morning in early October 1989.

When Lopez arrived, unarmed, he wanted questions answered. His own weapons at his house, including an AK-47, had disappeared.

Three FBI agents stood some 25 feet apart from each other as Lopez arrived. Their positions offered several fields of fire if necessary. When Lopez leaped from his jeep, he approached one of the FBI agents and complained

about the ransacking of his apartment and the wiretapping. He also complained about the illegal operations. Lopez refused to take part in the planned scuba diving, making it necessary to carry out the elimination then and there.

As Lopez sensed danger and walk away from Pierce and toward his car, one of the agents signaled to close in for the kill. One FBI agent tackled Lopez and wrestled him to the ground. During the struggle, another FBI agent, sitting in a car, aimed his weapon at Lopez and then shot when the other two agents released their hold of Lopez, striking Lopez in the back and shoulder.

One agent used a 357 Magnum with hollow-point bullets, called a “dum-dum” round, that upon impact, expands like a mushroom, seemingly exploding. Any hit to the body trunk would be mortal. A hit to an extremity, an arm or a leg, would cause severe loss of blood. The Bureau always taught its agents to shot to kill, never try to merely wound a person.

The shooting caused several people to appear. To insure that Lopez would bleed to death before help arrived, one agent placed handcuffs on the mortally wounded Lopez, who died before medical help arrived.

A member from the CIA’s surveillance team carried Lopez’ missing AK-47 to the scene, placing it next to him, providing the news media with the notion that Lopez was intent upon killing the federal agents.

Initial news reports about the shooting differed significantly. The Monday issue of the *New York Post* newspaper showed a picture of the dead fireman lying face down in the parking lot. Both his hands were covered with his own blood as he attempted to suppress the flow. Medical attention did not arrive until it was much too late.

The *Staten Island Advance* newspaper carried another story, provided by witnesses at the scene. The FBI provided their own version, which was dutifully carried by the media. None said it was an assassination. The FBI story was that Lopez was mentally unstable and went berserk on the pier. Further, that Lopez was a member of a diving club. The media never satisfactorily explained his relationship to the three FBI agents or what the FBI scuba diving team did.

On the very next day, the FBI claimed that the shooting was justified, that Lopez threatened the FBI agents with his weapons, and that the agents fired in self-defense. The Bureau conducted no investigation into the matter and only accepted the accounts of the three assassins.

The other witnesses, whose accounts differed, were dismissed. Their version of the shooting was never recorded. The *Staten Island Advance* continued to carry the story into its November issues, but its investigation never bothered to check any records, interview the other witnesses or simply dig deeper into the reasons for the shooting. The FBI had foolishly confirmed that Lopez was upset because he claimed his residence was searched and his phone was tapped.

Steve Lopez was a 4-year veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps and a 15-year veteran of the NYC fire department. He worked for the CIA since the late 1970s and worked for the FBI in the mid 1980s. He was the only outsider who ever served on the FBI scuba diving team. Lopez was trusted by

his fellow FBI divers. Yet the Bureau claimed he had a long history of mental problems. If correct, why did the FBI employ him on their exclusive diving team? Neither the FBI nor the CIA would have used him in any of their clandestine operations. If any instability existed in Lopez, it occurred after his operations with the Intelligence services. He was “the spy who came in from the cold.”

What were the secrets that Lopez possessed? Secrets so distressing that had confronted his FBI team. Secrets which called for an assassination by the U.S. government. Within a ten month period, two events happened that attracted media attention to the FBI New York office. Not particularly startling except both events came off the same FBI squad.

### **Two FBI-Controlled Events to Cover Up Crimes Against U.S.**

The first event occurred on November 5, 1988, when Taus was arrested by the FBI on sham charges after he sought to report criminal activities involving the CIA, the FBI, and White House politicians.

The second event occurred with the death of Lopez in October 1989. One FBI agent present at the time of Lopez’s death was FBI Agent Pierce. Out of a population of some 1250 FBI agents in Metropolitan New York, the above incidences occurred to agents who worked together on the same squad, and on the same Freeport CIA case!

Pierce worked alongside of Taus on the Soviet Satellite FCI Division. His fellow FBI scuba divers worked on the FBI’s Soviet FCI Division, the same division that the FBI agents Robert Hanssen and Earl Edwin Pitts gave secrets to the Soviet Union that resulted in many government informants being killed.

Not only did Pierce assist Taus in his Freeport case, but Pierce was the assistant case agent on another one of Taus’ cases in Manhattan, “Operation Footwork,” that was directed against the United Nations Diplomatic Corps. Pierce was privy to both of Taus’ investigations, including working files and informants.

Pierce claimed he was an American Indian, but his patriotism was questioned when he refused to stand up for the playing of the National Anthem. Nor would he say the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. His loyalty appeared to be with the people in control of the CIA that had been involved in many criminal operations, some of which were subverting national security.

### **Murders Not Out of Character for Certain FBI Agents**

Murders are not out of character for certain FBI agents, nor barred by FBI Washington officials. Years ago several of my CIA sources described murders committed by FBI agents. I thought this too preposterous and never wrote about it. However, events surfacing in the Boston FBI office in the late 1990s, and events surfacing shortly thereafter in the FBI New York offices, made clear that such a culture did exist.



## CHAPTER FORTY

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### FBI's Murderous Conduct in Boston Office

For years, several of my CIA assets had told me about FBI assassination teams, and I could never get myself to writing about what they were telling me; it was a little too much for me to accept. However, criminal proceedings and civil lawsuits filed against FBI agents in the Boston area in the 1990s provided proof that FBI agents worked with crime figures, providing the names of government informants, who would then be murdered.

#### **FBI Corruption and Murders in Boston Office**

#### **Indicated Deep-Seated Culture Throughout FBI and DOJ**

Over the years the instances of corruption involving FBI personnel had been kept off the public radar, but this would change in the 1990s when decades of FBI involvement in murders and other criminal acts were exposed by courageous media people in the Boston area. This attention was brought about by the large number of murdered victims in the Boston area associated with the FBI-criminal relationship.

If it weren't for determined media people at the *Boston Globe* and the *Hartford Courant* the murderous liaison would probably still be functioning as it had for the past 20 years. Helping to expose these matters were two reporters for the *Boston Globe*, Dick Lehr and Gerard O'Neill. They authored the book, *Black Mass: The Irish Mob, the FBI and a Devil's Deal*. The following was revealed by affidavits, testimony, court proceedings, and government records.

#### **FBI Boston Office a Criminal Enterprise— Sanctioned by Washington**

The courageous media reporting and court proceedings revealed decades of FBI agents misusing their FBI positions to protect the powerful and murderous Boston-based crime group known as the Winter Hill gang headed by James "Whitey" Bulger and his partner, Steven "The Rifleman" Flemmi. Under the pretext of using Bulger and Flemmi as confidential informants, FBI agents, and particularly FBI Agent John Connelly, protected the crime group against state and federal prosecution and provided them insider information about wiretaps and pending indictments so they could protect

themselves.

FBI agent Connolly's alleged corruption began in 1976 when he accepted gifts from Bulger and returned the favors by giving Bulger inside information. Connolly was convicted on May 28. Fortunately for him, he was acquitted on the charges of complicity to murder. Six lawsuits were filed, with another ten expected, from family members of people who were murdered due to Connolly's actions.

FBI agents knew that Bulger and Flemmi were committing murders, some of which occurred after FBI agents leaked information about FBI confidential informants to Bulger. Bulger was involved in numerous criminal activities and needed the FBI to protect him whenever a state or federal agency threatened him.

The alleged purpose for this cozy arrangement was for the FBI to receive information from the Winter Hill gang on the activities of rival gangs. However, the information provided to the FBI by this relationship was relatively minor, while the benefit to the Bulger group was of immense value.

By providing information to the FBI about Winter Hill's competitors in criminal activities, the gang was able to not only get rid of the competition but to take over their racketeering activities.

Another valuable benefit to the Winter Hill gang was that the FBI agents provided information about FBI informants, who were then tortured and murdered. This information permitted the Winter Hill gang to murder many government informants—with the full knowledge of the FBI agents and the Justice Department in Washington—including FBI director J. Edgar Hoover.

The FBI agents provided Bulger and Flemmi with information about wiretaps placed upon their phones by state and federal agencies, and with information on pending indictments.

Bulger was not only a living legend in Boston but also had strong political connections in Massachusetts. His younger brother, Bill Bulger, was powerful in the Massachusetts Senate, and later became president of the University of Massachusetts. While president of the University of Massachusetts, William Bulger refused to testify in December 2002 before a congressional committee investigating the FBI's conduct associated with the Winter Hill gang and William Bulger's brother. Referring to William Bulger was a *New York Times* article (April 10, 2003):

In December, Mr. Bulger refused to testify at a hearing of the committee [House Government Reform Committee], in Boston, pleading his Fifth Amendment right against compelled self-incrimination. In December it was revealed that Mr. Bulger had told a federal grand jury looking into misconduct by F.B.I. agents in Boston that he had "an honest loyalty to my brother. I don't feel an obligation to help everyone to catch him." Mr. Bulger also disclosed that he had spoken with Whitey Bulger by telephone shortly after he went into hiding and had not advised him to give himself up.

#### **Who Was Using Who?**

Bulger, the head of powerful gangster group in New England, had political connections. Bulger had no reason to be an FBI informant and the FBI surely knew this. The FBI-Bulger connection made Bulger the undisputed crime king in New England, without any significant competition, and using



the FBI for protection against prosecution for the dozens of murders committed. It was not the FBI using Bulger but rather Bulger using the FBI. The FBI was Bulger's enabler, paving the way for an already powerful murderous organized crime group to become even more powerful.

Bulger became a living legend in Boston, protected by the FBI, with strong political connections in Massachusetts. His younger brother, Bill Bulger, was powerful in the Massachusetts Senate, and later became president of the University of Massachusetts.

The incestuous relationship between the biggest crime group in New England and the FBI started in the 1960s for Flemmi and 1975 for Bulger. This relationship continued until the turn of the century. During this period, FBI agents socialized with Bulger and Flemmi, having dinner at each other's homes, exchanging gifts, and in several cases, the FBI agents received cash from the crime group.

### **FBI Blocking State Police Investigations**

When the Massachusetts state police sought to indict Bulger and other members of his criminal organization for murders and other crimes, FBI agents provided protection. The FBI informed Bulger of investigations, removing their names from indictments, disclosing wiretaps, and refusing to cooperate in joint task force investigations. This made possible the continuation of the murders, drug smuggling, and other racketeering activities that could have otherwise been prevented.

### **One Agent Exposing the Links, and High Level Cover-Up**

FBI Special Agent Robert Fitzpatrick repeatedly told his superiors that Bulger was committing murders and other crimes and should be terminated as an FBI informant. He also advised his bosses that FBI Special Agent John Connolly was passing confidential FBI information to Bulger and that this information assisted Bulger to avoid certain areas where telephone and other taps were in place. The decision was made at high FBI levels, including Washington, to continue this relationship with Bulger, knowing that people were being murdered and that racketeering activities were continuing to flourish.

### **Example of Many Murders Made Possible by FBI Agents**

Confidential informant for the FBI, Edward Brian Halloran, offered the Boston FBI information to show that Bulger killed a person named Wheeler, and asked the Boston FBI office to allow him to testify and put him in the government's witness protection program. Instead, FBI agents gave this information to Bulger, knowing that Halloran would be murdered. He was murdered shortly thereafter.

Two of the many murders perpetrated by Bulger and Flemmi involved young women, Deborah Hussey and Debra Davis. Flemmi was living with his common-law wife, Marion Hussey, starting this relationship when Deborah, her daughter, was only five years old. As Deborah grew older, Flemmi started a sexual relationship with her, in addition to what he had with her mother.

When Deborah decided to end the sexual relationship, Flemmi and Bulger strangled her. Before disposing of the body, to prevent identification,

they cut off Deborah's fingers and toes and knocked out all of her teeth.

While Flemmi had sexual relations with Marion Hussey and her daughter, he also had a sexual relationship with Debra Davis. She had foolishly entered a relationship with Flemmi at the age of 18, lured partly by the gifts lavished upon her. Several years later, when she announced an intention to end the relationship, Bulger and Flemmi strangled her in a house owned by Flemmi's mother. Flemmi and Bulger feared she would reveal what she learned about the criminal activities during her relationship with Flemmi.

She was buried under a railroad trestle in Quincy, Massachusetts.

As the information became known about how Bulger and Flemmi had murdered their daughters, the girls' mothers filed civil actions against Flemmi and several FBI informants and agents. On February 26, 2001, Deborah's mother, Marion Hussey, filed a lawsuit and on March 7, 2001, Olga Davis filed hers.

### **Protection from Other Government Offices**

While the FBI-protected Bulger and Flemmi, protection came also from other DOJ offices—which would be ordered at the Washington level. Although it was common knowledge in the community that Flemmi and Bulger were murderers and protected by the FBI, William F. Weld, the U.S. Attorney in Boston from 1981 to 1986, did nothing to interfere. Nor did he do anything when he subsequently became governor of Massachusetts. And this protective stance continued after Weld left the governorship and became Assistant Attorney General in Washington, D.C.

In 1984, while Weld was U.S. Attorney, the DEA planned to use wiretaps against Flemmi and Bulger to obtain additional evidence of their drug crimes. The DEA asked Weld if the FBI wanted to get involved in a joint operation. Weld asked the head of the FBI Boston office, James Greenleaf, if he wanted to cooperate. Greenleaf refused. The DEA then proceeded without FBI assistance, but their subsequent wiretaps were rendered useless when the FBI office tipped off Bulger and Flemmi about the location of the wiretaps and bugs.

When U.S. Attorney Robert Mueller was responsible for the Boston office, he also covered up for the relationship. He later became director of the FBI to defend the United States against crime in the presidency of young George Bush. While Mueller was U.S. attorney in San Francisco, I made his office aware of considerable corruption that I and a group of other former federal agents had uncovered, much of it in Mueller's immediate jurisdiction. Mueller and his office chose to cover up for the criminal activities.

This entire FBI-Winter Hill gang partner-in-crime relationship was made known to FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover for many years, and nothing was done to halt the incestuous and criminal relationship. Hoover, the FBI, and the Justice Department became complicit in the murders made possible by FBI misconduct. In my book, *Unfriendly Skies*, I described writing to FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover—while I was a federal agent for the Federal Aviation Administration—accusing him of criminal activities. A federal agent does not get away with such accusations unless they are true.

**Local Media Exposure Finally Forced Justice Department Action**

The *Hartford Courant* and the *Boston Globe* ran a series of articles on the sordid relationship between FBI agents and the Bulger gang, while most of the national media kept the lid on the scandals

As the State of Massachusetts was about to hand down indictments against Bulger, Flemmi, and other members of the Winter Hill gang, FBI Agent Connolly alerted Bugler, who then fled, along with a female companion.

James Bulger was shown on the Internet web site of the Massachusetts State Police as being wanted by the State of Massachusetts and the DEA, offering one million dollars reward for information leading to the arrest of Bulger. The Internet site listed Bulger under Most Wanted, and "Wanted for 19 counts of murder." The Internet site lists his female companion for harboring a fugitive: Catherine Elizabeth Greig (aka Helen Marshall and Carol Shapeton).

**Long Overdue Federal Indictments**

Federal indictments were also handed down against FBI agent John Connolly, who was arrested on Christmas Eve, 1999, and charged with racketeering.

**Defense Argument: Murders Perpetrated with FBI Permission**

Defense lawyers for defendants Bulger and Flemmi argued before U.S. District Judge Mark L. Wolf that the charges should be dismissed because the government tacitly gave Flemmi and Bulger permission to commit the crimes they committed while they were acting as FBI informants. They also argued that the FBI knew of the crimes being committed and looked the other way.

**FBI Aiding and Abetting Revealed in Testimony**

In one of Flemmi's affidavits, he stated that FBI agents had a practice of alerting him to avoid certain places where the FBI had placed bugs, that FBI agents told him of impending indictments, and gave him the name of a Cosa Nostra FBI informant, who was then murdered—based upon the information given by the FBI.

Those statements were supported by John Morris, former supervisor of Boston's Organized Crime Squad, who testified that he told FBI Agent Connolly about an informant who would be testifying against Bulger in the murder of a New England Jai Alai operator, Roger Wheeler. A short time later, the informant was killed.

The informant, Edward Brian Halloran, had information to show that Bulger killed Wheeler, and asked the Boston FBI office to allow him to testify and to put him in the government's witness protection program. Despite the fact that this information could solve one or more murders, the FBI refused. Halloran's name was given to Bulger, knowing that Halloran would be killed shortly thereafter.

**FBI Agent Taking Cash from Deadly Crime Group**

Former FBI agent John Morris, testifying under a grant of immunity, admitted taking cash on several occasions from two informants, totaling \$7000, and that the money came from Bulger and Flemmi.

FBI Agent Connolly, who was Bulger's handler—or the other way around—repeatedly refused to answer questions, invoking his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination. Former FBI agent, Nick Gianturco, claimed it was a “mistake in judgment” to accept gifts and having frequent dinners at the home of Flemmi's parents. (This is the residence where Debra Davis was murdered.)

### **Thirty Years in Prison For Crime the FBI Knew He Didn't Do**

A May 4, 2001, *Boston Globe* headline read, “Man Imprisoned 30 Years for Crime FBI Knew He Didn't Commit.”

Due to the withholding of evidence, Salvati was sent to prison in 1967. A Massachusetts father of four, Joe Salvati, was convicted of murder and served 30 years in prison—while the FBI, including Washington headquarters, knew he was innocent and knew the murder was committed by one of their paid informants. The known perjured testimony of an FBI informant led to his conviction and imprisonment.

### **Dying in Prison for Crimes They Didn't Commit: Courtesy of Justice Department Personnel**

Two of the men convicted with Salvati died in prison for a murder they did not commit and which the FBI knew they didn't commit.

### **A Rare Lawyer Indeed!**

Salvati remained in prison for 30 years until a rare lawyer's persistence produced documents withheld by the FBI and Boston police. It took years for Salvati's lawyer, Victor Garo, to obtain documents proving FBI agents and Boston police prosecuted Salvati to protect the identities of several FBI informants who would possibly be exposed if the real murderer were identified.

### **Congressional Investigation**

A hearing was held on May 4, 2001 before the House Government Reform Committee concerning the FBI's involvement in covering up for several of their informants who were involved in a Boston murder and how the FBI withheld information so as to convict an innocent man and father of four of murder. After listening to what occurred, Representative Christopher Shays tearfully told Joe Salvati:

*Your story of faith, your story of family, your story of courage and perseverance is a gift to your nation. And we cherish it. Your testimony will insure no none else has to endure the outrageous indignities and injustices you, Mr. Salvati, Marie, and your family, have suffered.” [Don't count on this PR statement!]*

Testifying before the committee, lawyer Garo said:

*It was more important to the FBI that they protected their prized informants than it was for innocent people [to be sent to prison]. The truth be damned. It didn't matter the truth.*

### **FBI Agent's Arrogance**

In response to a question from a committee member whether FBI Special Agent H. Paul Rico felt any remorse for his role in the case, he defiantly shouted, “What do you want, Tears? It'll be probably a nice movie or something.”

### **Documents Showed FBI Director Implicated in Crimes**

Documents presented during the criminal trial proved that FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover knew of the criminal misconduct, false testimony, murders perpetrated by protected FBI informants, and sending innocent people to prison.

Connelly's tip to Bulger of his indictment occurred in 1994 and enabled Bulger to flee. ("Trial Ending for Boston FBI Agent Accused of Mob Ties," *New York Times*. May 24, 2002.) As of this writing, in 2006, Bulger is still a fugitive from justice and on the FBI's most wanted list. Many people connected to the case believe that the FBI does not want to capture Bulger so as to cover up its decades of criminal involvement.

### **Jury Finds Connolly Guilty of Lesser Charges, With Federal Judge Proposing Leniency**

A jury found Connolly guilty of racketeering, obstructing justice, and lying to an FBI agent. Following this verdict, senior U.S. District Judge Edward F. Harrington wrote a letter to the sentencing judge requesting leniency for Connolly.

### **Light Sentence for Crimes of Enormous Implications**

In 2002, Connolly was sentenced to ten years in prison for his conduct that resulted in FBI informants being murdered, in conduct converting the FBI offices into a racketeering enterprise, and other crimes. The sentence was less than countless numbers of men and women received for peanut quantities of drugs or no-drug conspiracies in which government agents and government informants falsely testify about drug evidence. The system protects its own!

One of Bulger's brothers, James "Whitey" Bulger, pleaded guilty (April 15, 2003) in U.S. district court at Boston for perjury and obstruction of justice arising from lying to federal grand juries.

### **Media Blackout Despite the Grave National Implications**

The evidence showed a major scandal with national implications, but national media exposure was limited, and only a few local newspapers provided the public with details on this sordid FBI drama. These were the *Boston Globe* and *Hartford Courant*, running a series of articles that commenced in 1988. The rest of the nation's media covered up for the sordid and widespread misconduct in the FBI. This is the FBI that would be counted upon to detect terrorists and other threats to national interests!

A CBS "60-Minutes" broadcast in April 2001, provided an abbreviated account, showing mob boss James J. "Whitey" Bulger, as being a paid FBI informant for over 20 years and protected against investigation and prosecution while he and his gang engaged in murders, drug dealings, and other crimes. Despite revealing grave problems within the FBI, that one-time showing was it.

An April 6, 2001, *Dateline* program revealed that Robert Fitzpatrick, who was an Assistant Special Agent in charge of the FBI's Boston Field Office in the 1980s repeatedly told his superiors that Bulger should be terminated as an FBI informant after learning of the numerous murders he committed. Fitzpatrick also said he warned top FBI officials that former FBI

Agent John Connolly was leaking confidential information to Bulger. So successful was the media cover-up that I could not find a single person, including talk show hosts, who knew about the Boston FBI scandal.

### **Foreign News Service Reporting FBI Corruption**

A June 20, 2001, *Reuters* article was titled, "FBI Agent Accused In Corruption Inquiry," referring to an FBI agent in nearby Providence, Rhode Island, accepting expensive gifts from criminal elements. The article stated:

An F.B.I. agent has been suspended over accusations that he accepted gifts from a mob associate's former wife ... the Providence Journal reported today. The newspaper said the Federal Bureau of Investigation confirmed that the special agent, David DiLustro, has been suspended with pay. The gifts Mr. DiLustro received included a bath house at an exclusive beach resort ... The F.B.I. is investigating Mr. DiLustro's relationship with Gail-Ann Calenda, who bribed city officials to get property-tax reductions in 1998. Two tax officers and a lawyer were convicted in the case. Mayor Vincent Cianci and five others have been indicted on corruption charges as a result of the inquiry.

### **Many More Involved at State and Federal Levels**

Many more people in state and federal government positions were involved, either directly or through cover-ups, who escaped prosecution. One name that wasn't mentioned in this scenario was former Massachusetts Governor Bill Weld. He headed the Boston U.S. Attorney's office during much of the time Bulger & Flemmi were engaging with the FBI in a racketeering enterprise. Nor was any mention made of U.S. Attorney Richard Mueller who was head of the Boston FBI office during part of the time these FBI crimes were ongoing.

### **High FBI Officials Implicated, Making Cover-Up Urgent**

Among the high-ranking figures that surfaced at Connolly's trial were Robert S. Mueller, III; former FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, and the former president of the Massachusetts senate, William Bulger.

FBI Director Mueller was an assistant U.S. attorney in Boston, in charge of the Criminal Division, and for a period of time was the acting U.S. attorney, while Connolly was involved in murderous misconduct with a criminal group headed by James Bulger. Mueller never acted to halt Connolly's misconduct. A brief description of the Connolly case follows. Mueller covered up for numerous criminal activities<sup>2</sup> that I reported to him while he was with the FBI office in San Francisco.

On May 23, 2002, Assistant U.S. Attorney John Durham filed charges against Connolly, who at that time was retired from the FBI. The charges stated that Connolly "functioned as a member of a criminal enterprise;" racketeering and obstruction of justice; leaking confidential information to people in the Bulger organized crime group that resulted in the killing of three witnesses; taking bribes; active participation in sending innocent men to prison; role in murdering witnesses against the mob; covering up crimes

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<sup>2</sup> I offered to provide evidence to Mueller while he was in the FBI San Francisco office, and the criminal activities that I offered to report were those that I described in my book *Defrauding America*. They consisted of drug smuggling by people in the FBI, rampant corruption of federal judges and others in the bankruptcy courts; and others, all of which involved people in government positions. He never responded.

committed by the criminal elements; and tipping off James "Whitney" Bulger, the powerful head of a Boston, Massachusetts organized crime family, of an indictment for Bulger's arrest.

### **Diverted Congressional Hearings**

The publicity forced the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Government Reform to conduct hearings. But not to address the corruption within the FBI that went to Washington and included DOJ officials. The hearings were primarily on the advisability of using government informants!

### **"An institution in dire need of reform."**

An outspoken member of the committee was Congressman Bill Delahunt of Massachusetts. He said, "What happened in Boston is not just a John Connolly rogue street agent problem. What we have revealed here is an institution in dire need of reform, with no accountability, no transparency, and a total lack of controls." Interestingly, Representative Delahunt spent 20-years as a local district attorney and claimed his own investigations of Whitey Bugler were undermined by FBI protection of the mobster.

As far back as 1965, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover was told that four innocent men had been sent to prison for life for a murder which the FBI knew was committed by one of the FBI's informants. The murder of Edward Deegan in 1965 was committed by FBI informant Vincent Flemmi. Michael Sullivan, the present U.S. Attorney in Boston investigated whether other FBI agents were involved.

In an attempt to cover its own involvement in the murders and other crimes committed by Connolly, officials in FBI Washington headquarters sent a team to investigate some of these accusations back in 1997. FBI Agent Charles Prouty and a team from the FBI and Justice Department looked into the situation discovered by U.S. District Court Judge Mark L. Wolf.

Within five weeks, Prouty and his team released their report, which found no wrongdoing within a five-year statute of limitations period. Further hearing by Judge Wolf unearthed the misconduct that was eventually cited in the Connolly trial. For protecting the FBI's role in the crimes, Prouty was promoted to the head of the FBI Boston Field Office as its new Special Agent-In-Charge.

While the Justice Department's Criminal Division prosecuted Connelly, the civil law suits against him were being vigorously defended by the Justice Department's Civil Division. The U.S. Department of Justice was willing to defend Connolly in these civil lawsuits because the FBI was also being sued. The standard of proof in a civil suit is much lower than in a criminal case. Here jurors base their findings on only a preponderance of evidence, not proof beyond a reasonable doubt.

The trial of John Connolly took place in an atmosphere that implied his innocence. Connolly was permitted to sit in the audience with his family rather than at the defense table. U.S. District Judge Joseph A. Tauro saw no problem in that arrangement.

Sitting in the courtroom was the new FBI director, Robert Mueller, who many believe was appointed FBI director because of his capacity to cover

up governmental scandals. He followed the profile of many past FBI Directors, including former FBI Director William Sessions who rose from a lowly federal district court Judge in Texas to the FBI Directorship after he cooperated with President Reagan and his Attorney-General Dick Thornburgh in the 1980's.

In politics, rewards are handed out to those that cooperate. During the 1980s AUSA Robert Mueller in Boston kept the lid on the FBI scandal involving the criminal group headed by Bulger. He was appointed United States Attorney in Boston, insuring that information was kept from the Boston Police Department about the crimes perpetrated by the Bulger group and by FBI agents.

Boston Police Department complained bitterly that both the Justice Department and the FBI interfered or prevented their investigations into known mob operations. Watching Connolly's trial in May and June of 2002 was Massachusetts State Senator William Bugler, who was also the president of the Massachusetts senate. William Bulger was the younger brother of mobster James "Whitey" Bulger, who headed a powerful organized crime group in Boston, in which FBI Special Agent Connelly was involved.

When a secret federal indictment against Bugler occurred in 1994, FBI agent Connelly immediately informed Bugler, enabling him to flee. He is still on-the-run. Senator Bugler's stated he was unaware of his brother's criminal career, which no one, of course, believed.



James Bulger

### **Another FBI Agent Exposed in the Murderous Boston Office**

According to testimony by a Mafia boss and a government informant, Boston FBI Special Agent H. Paul Rico was also heavily involved with criminal elements. He reportedly helped kill a gangster, and framing others for murders that they did not commit.

Rico was charged with the 1965 murder of Tulsa businessman Roger Wheeler, a murder that Rico committed after retiring from the FBI and working for Wheeler as a security consultant. Rico murdered Wheeler at a Tulsa country club because Wheeler had discovered Rico had embezzled funds from Wheeler's company, World Jai Alai. It could be assumed that the FBI's tolerance of Rico's criminal conduct while in the Boston office emboldened Rico to kill Wheeler, thinking he was immune from prosecution. While waiting to go to trial, Rico died in January 2004 at an Oklahoma state



prison in Tulsa. His death prevented further information about FBI misconduct from being revealed during trial.



### Deadly Blowback Effects Upon America

If Taus had not been blocked from reporting the criminal activities, some of which met the definition of treasonous and subversive activities, much suffering, much harm suffered by the United States, and some catastrophic and deadly effects, would not have happened.

Drug smuggling into the United States would have been greatly decreased if the CIA was not so heavily involved, along with all the other people in government offices who knew of these criminal activities and did nothing, or who actively covered up. Many deaths, many prison sentences, would not have happened. The illegal funding and arming of Iraq during the 1980s would not have occurred, and very possibly, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait would not have occurred, or the subsequent invasion of Iraq on a basis of lying. Thousands of innocent Iraqis would not have been killed from the war fostered upon Iraq by young President George Bush and his group. Thousands of dead and maimed U.S. service people would not have happened.

And this is just the beginning.

There are several main themes that I have tried to bring out in these pages, which not only directly affects the life of a true patriot, but also affects major national interests, with bleed-down to most people in the United States. Many of the problems, including those that affected people fatally, include the culture, the corruption, among key people throughout government, and the ripple effects throughout society.

Several themes, possibly hidden in the details, include the following:

- Taus discovered and attempted to report criminal activities while he was in the Army, and while he was an FBI agent. These criminal activities included, for instance:
  - o Drug smuggling by people in control of the CIA, which was covered up by military officials, CIA officials, members of Congress, FBI and other Justice Department officials. Drug smuggling into the United States, with its deadly and other harmful consequences, harmed national security, criminalized government institutions and the people controlling such institutions. The people directly and in-

directly involved in these crimes were engaging in, or aiding and abetting, covering up, subversive activities.

- o Illegal funding and arming of Iraq during the 1980s, during the Reagan and Bush administrations, leading to the 1990 Gulf War and the invasion of Iraq.
- People in control of the Department of Justice corruptly misused the power of their office to falsely charge and prosecute an FBI agent to silence him. Not only were these gross acts of misconduct against Taus, but also further corrupted the various divisions of the Department of Justice.
- The general corrupt culture in government is shown by these events. This book reveals only one small part of the corruption that I and a long list of other insiders have discovered and which I detail in my various books. What has been done to Taus, and the criminal activities that he sought to expose and correct, are only a small part of the overall Trojan horse subversion of the United States and its people by arrogant and corrupt people in control of the system.

If you now put this book down and do nothing, you are part of the problem. There are things that you can do, and the present trend in government shows there isn't much time left.

#### **The Power to Force Perjured Testimony**

State and federal prosecutors have the power to force people to falsely testify, and there have been countless examples of this that I have received over the years. Prosecutors “buy” and demand known perjured testimony from witnesses before grand jury and trial juries, misusing their awesome government powers to bring about convictions. This increases their reputation for convictions, leads to promotions, and higher incomes. This practice is standard in drug prosecution cases, and my various books give several tragic examples of this.

There have been several highly publicized sex-abuse cases over the years where it was eventually determined that prosecutors had pressured and pressured children to claim fantastic sexual abuses that were discovered to be fabrications fostered by overzealous prosecutors seeking to make a name for themselves.

Ten families testified against Taus, some of whom were under investigation for offenses that were suddenly dropped when they testified. There was never any medical, physical, or psychological evidence presented. Nor were there ever any claims made during the entire eight-year period that Taus was associated with the club. Not until the FBI started intimidating people.

#### **A Closer Look at Probabilities**

For the sake of argument, and forgetting for the moment the outrageously long prison sentence, let's say Taus *had* inappropriate relations with boys. He didn't rape or force anything upon them. Anything that he could have done—assuming again for the moment that Taus did have some inappropriate relations with boys—his sentence was far longer than received by some serial murderers, or those who brutally killed their victims.

Thousands of priests, most of them Catholic, had inappropriate contact

with young choirboys in church, and very few of the priests were ever charged. During my lifetime I have met women, or men, who described to me sexual relations they had while in their early teens, and none described any adverse reaction. This is not to condone such conduct, but to show the extreme paranoia that exists, almost like the Salem witch trials and burning at the stake.

### **The Other Probability**

Now that I've addressed that, let's address Taus' guilt or innocence. The first charge—misusing a credit card, was a farce. As for the charge of inappropriate behavior among boys at the Freeport Sports Club, there were never any complaints about inappropriate conduct during the eight years prior to the time that government officials felt that Taus' reports were threatening to expose high-level corruption in government offices, including the Reagan-Bush White House. It wasn't until prosecutors pressured some of the alleged "victims" and their families that several boys admitted to inappropriate behavior.

Since the athletic club was being used by the FBI for surveillance purposes, it is highly unlikely that Taus would have conducted himself inappropriately and thereby undermine the intelligence-gathering intent of the operation.

### **Jury Misconduct**

Various forms of jury misconduct existed. For instance, one of the more domineering jurors, Nancy Dillon, had a relationship to District Attorney Denis Dillon, and she could easily influence the more naïve jurors.

### **A Death-In-Prison Sentence**

After the trial, Judge Baker sentenced Taus to 30 to 92 years in prison. This patriotic American did more for his country than most people, and for trying to protect the country against people in government committing criminal and even subversive offenses, Taus will probably die in prison if people outside of government don't come to his aid. He won't be eligible for parole until he is 87 years of age, and by that time he will probably be dead!

### **Describing His Ordeal**

In letters to me, Taus described the ordeal he went through with lawyers and judges, which reminded me of the standard misconduct that many others have experienced, and which I also experienced when powerful forces in government tried to halt my exposure of deadly corruption that I had discovered as part of my official duties. In describing these events Taus wrote:

The first appeal attorney, Richard Mischel, just took my mother's money and did nothing for years. He did write a rough drafted brief that could have been written by the District Attorney himself, with the inaccuracies and bias.

By 1995, I had written my own legal petition, known as a Criminal Procedure Law (CPL) § 440 motion, given newly-discovered evidence and other issues not included in the direct appeal rough draft.

Although Appeal Attorney Mischel was paid, he did nothing for the next several years.

With no action by Mischel and with no money left to hire another attorney, I submitted a 200-page C.P.L. 440 motion concerning the involvement of the CIA in criminal activities that led to my set-up and the cover-up.

In 1998, enough money was scraped together to hire a new appeals attorney. None of the original monies paid to Richard Mischel was ever returned to me. The new attorney, David M. Green, had responded to a small ad I placed in the *New York Law Journal*, "searching for a competent counsel to handle a high-profile appeal." Of the 40 attorneys who replied, Mom and David interviewed seven of them whom I selected and we settled upon Green.

Green did a good job in writing the appeal and listening to my input. Green also got his friend Joseph Heinzmann, to assist. However, their oral argument before the three-judge panel of the New York State Second Appellate Division was lukewarm at best and was not persuasive enough.

The next step was a request to appeal to the New York's highest court, the Court of Appeals. Green and Heinzmann wrote a brief appeal brief for that court.

The next appeal level is at the federal level, where one files a federal habeas corpus petition with the District Court. However, that would take another large payment to my attorneys. They wanted \$15,000. Along came retired New York Police Captain Rudolph Blaum, and his wife, Cecily, who both knew of my plight and most generously paid the full amount to Green.

Such generosity is extremely rare, especially from strangers. But Rudy knew about my plight for he had worked in New York City, he saw the politically sanctioned drug trafficking and government corruption. He knew what I had faced in my own FBI official investigation and they decided to help.

Green and Heinzmann submitted the required paperwork establishing the grounds for the habeas corpus action. U.S. District Court judge Weinstein refused to provide any relief.

By this time it was apparent that money was being wasted on hired legal counsel, so I told Rudy and Cecily that I would proceed, asking the court to appoint a poor person's attorney for me. The court did so.

Marjorie M. Smith was a very capable lawyer. But instead of defending me vigorously, she did little and did not communicate with me. In short, I found myself again, submitting motions and petitions to the court. On May 9, 2005, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 2<sup>nd</sup> circuit heard my appeal in New York City. My mother and son David attended, along with a journalist and a lawyer friend of Captain Blaum.

Needless to say, Smith did a terrible job, and failed to provide materials asked by the three-judge panel, failed to raise arguments, and failed to note that Judge Reena Raggi, who presided, should have recused herself under Title 28 U.S.C. 455, since she handled my initial hearing back in November 1988.

Smith failed so miserably, despite her ability, that it could only have been due to political pressures. The fact she was court-appointed clearly meant that she worked for the government that had prosecuted me.

In a near summary judgment, the Second Circuit panel dismissed the six issues as all harmless errors. It was astonishing to learn that the deprivation of one's U.S. and New York constitutional rights meant nothing, nor did the numerous case law backing our issues have any consequence or precedence for the court!

Again, the court affirmed the decision against me, this time the court noted in its statement "that the evidence was against me." That was an incredible statement to make, since the same court denied me the Certificate of Appealability (COA) to expand the issues to include the very evidence that was being denied!

So again, I proceeded submitting motions to get a rehearing before another panel, and asking for a new attorney to handle my Writ For Certiorari to the U.S. Supreme Court. Remarkably, on July 26, 2005, the court granted me a new attorney to handle the petition.

In another letter describing the hardships upon his mother, and upon the Vietnamese orphan that he adopted, and which had been given such good and extensive publicity in the media years earlier, Taus wrote:

The impact of my false arrest and incarceration is difficult to express in words alone. Aside from the devastation caused by the false media stories, by my loss of employment, huge legal fees, and inability to meet living expenses, there was the isolation which our government placed upon my family and me. By disparaging my character, my mother and son both suffered indignities from others. Friends became estranged, neighbors shunned them, and for me, I bore the horror of the pain that was inflicted upon them by honest work and loyalty for the government, neglecting them while performing my duties worldwide, failing to realize that I was working for a cabal of evil men in our nation's government.

It was all too much; Mom suffered a severe heart attack several years ago. And my sister, April, David's aunt, also had a major heart attack. That time the "rescued boy" became the "rescuer." David took charge when there were no other relatives "available" (though there were several aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, and nephews, who could have helped). It was David alone who took mother to the hospital, made all arrangements, and took care of her, worried and prayed to God for her recovery. All the while I could do nothing. The state had imprisoned me, making me useless to everyone, especially to those who needed me so much.

This is the real hell I suffered. My inability to help the son I rescued, and the mother that sacrificed so much for me. My time in combat was a lesser hell than my time in prison, since I could not help my family. And I seem useless to others with no assigned missions to carry out.

Perhaps I do have a mission: to expose the corruption in our government that brings harm to all honest Americans and adversely effects our international alliances and humanity in general.

### **Many Ironies**

Ironically, Judge Baker was later forced to resign because of many irregularities in the handling of cases assigned to him. The prosecutor, Kenneth Littman, was fired after it was revealed that he had propositioned an underage female in the Nassau County courthouse.

Of the of thousands catholic priests that were sexually abusing children in the church, and the church officials who protected the criminal acts, rarely were any of them charged with a criminal offense.

The people perpetrating the criminal activities that Taus sought to expose, and those who feloniously covered up for the criminal activities, none of them ever suffered any adverse consequences, despite the grave consequences for the United States.

### **A Patriot and War Hero Will Die in Prison Without Help**

The corrupt elements in the judicial system protected itself, and the system, in denying Taus the protection and defenses that underlie our form of

government. At every turn, starting with the initial charges against Taus, the judicial system acted to cover up for high-level crimes in government.

Starting with the false credit card charge by Justice Department prosecutors, the misuse of the state prosecutorial powers and threats to bring about a conviction for alleged inappropriate behavior with boys, state and federal judges joined in carrying out the conspiracy. This tactic is repeatedly detailed in several of my other books, and in every case, not only is the defendant victimized, but also so are major national interests and the lives of many otherwise innocent people. Throughout the appeal process, the system worked against Taus and in favor of protecting crimes against the United States by people in the CIA and White House politicians.

### **Misconduct of the Trial Court Judge**

The trial judge, Edward Baker, made one prejudicial ruling after the other during the trial, which tended to switch jurors attitude toward Taus. Also, the media, and remember many media people are on the secret payroll of the CIA and other government offices, continued to slander Taus in their reporting. Among the trial tactics denying Taus an honest trial were the following legal problems:

- During the trial, the Taus' lawyer filed 23 mistrial requests, based upon the repeated violations of due process by Judge Baker.
- Numerous requests for missing evidence and request to allow defense witnesses to testify; those were denied.
- One of the jurors, Nancy Dillon, has a personal relationship with the prosecuting attorney. Judge Baker denied a hearing on that matter. Dillon told a fellow juror that she is related to District Attorney Denis Dillon whose office prosecuted Taus.
- The prosecuting Assistant District Attorney was later fired for having solicited sex with a minor in the courthouse.
- Witnesses were intimidated and coerced into making false statements.
- Jurors were allowed to read daily the prejudicial newspaper articles throughout the trial.

Judge Baker had to retire early due to numerous prejudicial decisions in other cases that made newspaper headlines, reflecting on his character and violation of due process rights.

### **Sabotage by Appeal Attorney**

Taus then experienced a long delay and then failure by the attorney his aging mother hired to file an appeal. Scraping money together, Yolanda Taus hired New York lawyer, Richard Mischel, to prepare a draft of an appeal brief for the New York Second Appellate Division. Taus stated that it took his mother several years to accumulate the funds to pay for the appeal, and that the draft prepared by attorney was so inferior that he had to be discharged, despite having been paid funds to file the appeal. Taus stated the attorney was a close friend of the Assistant District Attorney that filed the objection to the appeal.

The appeal that Mischel should have filed was a direct appeal to the New York appellate division. Taus said that after waiting for two years for Mischel to prepare the appeal brief, and then providing a poorly written



draft that sounded like it was prepared by the prosecutor, Taus and his mother discharged Mischel, thereby losing the money that they had scraped to pay for the appeal process.

In desperation, Taus filed a “440 Motion” that listed the reasons for the charges and the denial of due process by the trial court. These included the conspiracy that brought about his arrest and prosecution; the cover-up; newly discovered evidence; missing and withheld evidence by the prosecutor, which constituted a *Rosario* and *Brady* violation; intimidation and threats against the witnesses during the trial; prosecutor’s failure and withholding of statements/reports by the FBI and Nassau County district attorney’s office relating to the questionable reliability of witnesses testifying against Taus; the use of fraud against Taus by FBI and then by Nassau County investigators.

Newly discovered evidence included information about the CIA’s role in the Freeport K-Team business that Taus was exposing. *The Washington City Paper*, *Time*, and *Newsweek*, printed articles in 1993 showing the relationship. It would show one more reasons for silencing Taus. (I had discovered years ago, state and local police, prosecutors, and judges cooperate with federal personnel to file false charges, to deny a fair trial, and send innocent people to prison.)

### **Filing Legal Papers in the State and the Federal Courts**

Taus, through his lawyers, and sometimes by himself in pro se status, filed many legal papers seeking to overturn the conviction, only to encounter a steady stream of judges covering up for the initial fraud.

After writing dozens of letters to lawyers seeking to represent Taus, his mother placed a classified ad in the *New York Law Journal*, Taus got another lawyer to file an appeal brief, David M. Green. I examined one of the briefs filed by Green, and he did raise very important issues, any one of which should have resulted in the conviction being overturned.

Taus’ appeal was then taken over by David Green and Joseph Heinze-man, who filed a request with the Second Appellate Division Court in New York, and argued the case before a three-judge panel. The issues raised in the brief filed by David Green included:

- o Defendant was deprived of a fair trial and effective assistance of counsel as the result of the court’s repeated confrontations with and denigrations of defense counsel.
- o The Trial court’s refusal to allow questioning of the investigating police officers as “collateral impeachment” was improper.
- o Appellant’s right to a fair trial was abridged by the prosecutor’s failure to provide the defense with critical “Rosario” and “Brady” material consisting of psychiatric reports of prosecution witnesses, FBI “302” reports and police interviews.
- o Defendant was denied a fair trial as a result of juror misconduct and improper influence.
- o The government’s actions in this case were so outrageous that they “shock the conscience.” The defendant’s due process rights under the state and federal constitutions were violated and therefore his

conviction must be overturned.

- o Prosecutorial misconduct deprived appellant of a constitutionally fair trial.
- o The defendant's sentence was excessive. In the interests of justice it should be reduced.

Portions of Green's brief that was filed with the Supreme Court of the State of New York (91-03304; 96-07105), Appellate Division, stated in part:

#### STATEMENT OF FACTS

This highly emotional and unusual case revolves around a man, RICHARD TAUS, accused of the crime of sexually molesting ten children. But what appears on the surface as a straightforward criminal case is very misleading; this learned court is urged not to jump to conclusions, to keep an open mind to this incredible case as it factually and legally unfolds.

A brief overview of the uncontroverted facts will establish the unusual issues in this case:

**First**, TAUS is a recognized war hero, having served two tours of duty in Vietnam as a top-secret courier and helicopter pilot. He is witness to some of the worst horrors of this war, in and around the infamous "TET Offensive", more fully detailed in the statement of facts below. After receiving multiple commendations, including three Bronze Stars, TAUS exits the Army as a Captain, joins the Army Reserves, eventually promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, and finally, enters the FBI;

**Second**, at the FBI, TAUS again distinguishes himself, receiving "top secret" clearance and becoming part of the foreign counter-intelligence unit, investigating areas of national security in some of the most sensitive areas, TAUS was an FBI agent for over 10 years;

**Third**, TAUS, as is established over and over again at the trial, has shown incredible concern for children, even taking the historic step of adopting a Vietnamese orphan, the first single American to do so, needing approval from both the Presidents of Vietnam and the United States. TAUS, as a soccer coach and eventual President of the Freeport Soccer Club (The Freeport Club), befriends many children who come from disadvantaged backgrounds both emotionally and socioeconomically. He literally opens his home to these children, and gives them both emotional and monetary support; Hundreds of boys and girls participated in the Soccer program while TAUS was involved and this case is based on ten complaints;

**Fourth**, it is these children who accuse TAUS of these nefarious acts, eventually causing TAUS to be convicted of 19 of the total 29 charges, even though no medical records of the children are ever produced and no witnesses to these accusations ever come forward. As is demonstrated in their own testimony, these impressionable children were severely coerced into testifying by elements of both the FBI and the Nassau County police (who sit at the prosecutor's table throughout the-entire trial), and that all the children give weak, inconsistent and improbable testimony;

**Fifth**, after subjecting TAUS to several hours of intense questioning<sup>1</sup>, employing all of the coercive tactics FBI agents are trained to use, incredibly, TAUS is arrested for putting \$9.00 worth of gas on a government-issued credit card, which he used in his personally-owned vehicle to pursue an official investigation.<sup>2</sup>

However, what really transpired here? Although it sometimes reads like a Hollywood thriller, the court was reminded that TAUS has paid for it with his professional life and freedom for the last ten years and potentially next 15 years.

It turns out that TAUS had established the soccer league as a type of "cover" for spying on a CIA group engaged in criminal operations, operating out of Freeport

known as the "K-Team". TAUS had uncovered a rogue operation of the CIA and was reporting this illegal activity to his superiors, who turned a deaf ear. TAUS spread the word of this group around. TAUS must have hit a nerve, because one week before the 1988 presidential election he was arrested and accused of these scurrilous charges.

The context of this trial must also be considered: the TAUS prosecution occurred during, what the *Wall Street Journal* disparagingly called in its Review and Outlook column, "the great contagion of child abuse prosecutions that swept the country beginning in the mid-1980's" (*Wall Street Journal*. 8/30/95, p.A10). The *Journal*, in a subsequent article, noted the manner of investigation was "highly prejudicial and irreparable and that he way the state's investigators questioned children raised extremely serious doubts about the reliability of their allegations" among other errors (6/15/98, p. 28).

Thus, the trial was stacked against TAUS, from pre-trial publicity tainting the jury pool, to a defense-hostile judge to prosecutorial misconduct and finally, governmental misconduct: a classic "Salem-style witch hunt". It is up to this court to right the wrongs done to TAUS and either set him free or grant him a new trial.

### **PRE-TRIAL HEARINGS & MOTIONS**

Prior to trial, defense counsel discussed with the court an article that appears in Newsday that defense counsel wishes to put into evidence; it is very hostile to TAUS and prejudices the jury.<sup>3</sup> (H. 141) The Court marks it as an exhibit for possible use in a future application. (H. 143)

### **JUDGE ABBY BOKLAN RECUSAL**

During pre-trial hearings, defense counsel informs the court that they intend to call a Dr. Daniel Schwartz as an expert witness. (H. 584) Judge Boklan maintains that this is a problem because she is very familiar with Dr. Schwartz and finds his credibility impeccable, and therefore would have tremendous difficulty finding against his conclusions. (H. 584)<sup>4</sup> Judge Boklan recused herself (H. 610), and, for unrelated reasons, dismissed Count 19 of the indictment. (T. 13)

Subsequent to Judge Boklan's recusal, the combined *Dunaway*, Search and Seizure, and Huntley hearings are repeated in front of a newly assigned judge, Edward A. Baker. (H2. 3) FBI Special Agents Kenney & Dunbar testified as to their involvement in this case more detailed below under the heading: "The Interrogation.

Judge Baker set the tone for his handling the trial very quickly by immediately denigrating defense counsel with an extemporaneous remark on Defense counsel's approach to cross-examination, and injecting additional language when simply sustaining the prosecutor's objections. (H2. 71, H2. 157)

Defense counsel moved to exclude two Detectives of the Nassau County Sex Crimes Squad, Detectives Brimlow and Doppman from sitting at the prosecutor's table during the trial. The defense argued that they are potential witnesses and moreover, they are coercive and intimidating to the children testifying. (T. 16) The judge did not exclude the Detectives, as he would exclude only witnesses or potential witnesses; he considers their possible questioning as "collateral impeachment". (T. 17; T. 21)

### **THE PEOPLE'S CASE**

Subsequent to the dismissal of the federal charges against TAUS, Nassau County police obtained statements from some young members of the Freeport Soccer Club. As the following testimony demonstrates, the police manipulated these boys, who had no independent recollection of the events to which they testified. (T. 73) The Police and ADA did an extraordinary amount of "coaching", including a full "Dress Rehearsal" in an actual courtroom. Finally, as shown below, the Police wrote statements for the boys to sign and intimidated them into believing the con-

tents. It is obvious that the police decided from the start that TAUS was guilty and therefore chose to ignore the contradictory testimony of the children and total lack of any corroborating evidence.

**EDMUND BRIAN NAUMANN/Edmund Doe (Naumann) (T. 282 - T. 316)  
Counts 18 & 19<sup>5</sup>**

Naumann was twelve years old at the time of trial and 6 years old at the time of the alleged incident. Naumann testified that he met TAUS in November 1984, when he joined the Freeport Soccer Club (The Freeport Club). (T. 283) After two different practices, TAUS innocently patted his behind after a team victory; an action common among sports teammates. (T. 286; T. 301) Naumann testified that there were several players and parents in the vicinity. (T. 313)

An analysis of Naumann's testimony established a pattern repeated by all of the children's testimony:

**First**, Naumann admits that he could not remember the incidents in question until the Detectives Brimlow and Doppman and ADA Littman questioned him; (T. 305)

**ENDNOTES**

1. Very high-ranking officials participate in the questioning of TAUS, both in New York and as testified to, in Washington, D.C. headquarters.
2. Nassau County police officers arrest TAUS in mi-1989, several months after the federal arrest.
3. The article is entitled "Witness: Ex-agent Admitted Sex Abuse." *Newsday*, (10/24/89, p 21). The article states that a witness testifies that TAUS acknowledges making a statement admitting sexual abuse of minors; this article wholly mischaracterizes what transpired at the preliminary hearing. (H. 142)
4. Dr. Schwartz is a personal friend of Judge Boklan, carrying petitions for her election. (H. 586)
5. The People's witness headings correspond to the witnesses real name, name used in the indictment, trial pages and finally, corresponding counts in the indictment.

The three judges upheld the lower court's decision despite the massive numbers of due process violations. An appeal was then made to the highest New York court (71615), which was received by Judge Albert Rosenblatt. He upheld all the prior violations and refused to overturn the trial court decision.

The appeal was denied by the New York state judges; Green then filed papers in the federal court in New York under the habeas corpus statute, Title 28 U.S.C. § 2254, raising similar issues.

An appeal was then filed with the U.S. Court of Appeals in Manhattan. That petition was filed on July 22, and heard by the *same* court where I filed my appeal and gave oral arguments in 2004. That complaint, and the appeal, related to my attempts to report criminal activities in government offices and the parallel actions taken to silence me, similar to what was done to Taus. (Information about that filing is in several of my books, including *Blowback*, *9/11 and Cover-Ups*, and *Lawyers and Judges: American Trojan Horses*.)

Taus obtained a lawyer to file a Petition for Habeas Corpus in the U.S. District Court in Manhattan (August 14, 2002, case # 02-4492). That petition was acted upon by U.S. District Judge Jack Weinstein, who denied the petition (November 26, 2003). In a two-month period that included Taus'

appeal, Weinstein dismissed over 500 appeals, showing that he obviously did not take the time to examine the issues that were raised.

- Protecting the system further, Weinstein barred Taus from raising the issues that would have shown the serious misconduct that Taus had reported and which was then immediately followed by actions to silence him. The issues that could be raised on appeal under the Certificate of Appealability rule, Weinstein limited the appeal issue to the weakest of all the issues: Jury misconduct. While that is an issue, it is weak and protects the system from being exposed if Taus had been allowed to raise the other issues, such as the retaliation after Taus had reported high-level corruption in the CIA and of White House politicians.
- An appeal was then made to the U.S. Court of Appeals in Manhattan (04-0405). The hearing was set for May 9, 2005 before appellate judges Reena Raggi, John Walker and Wilfred Feinberg. (Raggi was one of the judges who in November 1988 denied Taus bail after the sham FBI charges associated with the \$9 credit card charge.)
- With her on the panel, Taus didn't have much of a chance. Taus filed a Judicial Notice petition disqualifying Judge Raggi on the basis of her prior conduct. Then, addressing the failure of his court-appointed appeal attorney, Marjorie Smith, Taus mentioned the failure of his attorney to present copies of the prejudicial newspaper articles and the defect in the District Court's summary judgment where the court stated it was relying upon the evidence without giving Taus the opportunity to present the withheld evidence which Taus had obtained under a Freedom of Information law request (FOIL).
- Taus experienced the same cover-up from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals judge that I encountered. Abandoned by his court-appointed lawyer, Taus filed a Petition for Rehearing (02-CV-4496JBW/03-MISC-0066JBW), which was denied, and then filed a Writ of Certiorari to the U.S. Supreme Court, with a request to the Court of Appeals for appointment of a lawyer. In a rare move, the court appointed another lawyer, Sally Wasserman.

### **Relying Upon Supreme Court Justices Was an Exercise in Futility**

I wrote to Taus explaining that the "appeal" to the Justices of the U.S. Supreme Court was an exercise in futility. I explained that the same Justices have been repeatedly covering up for criminal activities that I brought to their attention that were combined with massive civil and constitutional violations perpetrated by a long line of federal judges and had corrupted the nation's highest court. I said that the order by the lower court judge barring him from raising the issues of the most gregarious civil rights violations, and limiting the issue to absence of adequate legal counsel, simply allowed the Justices to easily dismiss the petition without incurring any criticism.

### **Depriving Taus of the Primary Defenses**

The lower court eviscerated Taus's numerous primary defenses and held in its ruling allowing an "appeal" to the Supreme Court as the only issue, inadequate legal representation during the lower court proceedings. Barring Taus from raising the major issues and limiting him to this virtually useless

defense made it possible for the Justices of the U.S. Supreme Court to deny the petition, shielding the Justices from being faced with the draconian due process violations. In December 2005, as I forewarned Taus, the Supreme

Court denied his petition.

Unless there is enough outraged by enough people, this highly decorated military officer will die in prison for having sought to protect the United States against the corruption in the CIA and of White House politicians.

**Taus Experienced a Form of the Retaliation Government Personnel Experience for Exposing Corruption in High Government places**

Retaliation against government agents who attempt to report corruption in government offices. I personally discovered this fact years earlier, and over the years countless examples of retaliation have surfaced. But nothing is done about it, despite the sometimes catastrophic effects upon the people and the country.

**Publicized Example of FBI Retaliation Against FBI Agent**

A *New York Times* article (December 4, 2005), titled, "Justice Department Investigators Find a Cover-Up in an F.B.I. Terror Case in Florida," stated:

Officials at the Federal Bureau of Investigation mishandled a Florida terror investigation, falsified documents in the case in an effort to cover repeated mistakes and retaliated against an agent who first complained about the problems, Justice Department investigators have concluded.

In one instance, someone altered dates on three F.B.I. forms using correction fluid to conceal an apparent violation of federal wiretap law, according to a draft report of an investigation by the Justice Department inspector general's office obtained by the *New York Times*. But investigators were unable to determine who altered the documents.

The agent who first alerted the F.B.I. to problems in the case, a veteran undercover operative named Mike German, was "retaliated against" by his boss, who was angered by the agent's complaints and stopped using him for prestigious assignments in training new undercover agents, the draft report concluded. [Series of retaliation against FBI Agents]

The case first became public last year, as he emerged as the latest in a string of whistle-blowers at the bureau who said they had been punished and effectively silenced for voicing concerns about the handling of terror investigations and other matters since Sept. 11, 2001.

Senator Charles E. Grassley, an Iowa Republican who has been a frequent critic of the bureau, said of Mr. German: "Unfortunately, this is just another case in a long line of F.B.I. whistle-blowers who have had their careers derailed because the F.B.I. couldn't tolerate criticism."

Ann Beeson, associate legal director for the American Civil Liberties Union, said that the inspector general's findings, coming just days after the Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal from an earlier F.B.I. whistle-blower, pointed to the need for tougher measures to protect those who report abuse. "With courts reluctant to protect whistle-blowers, it is crucial that Congress pass additional protections," Ms. Beeson said.

Mr. German's case dates to 2002, when the F.B.I. division in Tampa opened a terror investigation into a lead that laundered proceeds, possibly connected to a drug outfit, might be used to finance terrorists overseas. The F.B.I. was considering initiating an undercover operation to follow the lead, and Mr.

German, who had extensive experience infiltrating militias, skinheads and other groups, was asked to take part.

But in the coming months, Mr. German would alert F.B.I. officials that the Orlando agent handling the case had “so seriously mishandled” the investigation that a prime opportunity to expose a terrorist financing plot had been wasted. He said agents had not adequately pursued leads, had failed to document important meetings with informants, and had tolerated violations of rules and federal law on the handling of wiretaps.

The inspector general found that the F.B.I. had “mishandled and mismanaged” the investigation, partly through the failure to document important developments for months at a time. The report also found that supervisors were aware of problems in the case but did not take prompt action to correct them.

Moreover, after Mr. German raised concerns about the lack of documentation, an unnamed agent in Orlando “improperly added inaccurate dates to the investigative reports in order to make it appear as though the reports were prepared earlier,” the inspector general found.

In addition, someone used correction fluid to backdate by two months a set of forms that the main informant had signed as part of a bugging operation, in which he agreed that he had to be present for all undercover taping.

Mr. German became increasingly vocal within the F.B.I. about what he saw as the bureau’s failure to correct missteps, taking his concerns directly to Mr. Mueller in a 2003 e-mail message. His complaints, the inspector general found, led agents in Florida, Washington and Oregon to distance themselves from him.

In the most serious instance, the head of the F.B.I. undercover unit, Jorge Martinez, froze Mr. German out of teaching assignments in undercover training and told one agent that Mr. German would “never work another undercover case,” the report said.

The inspector general said in the report that Mr. Martinez’s treatment of Mr. German amounted to improper retaliation and “discrimination that could have a chilling effect on whistle-blowing.”

### **The Taus Tragedy is Also a Tragedy Affecting the Entire United States and Its People, and Tip of the Iceberg**

Taus is a victim, but he is not alone. America is a victim, and so are many of its people. If the culture in the DOJ, the FBI, Congress, were not as corrupt as it is, Taus would have been able to perform his duties, the corruption he sought to expose would not have continued, and the American people would not have suffered as they did. But what he sought to expose was a minute fraction of the endemic corruption and cover-up culture spreading throughout America. And the people will pay for it, more and more as time goes on.

It is people like Taus who are America’s heroes, not ball players or the countless other people whose conduct or fate does not in any way merit the title. Taus and the others like him have suffered because of a massive breakdown in values within the United States.

### **Typical Experience by Government Whistleblowers**

In many ways, Taus’ experiences paralleled what I had gone through. He, like I, saw corrupt and criminal misconduct, and we both tried to carry out our responsibilities, and we both suffered.

### **Informing Members of Congress of Criminal and Subversive Activities**

Taus and I both informed members of Congress of these matters, and both of us ran into the same indifference, cover-ups, and obstruction of justice. Members of congress had responsibilities to receive our evidence as part of their oversight, and also under the federal crime reporting statute, Title 18 U.S.C. § 4.<sup>3</sup> That statute requires that anyone who knows of a federal crime must report it to a federal judge or other officer; and members of Congress are considered officers for the purpose of receiving that information. By failing to act, by refusing to receive information of corrupt and criminal activities against the United States, they became complicit in the crimes.

I asked Taus for copies of the letters that he sent to members of Congress while Taus was an FBI agent. He advised that these letters were seized from his FBI office and from his home at the time of his arrest, and were never returned to him. I then asked him to try to remember the names of some of the people he had contacted and to try to redo the contents of the letters, to the best of his memory. He did this. Among the members of Congress that he remembered writing were Senators Arlen Specter; Barry Goldwater; Alphonse D. Amato; Bob Graham; Representatives Charles Schumer; Norman Lent, among others.

The following are the contents of some of the letters that Taus wrote, based upon his memory:

The following redacted letters are examples of others that were sent by FBI agent Richard Taus to members of congress from 1984 to 1988, trying to report to these congressional members corrupt and criminal activities that Taus had discovered as part of his official duties as an FBI agent:

Senator Barry Goldwater  
Senate Select Committee on Intelligence  
US Senate  
Washington/ DC 20510

Dear Senator Goldwater:

During the June 1964 Commencement Address at Pennsylvania Military College/ you gave the graduating class a speech about doing one's duty for this nation. Prior to that speech, we met in the Student Union Building where members of the PMC Political Science Club introduced me to you. I was the Cadet that received the "Sons Of The American Revolution Good Citizenship" Medal. (See enclosed newspaper article.)

Since that time, I served two tours of duty in Vietnam as an Army officer. Presently, I am an FBI Special Agent assigned to the Foreign Counter-intelligence (FCI) Division at the FBI's New York Field Office (FBINYO). Since I have been unable

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<sup>3</sup> Title 18 U.S.C. § 4. Misprision of felony. Whoever, having knowledge of the actual commission of a felony cognizable by a court of the United States, conceals and does not as soon as possible make known the same to some judge or other person in civil or military authority under the United States, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than three years, or both.



to address certain important concerns to my superiors here, I felt that you would understand my concerns (noted below) as the Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

In conducting investigations, both on the FBINYO Criminal Division and the FCI Division, I have discovered several major violations of federal laws with a group of individuals who call themselves the National Freedom Institute. Based upon the very scope of their involvement in political and governmental matters, I find it difficult to believe that they are only private citizens acting on behalf of the U.S. Government. I have been unable to get any answers from my superiors here, whom I have informed about this situation.

The National Freedom Institute is located in the Village of Freeport, New York where it appears to be conducting business as a financial securities firm under the name of Drexel. Since the late 1970s, this organization has been investigated by the FBINYO Criminal Division for criminal activities without any indictments or prosecutions. Within the past two years, Drexel has been involved with known Mafia figures and Drexel members have conducted, what appears to be business/ with foreign nationals.

As a result, the FBINYO has turned this case over to their FCI Division. However, while I was assigned to the Criminal Division, I uncovered massive financial scams and frauds, along with drug-trafficking operations with Mafia involvement. This firm seems to have strong financial contacts that the FBI is unable to unravel due to limited manpower and resources. As I know you are aware, every year the Bureau asks Congress for additional funding and manpower to pursue its investigations.

At this time, I have written letters to my own Senators and Representatives about this matter, including Alfonse M. D'Amato who is on the Finance Committee. Given your position as Chair of the Senate Select Committee, our 1964 meeting at PMC and the speech you gave, I am seeking your advice and guidance in the above matters. As an FBI Special Agent, I know that I have the responsibility to notify your committee since nothing has been done by the US Attorney's Office.

Thank you for your strong conservative stance on issues affecting this country. I look forward to your reply. I have phoned your office and your staffer suggested writing this letter. I will be happy to provide you more details in the future.

Sincerely,  
Richard Taus

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington/ D.C. 20505

Dear Congressman Schumer:

Due to your outspoken stance against corruption in government, I would like to inform you about several ongoing FBI investigations that deserve your attention. I am an FBI Special Agent assigned to the New York Field Office (FBINYO) where I work on the Foreign Counter-intelligence (FCI) Division. In my capacity as a Special Agent, I have discovered serious violations of federal law both from my case investigations on the FBINYO's Criminal and FCI Divisions.

These investigations have uncovered the involvement of officials, agents and operatives of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) with Mafia organized crime members and drug-trafficking activities. Specifically, there is a business firm known

as Castle Securities, Incorporated that operated in the Village of Freeport New York. This enterprise is engaged in financial frauds, including the looting of the Savings & Loans (Thrift) Industries, dummy or shell corporations designed to hide money-laundering operations and other financial scams and securities' violations.

I have approached my FBI superiors and both the U.S. Attorney Offices in SDNY and EDNY, along with Justice Department and FBIHQs in Washington, DC with no results, no requested subpoenas for further investigative actions.

Since Castle Securities is further engaged in business and political liaison with foreign nationals and their governments, I believe this firm is operating unlawfully. Their business relations appear to be matters best handled by the U.S. Departments of Commerce, State, and Justice.

In my official FBI investigations, I have found that members of the National Security Council and Agency staffers along with White House officials are connected to criminal activities associated with the acquisition of military hardware. These hidden negotiations are part of the current scandals of the Iran Contra Arms Initiative Affair and the Iraqi Arms/Agriculture Loans program.

As an FBI agent, I am required to sign the Senate and House Select Committees on Intelligence acknowledgement that I know of no unreported criminal activities. I have been instructed by my superiors to terminate my informants and make no reference to these illegal and subversive matters. These matters implicate high-ranking government officials, politicians, organized crime, and business leaders who appear to control and manipulate government agencies and operations.

Rather than comply with a clearly unlawful order, I am writing to you and other members of Congress, seeking assistance from legislators who champion this nation's values and principles.

Your Brooklyn office staff/ in my recent phone calls, suggested I write you. I can supply additional details on these matters which I pray you will keep confidential at this time. Godspeed in your work for America. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,  
Richard Taus

Senator Arlen Specter  
Senate Select Committee on Intelligence  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Specter:

As an FBI Special Agent assigned to the New York Field Office, I have telephoned your Washington office hoping to speak with you about matters that concern your Select Committee on Intelligence. I have been assigned to both the FBI's Criminal and Foreign Counter-intelligence Divisions in the New York Field Office where I encountered a financial firm involved in criminal activities.

These activities were investigated by the FBI as early as 1977 without any indictments or prosecutions. Recently, Castle Securities, formerly known as the Drexel Company, has been connected to the ongoing Iran Contra Arms Initiative Affair. However in the past, Castle has been involved with Mafia members and others, some of whom are foreign nationals. From FBI investigations, there appears that this firm has manipulated financial securities and loans, created shell or dummy

corporations to hide their fraudulent financial transactions and negotiated other unlawful businesses without any sanctions being imposed.

The Department of Justice, both in Washington and with the U.S. Attorney's Office at the Southern District and Eastern District of New York has not issued any subpoenas nor indictments against this firm. Furthermore, neither the U.S. State Department nor the Commerce Department appear willing to discuss these matters, nor will the Central Intelligence Agency provide any insights.

As you are aware, last year's media coverage of the developing Iran-Contra Arms Initiative Affair has brought about serious questions from both American and World Public. As a leading member of the Senate Committee, and with FBI Headquarters permission, I can supply you with additional information on what appears to be an Intelligence problem since Castle is heavily involved in criminal activities and financial frauds on an international scale.

As a U.S. Army Reserve Lieutenant Colonel and an FBI Agent, I am compelled to inform Congress about these matters since no actions have been taken by our various governmental agencies.

Please contact me at the FBINYO. I will provide you with further details on this matter.

Sincerely,  
Richard Taus

Senator John Kerry  
Senate Select Committee on Intelligence  
Washington/ D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Kerry:

Since we are both Vietnam Veterans, I am seeking your advice and assistance. I am an FBI Special Agent at the New York Field Office (FBINYO) where I am assigned to the Foreign Counter-intelligence (FCI) Division. As you are aware, the FBI requires that its agent personnel sign the biannual acknowledgement form for which goes to both the Senate and the House Select Committees on Intelligence. It states that we, as FBI agents, know of no unreported crimes or criminal activities.

With your Committee's hearings now into the Iran Contra Arms Imitative Affair, I have found several criminal operations and activities that apparently have not been prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's office.

When I telephoned your office last week, I was told that you would call me at the FBINYO and to mail you a letter concerning this information.

A financial firm in the Village of Freeport New York, known as Castle Securities Corp. (formerly the Drexel Company), is conducting business with a number of known Mafia figures and foreign nationals. Thus far, Castle's members have been associated with several different financial scams and frauds, including their involvement in the Iran Contra Arms Initiative Affair, which you are investigating.

As an FBI Agent, I served both on the Criminal and FCI Divisions where this company was targeted for its criminal activities and its known associations with foreign diplomats. In the mid-1970s, this company has been investigated by the FBINYO Criminal Division. At this time, neither the U.S. Departments of State/ Justice or Commerce has provided the FBI with any knowledge about this firm, though it engages in affairs that should be handled by their respective departments. My FBI superiors also appear to be at a loss for information about Castle's operations and its immunity from prosecution.

The FBI investigation of Castle has revealed financial frauds, including money-laundering operations and drug trafficking, unlawful weapons sales, and unauthorized negotiations with foreign government officials, in violation of both their authority and the Boland Amendment.

The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has not provided any information or comment concerning Castle's activities. Therefore, I am writing you based upon your current hearings into affairs which are connected to this company.

This matter has been addressed to my FBI superiors who have not positively responded to my suggestion that we inform your Committee. Since I have witnessed firsthand the ravages of drugs upon our troops overseas in Vietnam, I feel duty-bound and morally obligated to make your US Senate Committee aware of the obstacles' involved and the harm that is being perpetrated upon the American Public. I am willing to testify before your Committee and I would ask that you subpoena my FBI investigative files into Castle Securities and its officers. From my meetings with Castle management, they have admitted their involvement in the Iran Contra Arms Affair.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future. I can be reached by phone at the FBINYO or at my home in Freeport (516-378-3884).

Sincerely yours,  
Richard Taus

### **Congressmen Complicity Indicated by Retaliation Taken After Informing Members of Congress of Criminal Activities**

It was *after* Taus reported the criminal activities to members of Congress that actions were taken to silence him, misusing the awesome raw power of the U.S. Department of Justice and the control DOJ officials had over local law enforcement personnel. No one except them knew that Taus was trying to report the criminal activities involving CIA and White House personnel.

The members of Congress who were notified by Taus, and who continued the cover-ups—which were felonies—then watched as government power was misused to destroy the federal agent. Among the members of Congress to whom Taus first made the reports, and who knew the retaliation inflicted upon him for his patriotic efforts.

In response to another letter that Taus wrote to Senator Bob Graham, Graham's off-the-shelf letter (October 3, 2001) stated in part the same format that I usually received when I tried to provide evidence of criminal and subversive activities that were continuing to inflict great harm upon the United States. First, the reply thanks the sender for the original letter:

Thank you for contacting my office regarding intelligence issues. I remain concerned that we have allowed our intelligence capabilities to downgrade to a dangerous level. Intelligence is our first line of defense. As Chairman, I will work to see that our intelligence efforts are both fully funded and effectively organized.

Then, in closing, the letter has the same general response that could be used to reply to a constituent complaining about excessive watering of the White House lawn:

Please be assured I will have your thoughts in mind as both the Committee and the Senate considers this highly sensitive issue.

Taus' letter to the U.S. Office of Special Counsel ran into a roadblock, just as I had done. His letters to the Department of Justice resulted in the following April 10, 2002, cover-up reply:

The purpose of this letter is to advise you that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)\_Office of Professional Responsibility reviewed your allegations and found no evidence of serious misconduct by any FBI employee. Therefore, no action is deemed necessary by this office.

Taus had not provided any evidence; he offered it, but it was never requested. His allegations were serious and showed the culture of the FBI and DOJ personnel that contributed to such disasters as 9/11.

After 9/11, Taus again attempted to inform members of Congress, with the same indifference. In a September 2, 2004, letter to Senator Charles Grassley, Taus stated in part:

The FBI retaliated against me for my attempts to expose corruption within the Bureau and the CIA. Investigations into the Iran-Contra Arms Initiative Affair, and a host of other FBI cases, including the "genesis" of terrorism. All these cases were stymied or halted by corrupt or complacent Bureau officials.

I will be happy to provide you with much more detailed information. I have tried to vindicate myself for these many years, but more importantly, to inform the American public about corruption in our government and by our leaders in business, politics and organized crime.

In addition to my FBI record, I was a Lieutenant Colonel in the US Army Reserves, serving two combat tours of duty in Vietnam. For my fallen comrades-in-arms and for our Armed Forces currently overseas in the War on Terrorism, I feel a solemn duty to tell the truth and expose the perpetrators of these sinister cover-ups and scandals.

I pray that you will take an interest and write me for further information. I am asking for your assistance to help expose and overcome the tragedy facing all Americans due to this deception by powerful government officials.

There was no response to that letter.

The same members of Congress who chastised the CIA and FBI for not being more vigilant, so as to have prevent 9/11, were doing far worse, and committing crimes of cover-up in the process. I encountered the same and much worse during the 30 and more years I sought to report criminal and subversive activities to members of Congress. My first experience in encountering this standard obstruction of justice was while I sought to report the deep-seated criminal misconduct resulting in a series of airline disasters that I discovered as part of my official duties. By covering up, and becoming complicit with the perpetrators, members of Congress enabled to occur many otherwise preventable airline disasters. By reading my books, *Unfriendly Skies: 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries*, and *blowback, 9/11, and Cover-Ups*, this same congressional cover-up can be seen to have played a major role in the continuing culture that created the conditions enabling terrorists to hijack four airliners on 9/11.

### **Victims Other Than Taus: The American People**

The criminal misuse of powerful government offices to destroy Richard Taus continues to have other victims: people throughout the United States. For some, the consequences are real. For others, the consequences are more

difficult to understand. There are ripple effects throughout government and throughout society. The system will not correct itself; it is up to the people. And here the record is pathetically dismal.



In Happier Times

Yolanda Taus

Yolanda and Richard Taus

## FBI's Murderous Conduct in New York Offices

For several years people on both sides of the law, including other FBI agents, were reporting that FBI Supervisory Agent Lindley DeVecchio in the FBI's New York offices was working with the Colombo mafia family, providing them information on wiretaps and surveillance, and involvement in numerous murders.

In the same way that FBI officials in Washington kept the lid on the Boston FBI agents who for decades were working secretly with organized crime figures and involved in multiple murders, the same was occurring in the New York offices with the same high-level cover-ups. The many years of cover-ups indicate that the misconduct was tolerated and approved—or even directed, by FBI and DOJ officials in Washington.

Members of Congress, who knew of the many charges of grave misconduct, covered up for the criminal activities. I personally encountered this congressional cover-up for years, as did many other government agents.

### **Media Articles Exposing FBI Corruption Ignored (i.e. Covered-Up) By FBI-DOJ Officials and Members of Congress**

Over the years there were media articles concerning the serious FBI problems in both the FBI's Boston and New York offices, and ignored by FBI-DOJ officials and members of Congress. One of many *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* articles (December 1, 1998) by investigative reporter Bill Moushey wrote:

It was May 22, 1992. FBI agent Christopher Favo was briefing his boss, R. Lindley DeVecchio, who headed the task force trying to end Brooklyn's Colombo crime family war. Two men loyal to the Colombo faction led by Victor J. Orena had been gunned down on a Brooklyn street the night before, Favo announced. DeVecchio's reaction was not what Favo expected. The man charged with stopping the violence cheered for the shootings.

"He slapped his hand on the desk and he said, 'We're going to win this thing,'" Favo would recall two years later." And he seemed excited about it."

"He seemed like he didn't know we were the FBI. It was like a line had been blurred ... over who we were and what this was. He was compromised. He had lost track of who he was."

For three decades, Scarpa had been an informant for the FBI. His relationship with DeVecchio, which lasted at least a decade, went beyond any accept FBI practice, fellow agents have testified. DeVecchio not only ignored Scarpa's day-to-day criminal activities, he was accused of assisting in the Mafia killer's success. Accusations against DeVecchio, made in sworn statements by other FBI agents, cooperating FBI witnesses, government documents and court testimony include:

- Giving Scarpa the names of other FBI informants, so Scarpa could put them in harm's way while shielding his own illegal operations.
- Telling Scarpa where the FBI was placing wiretaps so he could avoid them.
- Informing Scarpa of pending indictments against his associates—in one instance, allowing Scarpa to help his son disappear before the younger Scarpa could be arrested.
- Handing over the addresses of Scarpa's enemies in the Colombo crime family war so that he could track them down and kill them.
- Fabricating evidence against Orena and other Scarpa adversaries so they would be sent to prison.

#### **Federal Prosecutor Reported the FBO Crimes— Followed By FBI-DOJ and Congressional Cover-Ups**

In 1988, the increasing reports by FBI agents, Mafia people, and a few concerned citizens caused a few media people in the New York area to bring attention to what FBI officials knew for years; that FBI Supervisory Agent Lindley DeVecchio was criminally involved with Colombo Mafia capo Gregory Scarpa and that high FBI officials were protecting Gregory Scarpa Sr. It wasn't until 1994 that the publicity forced the FBI to react. The FBI's Office of Professional Responsibility—the cover-up arm of the FBI—conducted an “investigation.” During the subsequent hearings, DeVecchio refused to take a lie detector test. True to form, the FBI office of Professional Responsibility cleared DeVecchio of any wrongdoing, despite the evidence that far exceeded evidence that put many ordinary citizens in prison for life.

#### **Diverting Attention by Retiring Corrupt FBI Supervisory Agent**

To bring a halt to the mounting publicity, the FBI had DeVecchio retire—with pay—and then quietly hired him as a consultant. That removed some of the attention about the FBI corruption relating to DeVecchio. DeVecchio then retired to Florida.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Persistence of Concerned Private Parties Circumvented the Cover-Ups at the Federal Level**

The persistence of two people, Angela Clemente and Dr. Stephen Dresch, started a process that circumvented the cover-ups by DOJ and FBI officials and members of Congress. After conducting hundreds of interviews

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<sup>4</sup> DeVecchio had a home at 8328 Canary Palm Court, Sarasota, Florida 34238 and owned other property. He was also involved in various corporations, including R.L. DeVecchio, LLC, with the principal address listed with the Florida Department of State as 8328 Canary Palm Ct., Sarasota, FL 34238; Savannah At Turtle Rock Association, Inc. and Avatar Property Management Group, Inc., both of which showed their principal address as 8500 Turtle Rock Blvd., Sarasota, FL. 34238.



with people on both sides of the law and gathering a great amount of information, Dresch and Clemente presented their information to a member of the House Judiciary Commission, Congressman William Delahunt from Massachusetts—whose constituency had been victims of the FBI's misconduct in the Boston office. Delahunt in turn provided the information to Brooklyn District Attorney Charles Hynes, who had been prosecuting corruption in other government offices.

### **State District Attorney Circumvents Cover-Up at Federal Level**

After investigating the information provided to him, which he then provided to a Brooklyn grand jury (not federal), the grand jury returned an indictment against retired FBI agent DeVecchio in March 2006. The indictment charged him with various crimes committed during the 1980s and 1990s, including murders.

The murdered victims, in which FBI agent DeVecchio was charged, included the murders of Mary Bari in 1984 by Colombo capo Gregory Scarpa, Sr.; Joseph" Joe Brewster" DeDomenico in 1987, and Larry Lampesi in 1992. Mary Bari was an attractive brunette who dated various mob figures, including DeDomenico, Lampesi, and under-boss Alphonse" Allie Boy" Persico. Her relationship with prominent mobsters caused her to be wined and dined, given diamonds and furs, and trips to Las Vegas.

The murder of Mary Bari followed information given to Scarpa by FBI Supervisory Agent DeVecchio, who informed Scarpa that she was an FBI informant and instructed Scarpa to murder her.

Mary Bari was lured to a job interview wearing high heels and a halter top, and when she arrived at the local Wimpy Boy Social Club, she was held down on the floor by Gregory Scarpa, Jr., and shot several times in the head by Scarpa Sr. Her body was then dumped, like garbage, on a nearby street.

One of her ears that had been blown off by the bullets fired into her head was later found by a cleaning lady.

DeVecchio was charged with instructing Scarpa to murder a Colombo soldier, Joseph DeDomenico, who was considered unreliable because he was using drugs and committing criminal acts without approval of Scarpa, and also embracing religion. This conduct threatened to bring out DeVecchio's role with the Colombo mafia family.

The charges again DeVecchio were based upon several dozen witnesses on both sides of the law, including several FBI agents; Mafia members; witnesses; Linda Schiro, Scarpa's female companion for many years who had information about the relationship between Scarpa and DeVecchio, and others.

The trial would be not only against DeVecchio, but the unindicted co-conspirators among FBI and DOJ personnel who knew about the crimes, who approved them, or even directed the criminal relationship.

Despite the gravity of the charges, the judge allowed DeVecchio to be freed on a low bail of \$100,000, much less than many people charged with relatively minor offenses.

An *ABC News* Internet site article (March 30, 2006), referring to DeVecchio, titled" Former FBI Stool Pigeon Indicted," stated:

A former FBI agent whose reputation was considered unimpeachable by colleagues was indicted Thursday on four murder charges for allegedly providing inside information to a mob figure, who then ordered the killings.

Lindley DeVecchio had a "corrupt" relationship with Colombo crime family boss Gregory Scarpa Sr. that led him to provide specific, detailed information that led to the murders, according to the indictment unsealed today by New York City's Brooklyn prosecutor, Charles "Joe" Hynes.

DeVecchio at least once suggested Scarpa commit a murder, Hynes said. "Over the last four months, a special rackets grand jury has heard from over 30 witnesses. As a result, the grand jury has voted an indictment," he said. Those witnesses included agents from the FBI and the Drug Enforcement Administration. Hynes said the investigation into DeVecchio began as Rep. William Delahunt, R-Mass., was preparing for hearings into allegations against FBI agents involved in organized crime investigations.

"After each of the murders, DeVecchio met with Scarpa," Hynes said. Hynes said DeVecchio took weekly payments from Scarpa from 1980 to 1982. He said DeVecchio met with Scarpa to discuss information and receive money. Hynes said that the FBI approved a DeVecchio request for payments to Scarpa. But more than \$66,000 earmarked for Scarpa never arrived in Scarpa's hands.

For 30 years, DeVecchio was one of the FBI's most important mob busters. DeVecchio was Scarpa's handler, and Scarpa was more than an ordinary stool pigeon; he had also allegedly served as muscle for the FBI when the bureau needed some extra legal assistance in making difficult cases. As a result, he was allegedly accorded special, sometimes questionable, favors, including tips on coming indictments that allowed Scarpa's associates to skip town in advance.

But, in aiding his informant to commit murder, prosecutors now allege that DeVecchio went too far in protecting his valuable mob asset. Law enforcement sources say DeVecchio may have also enriched himself in the process.

DeVecchio voluntarily surrendered to authorities yesterday on four counts of second-degree murder contained in the still-sealed indictment that was handed down last week by a Brooklyn grand jury, law enforcement sources and DeVecchio's attorney confirm.

"We've been advised that there is an indictment filed. We have been asked to surrender today," said DeVecchio's attorney, Douglas Grover, a former senior special attorney for the Justice Department's Brooklyn-based Organized Crime Strike Force.

DeVecchio's indictment is the latest chapter in a long, controversial relationship between the FBI and Scarpa that law enforcement sources say dates back to the 1960s and includes the FBI's use of Scarpa to punch, kidnap and pistol-whip suspects. In this relationship, law enforcement sources say, Scarpa served as a well-placed mob stool pigeon who, for decades, provided the FBI with information against his underworld rivals. In turn, the FBI provided Scarpa with information that allowed his mob associates to skip town before they were indicted, according to law enforcement sources and multiple published reports.

Prosecutors say a cozy and questionable relationship appeared to have ended in the early 1970s when Scarpa's handler at the FBI retired and Scarpa himself was placed on a list of inactive informants. DeVecchio however, reviewed that list, prosecutors say.

By the early 1990s, the relationship between the agent and the informant had spawned a series of allegations, including one that DeVecchio had aided

Scarpa in mob murders, but an FBI Office of Professional Responsibility investigation determined the allegations were unfounded. Supporters of DeVecchio cite that determination as one reason why they believe the current charges will be found baseless.

ABC News has learned that Hynes has developed new witnesses whose testimony the prosecutors believe will be relatively credible. That testimony is expected to also help demonstrate that DeVecchio may have used both Scarpa and the FBI—skimming money from each—to enrich himself, law enforcement sources said.

Whether information from those witnesses can be substantiated by documents is something that prosecutors admit they will have to prove at trial, and that would require records from the FBI.

“We think the people that are testifying to the DA today have their own baggage,” said DeVecchio's attorney. He said that he expects to be able to show that any testimony could be contradicted by previous statements made by those same witnesses, as well as by other federally protected witnesses.

Although the FBI has never confirmed the allegations that it used Scarpa as an “op” in jobs too seedy for a badge-carrying federal lawman, the Brooklyn prosecutor's office hinted that it has developed information about the ways Scarpa was used that is independent of the previously published accounts, and which may expand on them. Those detailed, published accounts were first reported in 1994 in the *New York Daily News* by Tom Robbins, now of the *Village Voice*, and Jerry Capeci, the mob chronicler whose Web site, GANGLAND, is widely read by mob buffs and law enforcement officials. Robbins and Capeci first disclosed the relationship between Scarpa and the FBI on the 30th anniversary of the civil rights murder. Selwyn Raab, a retired reporter for *The New York Times*, separately corroborated it in his mob history, “Five Families.”

### **[Widespread FBI Support Showed Approved Culture In FBI]**

An all-star cast of former top FBI agents is in DeVecchio's corner, including one of the most highly regarded infiltrators of the mafia in FBI history, special agent Joseph Pistone, more familiar to moviegoers as Donnie Brasco. These men say DeVecchio's indictment is the result of mob lawyers pressuring prosecutors to examine the allegations against DeVecchio, his conviction could potentially lead to verdicts against their clients getting tossed out. They say that the federal courts have already rejected the suggestion that DeVecchio could have been working not against but for the mob.

While the former federal agents who stand firmly with their colleague have protested his innocence, the Brooklyn prosecutor would not bring charges lightly. Hynes has a long record of success in controversial cases, including his role as a special prosecutor in a racially charged murder that threatened New York with riots in 1986, and which was the subject of the book “Incident at Howard Beach,” and his role as the special prosecutor who exposed corruption in the state's nursing home system. He has recently convicted the former head of the Brooklyn Democratic Party in a political corruption scandal.

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A *New York Post* article (April 2, 2006), addressing the indictment of DeVecchio, stated:

Brooklyn prosecutor Michael Vecchione credited Angela Clemente for sparking Brooklyn District Attorney Charles Hynes' probe. “She's the Pandora's box,” Vecchione said, pointing to the unlikely gumshoe who opened a treasure trove of dirty secrets about DeVecchio and Scarpa.

### **Biggest Federal Corruption Scandals in U.S. History**

Clemente, a reformer and lobbyist who writes reports about government misconduct for Congress, is now at the center of one of the biggest federal corruption scandals in U.S. history.

“I think it’s good that this is being investigated thoroughly,” she told *The Post* in an exclusive interview.” But DeVecchio is not the lone soldier here, and I’m adamant about that. There must be a congressional hearing and I’m going to pursue that like you have no idea.”

At the minimum, she says, and Hynes agrees, FBI suits should have known something was wrong after he got the bureau to fork over large cash payments for Scarpa without proper authorization—money DeVecchio then allegedly kept himself.

“It’s much more extensive and higher up, she said.” He had approval from people much higher and we should get to the bottom of this.”

Clemente, who calls herself a “forensic intelligence analyst” and whose research on rape cases, terrorism and other issues is used by lawmakers and officials, first took an interest in DeVecchio in 2000, long after the FBI cleared him of wrongdoing.

She’d heard stories about him allegedly working for Scarpa, and how DeVecchio—and perhaps higher-ups—was said to have allowed the ruthless Colombo family capo to commit murders and even helped him set up hits. [Murders!]

Clemente interviewed several of the key players in the case, including Scarpa’s son, Gregory Jr., informants and former federal agents.” When we opened one avenue, it branched out into 50 others,” she said.” The big issue was why the government allowed Scarpa to commit crimes, including murder, just to preserve their relationship with him.”

With the work piling up, she joined forces with a friend and colleague, Dr. Stephen Dresch, a Yale-educated economist and former Michigan state legislator who also does intelligence analysis and consulting work. Together, the two of them began to assemble new clues.

Clemente and Dresch explained that the break came when they investigated the murder of Colombo capo” Nicky Black” Grancio. He was a rival to Scarpa to become boss of the Colombo mafia family. Scarpa murdered Grancio to eliminate the rival for leadership.

### **FBI Showing Support for FBI Agent Involved in Multiple Murders**

During the first hearing on DeVecchio’s arraignment, numerous FBI agents were present to provide support for him. They included James Kossler, a former supervisor in the FBI’s New York offices; James Kallstrom, a former FBI assistant director; Joseph Pistone, the FBI agent who infiltrated the Mafia posing as Donnie Brasco; and others. Money for DeVecchio’s legal defenses came from present and former FBI agents. These supporting actions implied approval of DeVecchio’s murderous criminal conduct.

### **Subverting U.S. Interests Were Profitable for FBI Agent DeVecchio**

It was profitable for DeVecchio to become a literal co-partner with one of the most brutal crime families in New York. He received money from the Colombo mafia capo, he kept the money that the FBI intended to pay Scarpa for being an informant; and he thought his relationship with Scarpa would

propel him into a higher position within the FBI. It had been reported that DeVecchio kept over \$66,000 that the FBI intended to be given to Scarpa, which were the weekly stipends the FBI provided through DeVecchio. DeVecchio expected that Scarpa would be promoted from Capo to the next higher position as the Colombo's boss.<sup>5</sup>

DeVecchio allegedly became jubilant when informed in May 1992 that a bus company executive, Lorenzo Lampasi, with the Vic Orena faction was murdered. Scarpa had sought to eliminate Orena in favor of the Persicos. Previously, DeVecchio had FBI agents conducting surveillance of Lampasi and then providing his schedule to Scarpa so as to murder Lampasi.

DeVecchio took over the FBI responsibility for the Colombo Mafia group in 1980 and reactivated Scarpa who had previously been an informant handled by FBI Special Agent Anthony Villano.

DeVecchio acted also to discredit police department investigators who were getting too much information on Scarpa. DeVecchio accused New York Police Department detective Joseph Simone of providing information to the Mafia during the Colombo wars of 1992. That charge caused Simone to lose his job after being on the police force for 20 years.

#### **Additional Comments on Gregory Scarpa Sr.**

Scarpa learned that Patrick Porco was cooperating with the police on the murder of Dominick Masseria. Porco was one of four people in the vehicle that murdered Masseria. The driver was Reyes Aviles who allegedly fired the shot that killed Masseria, along with Gregory Scarpa's son, Joey Scarpa. (Joey Scarpa was murdered in 1995 during a dispute with drug dealers.)

#### **Scarpa referred to DeVecchio as his "girlfriend."**

Scarpa's wife was Connie, but he had a dual relationship with Linda Schiro. While dying in prison of AIDS he wrote a poem to Linda Schiro titled, Love Everlasting, and signed it, "K.M.," the abbreviation for a nickname he had acquired: "The Killing Machine." Scarpa Sr. died from AIDS that he had contracted from a blood transfusion during surgery. He had refused to accept screened blood transfusions and instead opted for a transfusion from an Associate in the Colombia Mafia family, Paul Mele.

Schiro had two children with Scarpa, one being Joey Scarpa, who was murdered in 1995. Gregory Scarpa, Jr. was the son from Connie, Scarpa's wife. Gregory Scarpa, Jr. is in federal prison at Florence, Colorado, serving a 30 year-to-life-sentence.

#### **The Colombo Mafia War**

Mob Boss Carmine Persico sought to circumvent the normal sequence for accession to boss. He wanted his son, "Allie Boy," to become boss. This violated the normal practice of succession where the underboss, Vic Orena, would become boss when the Carmine Persico stepped down. Scarpa, a Capo, aligned himself with Carmine Persico

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<sup>5</sup> The pecking order in the Mafia was Boss, Underboss, and then various Capos, depending upon the size of the crime group, and then below Capo were the Soldiers and then the Associates. Scarpa, Sr. was one of the Capos in the Colombo Mafia family in New York.

DeVecchio assisted Scarpa by providing false testimony against Orena in 1992, causing Orena to be sentenced to life in prison for crimes that he committed.

In the 1970s Scarpa, operating in the Bensonhurst section of Long Island, became a top capo in the Colombo Mafia family. In 1980, DeVecchio was assigned the Colombo FBI group and reactivated Scarpa Sr. as a paid informant to the FBI. Scarpa had been a paid informer from 1962 to 1975.

DeVecchio cooperated with Scarpa from 1980 to 1992.

Like Connelly in Boston, DeVecchio alerted Scarpa to pending indictments, including that of Gregory Scarpa, Jr. in 1987. Scarpa then fled, escaping capture, partly due to information provided by DeVecchio. He was finally captured in a New Jersey motel, captured not by FBI agents who were protecting him, but by DEA agents.

### **FBI Supervisory Agent DeVecchio's Help in Murdering Grancio**

Scarpa had followed Grancio to a Brooklyn social club where he planned to murder Nicholas Grancio, but found FBI agents doing surveillance on the mobster. Scarpa then called DeVecchio, who notified the surveillance team by radio to immediately come back to the office. The FBI agents thought this order very unusual and improper. Shortly after the FBI agents left, Scarpa murdered Grancio.

Mafia member Larry Mazza, who later became an informant for the FBI, reported that Scarpa called DeVecchio to remove surveillances on Grancio so that Scarpa's people could murder him. After DeVecchio pulled the FBI surveillance team from Grancio, Scarpa, who had been given the secret FBI radio frequency, heard the FBI team being called back to the office. Scarpa then moved in and assassinated Grancio. Grancio's family filed a lawsuit in 2005 against DeVecchio and his partner, Christopher Favio. Favio was an FBI agent who worked closely with Supervisory Agent DeVecchio.

To shift the blame from himself, DeVecchio accused a New York Police Department officer, Joe Simone, of being a mole divulging insider information to Scarpa. As a result, Simone was charged with a crime, but a jury acquitted him. Later, Simone was discharged, losing his pension after many years of service.

### **DeVecchio's Earlier Masquerade As Mafia Hit Man**

A *New York Post* article (April 6, 2006) described how DeVecchio, in his younger days as an FBI agent, masqueraded as a hit man using the alias of Tony DeAngelo, went undercover in 1983 inside the Metropolitan Correction Center in New York:

Decades before rogue FBI agent Lindley DeVecchio allegedly funneled classified information to a murderous mob boss, he acted the part of Mafia hit man to foil a death plot against two federal prosecutors, sources said. Masquerading as a hired gun named Tony DeAngelo, the now-embattled special agent went undercover in early 1983 inside the federal Metropolitan Correctional Center, where a rogue ex-CIA agent accused of selling weapons illegally was putting out the word he wanted to whack the prosecutors on his case.

"It was all on tape," recalled Lawrence Barcella,<sup>6</sup> one of the prosecutors targeted. "DeVecchio was a young FBI agent at the time, who went undercover as a mob hit man; it's somewhat ironic." The bizarre incident centered around Edwin Wilson, a former CIA agent caught selling weapons to Libya.

While awaiting trial, Wilson told his cellmate that he wanted to hire someone to rub out four witnesses in the case; two prosecutors and his ex-wife. The cellmate, Wayne Trimmer, alerted authorities, who set up a sting with DeVecchio posing as a jail-hardened murderer whom Trimmer ostensibly knew from the state prison in upstate Attica.

DeVecchio arranged a visit with Trimmer at the jail while Wilson and his own son met in the same room. That way, Wilson could check out the man he was about to hire.

"He fit the part," said Eugene Kaplan, the federal prosecutor who handled Wilson's murder-conspiracy case. "He knew how to do it."

In one final ironic twist, Wilson was released in September 2004 after serving more than 20 years in prison—less than half a year before Brooklyn DA Charles Hynes would open his investigation into DeVecchio's alleged mob ties.

### **My Prior Attempts to Report Criminal Activities**

I had reported DeVecchio's criminal misconduct in the first edition of *Defrauding America* that came out in 1994 and even reported to members of Congress, including the Judiciary Committee members, and also made reference to the FBI corruption in federal court filings. But my many attempts to have people in government (or the media) receive my evidence failed. Possibly too many major criminal activities were involved, including too many people in different areas of government; no one would receive my evidence, or even reply to my letters.

### **Starting a Book Project with Gregory Scarpa Jr.**

In May 2002, Gregory Scarpa, Jr. in federal prison at Florence, Colorado, contacted me with a request that I write a book on his story. His August 27, 2002, letter stated:

A friend of mine [Gerald Van Hoorelbeke] here at the U.S.P. Max informed me that you wrote him saying you would consider writing a book for me if I could provide you with a general outline of information that I possess.

My information will consist on how and when the FBI and high-ranking members of the Colombo Crime Family in New York worked together and eventually caused an internal war in the crime family. The member was my father Gregory Scarpa, Sr. and also myself, Gregory Scarpa, Jr. Because of numerous murders and then numerous indictments a big cover-up ensued.

This relationship headed by Supervisory Agent R. Lindley DeVecchio, Greg Sr. and Grey Jr. began approximately 1979. But Greg Sr. was on both sides (FBI & Mobster) for three decades going back to 1963—before DeVecchio. The other head agent was Mr. Vallone.

My information consists of not only ignored Scarpa's day-to-day criminal activities, the FBI agents assisted in the Mafia killers' success. Much of this I have documentation which also includes giving Scarpa the names of other FBI snitches, so Scarpa could put them in harms way while shielding his own illegal

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<sup>6</sup> As I described in *Defrauding America*, Barcella helped cover up for October Surprise.

operations, telling us where the FBI was placing wire taps so we can avoid them, handing over the address of Scarpa's enemies in the Colombo Crime Family War so that Sr. could track them down and kill them. Fabricating evidence against Vic Orena and other Scarpa adversaries so they would be sent to prison.

Also involvement with being a lookout while me, my father and others would burglarize banks while they were closed for the weekends. I have much more info that goes way back to the 60s.

Most Mafia books seem to have went well. I can't see a book with the Mafia and FBI as partners until the cover-up ensued go wrong. But with your expertise you know better than I. I am also not sure if we can use their real names.

Being that I'm in prison and if you are interested, all the legal issues of writing a book, deal for a movie or TV, I would go with my daughter as for signing contracts or whatever,

Sincerely,  
Gregory Scarpa, Jr.

I accepted, and we signed a contract (October 15, 2002) whereby I would write a book on his life with the Colombo mafia family and its relationship with FBI Supervisory Agent Lindley DeVecchio.

Among the many things he told me was how he kept the books for the Colombo family, how he had the task of putting money aside every week to pay DeVecchio, and to provide for the FBI agent periodic hotel rooms, champagne, and call girls. He provided me with considerable documentation to support his statements.

In a February 19, 2003, letter, Scarpa wrote:

I'm enclosing what I have of FBI DeVecchio's limited testimony at my trial, also Scarpa issue motions from attorney James Froccaro who represented at the time a co-defendant of mine and the other motion from my court-appointed attorney, which at the beginning was very good until the government got to him. I'm also sending you an affirmation prepared by attorney Flora Edwards for the Committee on Government Reform. These documents will have information for you to log as well as some answers to a few of your questions of Set One—areas to consider.

At the moment I am working on the questions Set One, as I complete some answers I'll send it to you.

Sincerely,

Greg

### **DOJ Prison Officials Blocked Scarpa From Revealing Further FBI Involvement**

After I received certain information from Scarpa Jr., prison officials confiscated his mail to me. In a June 22, 2003, letter, Scarpa wrote:

Rodney, numerous letters and informative documents that I sent you, for one reason or another, are returned to me, either "I'm not allowed to say this," or "Not allowed to say that."



**Reason Why DOJ Prison Officials Blocked Scarpa's Letters**

The most probable reason that DOJ prison officials blocked Scarpa from revealing his knowledge of prior Mafia activities to me was that FBI agents were involved in criminal activities with the Mafia, and particularly Gregory Scarpa Sr. and Jr.

Besides the information that I received from Scarpa, a fellow inmate with Scarpa, Jerry Van Hoorelbeke, provided me with information that he had obtained from Scarpa. Hoorelbeke was a former mobster who was a confidant to Jimmy Hoffa and socialized with various Las Vegas and Los Angeles mobsters. These included Tony Spilotro, the mobster depicted in *Casino*, and Eddie Nash, the mobster charged with ordering the Hollywood "four-on-the-floor" murders. He wrote a book titled, *Underworld Secrets: Hoffa to Las Vegas*, which I helped him to get published.

**Attempting to Report FBI Criminal Activities to Congress**

After Scarpa Jr. provided me with information about the role played by FBI agents in the murder of government informants, and after this pattern was exposed in the Boston FBI offices in the late 1990s, I sought to report the cumulative information I had acquired about FBI corruption in the New York offices to members of Congress, including the office of government reform.

This information showed that the criminal activities of FBI agents in the Boston office were not limited solely to that office, but also in the far larger FBI offices in New York.

The cumulative information included what Scarpa conveyed to me; what Hoorelbeke stated, and what former FBI Special Agent Richard Taus had conveyed to me. In addition, I had years of experience with FBI cover-ups, starting while I was a federal agent in the Federal Aviation Administration.

I obviously couldn't report the criminal activities to the corrupted FBI or any other division of the Department of Justice. I sent letters to Congressman Tom Davis, chairman of the Committee On Government Reform. Those letters were especially timely. The committee was conducting hearings on the FBI's criminal involvement with organized crime in the Boston area, the necessity of which was brought about by heavy media reporting in the Boston-area newspapers.

**Standard Tactic of Damage Control**

Rather than focus its attention on the criminal aspects of the FBI misconduct, which included the complicity of former FBI director J. Edgar Hoover and other Washington officials in the Department of Justice, members of the congressional committee on government reform focused on the FBI's use of informants. That wasn't the problem; the problem was the criminal involvement of FBI personnel.

A copy of the first letter to Congressman Tom Davis (July 4, 2003) is shown here:

**From the desk of Rodney Stich**

P.O. Box 5, Alamo, CA 94507; phone: 925-944-1930; FAX 925-295-1203

**Author of *Defrauding America, Drugging America, Unfriendly Skies, Terrorism Against America***

Lawyers and Judges—American Trojan Horses

Association Former Intelligence Officers (AFIO) Association of National Security Alumni

International Society of Air Safety Investigators Lawyers Pilots Bar Association (LPBA)

Websites: [www.defraudingamerica.com](http://www.defraudingamerica.com) [www.unfriendlyskies.com](http://www.unfriendlyskies.com) [www.druggingamerica.com](http://www.druggingamerica.com)

July 4, 2003

Representative Tom Davis, Chairman

Committee on Government Reform

2157 Rayburn House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515 Certified: 7002 0860 0003 9592 6405

Ref: Former government agent with information on FBI misconduct in New York City offices similar to that in Boston office in the Bulger matter.

To Representative Davis and the committee on government reform:

For the record, I am making the following statements that raise responsibilities under federal law, including the federal crime reporting statute (18 U.S.C. § 4):

- I am a former federal agent;<sup>1</sup> a veteran in the aviation field;<sup>2</sup> an investigator for many years; a confidant to many other government agents, and activist against corruption in government. I have acquired a great amount of information on criminal activities implicating certain government personnel that enabled the infliction of great and irreparable harm upon national interests and the lives of many people. This pattern will continue until certain people—such as you and members of your commission—meet their legal responsibilities, including those under federal criminal statutes.

**As it relates to Deep-Seated FBI Culture of Corruption:**

- As it relates to FBI misconduct, which is the area of your present limited investigation into FBI misconduct in Boston with the Bulger crime group, I have acquired information<sup>3</sup> showing that the subject of your Boston hearings is not limited to the Boston area. For instance:
  - o FBI agents in the New York City area were providing confidential information on government informants to certain members of the New York crime families, and the government informants were subsequently murdered. This information was given to me in writing by a former member of one of those crime groups. The Justice Department's Bureau of Prisons has recently blocked that insider from providing me, an investigator and author, with additional information that would have been used to promote national interests.
  - o Cover-up by various divisions of the U.S. Department of Justice when I, as a federal air safety agent, attempted to report criminal activities that I discovered in my official duties that played, and continues to play, a major role in a series of fatal airline crashes. This is the same type of misconduct, and cover-up, that caused the conditions to exist that enabled 19 hijackers to seize four airliners, when the preventative measures were known, were authorized to be taken, were required to be taken, and were not taken. The key issue here is the deep-seated pattern of corruption implicating key people in the government's aviation safety offices, a problem that will continue until exposed and meaningful corrective actions taken. The present

tactic to keep this matter from the public is to place the blame for 9-11 on the more innocent" intelligence failures."

- o FBI retaliation against a veteran FBI agent (and holder of several medals for bravery in Vietnam) when he continued to report drug-related and other criminal activities of CIA and other government personnel in the New York City area.
- o Repeated charges of criminal contempt of court against me, by Justice Department prosecutors, when I filed federal actions under the federal crime reporting statute (18 U.S.C. § 4)<sup>4</sup> and 28 U.S.C. § 1361, seeking to report the corruption in the government aviation safety offices (and in other offices that I and a group of other former and present government agents had discovered).

**As it relates to decades of aviation disasters—including 9/11:**

- As a federal aviation safety agent I discovered, documented, and attempted to report deadly misconduct in key government aviation safety offices that caused or enabled numerous major aviation disasters to occur.<sup>5</sup>
- Among the most recent aviation disasters made possible by this documented misconduct were the hijackings of four airliners by 19 hijackers on September 11, 2001. I and other federal aviation safety agents had reported, years earlier, the need for FAA management to order the simple and inexpensive preventative measures that would halt the decades of fatal hijackings.
- Why, and how, the authority and responsibility to act on these (and many other crash-related) aviation tragedies occurred opens the window on understanding, and taking corrective actions, on the corruption in government that continues to spread like a cancer.
- The complicity by those who knew of these crimes, and either did nothing or who actively covered up, would be another aspect of the 9-11 tragedies.

**Documented complicity of federal judges:**

- Felony cover-ups and obstruction of justice by large numbers of federal judges to block the reporting of these criminal and subversive activities. This documented misconduct includes, for instance:
  - o Repeated refusal by federal judges to receive evidence of criminal and subversive activities from present and former government agents, under the federal crime reporting statute (18 U.S.C. § 4). The federal crimes, which we initially sought to expose, related to aviation disasters, and eventually, the misconduct that enabled 19 hijackers to seize four airliners on 9-11.
  - o My attempts to comply with this important crime reporting statute commenced in the late 1970s<sup>6</sup> and continues to the present time.<sup>7</sup> In every instance, federal judges blocked the reports, obstructing justice, making possible the continuation of the conduct resulting in the 3,000 deaths on September 11, 2001.
  - o Repeated refusal to receive evidence of *other* criminal activities implicating people acting in government positions. These include, for instance, drug smuggling into the United States by people acting in government positions and the cover-ups and obstruction of justice by others who knew of these federal crimes. (These other criminal activities are detailed in the books that I have written in collaboration with a group of other former and present government agents).
  - o Seeking to block these reports of criminal and subversive activities, federal judges issued a series of orders permanently barring me access to the federal district and appellate courts. Simultaneously, legal schemes were initiated to corruptly strip me of the \$10 million in real estate assets that funded

my public-spirited exposure activities. These unlawful, unconstitutional, and felonious<sup>8</sup> orders permanently barring me access to federal courts also show the willingness of federal judges to not only obstruct justice but also to subvert the laws and constitution of the United States relating to civil rights.

- o Repeatedly charged me with criminal contempt of court for attempting to report criminal and subversive activities, including those that made the events of 9-11 possible. In addition to the obstruction of justice crimes, this retaliation violated other criminal statutes.<sup>9</sup>

**Most recent judicial obstruction of justice includes:**

- Federal judges refusal to file papers submitted to the U.S. district court, Southern District of New York, which concurrently blocked the reporting by former federal agents of criminal and subversive activities, including those primarily responsible for the conditions that enabled 19 hijackers to seize four airliners and kill 3,000 people. This filing was accompanied with the filing fee and all required documents, and sought to report criminal activities that I and other former government agents had discovered as part of our official duties. By this judicial obstruction of justice, the primary blame for the events of 9-11 are being withheld from the people, the guilty are being protected against prosecution, and the conditions enabling the events of 9-11, and many prior tragedies, remain in place.
- Refusal of judges in the district and appellate courts in Washington, DC to receive information from government insiders of criminal activities that enabled, for instance, the events of 9-11 to occur, and which, as in prior judicial obstruction of justice, enabled the federal crimes to continue that resulted in prior tragedies. This relates to the federal filing seeking to report the criminal and subversive activities, the sua sponte dismissal, and the aiding and abetting by appellate judges in the District of Columbia.
- There is much more information on corruption in government offices that I and my group of other former government and present government agents discovered. The continuation of these criminal activities was made possible by the cover-ups (obstruction of justice) by members of the House and Senate. Their complicity insures continued cover-ups and continued obstruction of justice. With the continued cover-ups by the broadcast and print media that keeps the public uninformed, combined with public indifference and cowardly state of denial, the guilty will remain unpunished and the tragedies made possible by the corruption will continue as before.

Sincerely,

Rodney Stich

Footnotes:

1. As a Federal Aviation Administration air carrier operations inspector I was given the task to correct the conditions causing the worst series of aviation disasters in the nation's history. In this position I acted as an independent prosecutor, conducted a six-month-long hearing, and developed a transcript that further proved my charges of corruption within the FAA that made possible a number of preventable aviation disasters.
2. I joined the U.S. Navy in 1940. I was a multi-engine patrol plane commander (PPC) during World War II. I was captain for several international airlines after World War II. Throughout this period I was a flight instructor. I was an FAA in-

- spector-investigator for a number of years. I wrote numerous books on misconduct that I discovered and have appeared as guest and expert on over 3,000 radio and television shows in the United States, Canada, Mexico and Europe.
3. Information on FBI/Justice Department corruption has been acquired over many years from my personal experiences as a government agent, as an activist, and from my many FBI, CIA and other government sources.
  4. The clear and specific wording of the federal crime reporting statute says: Title 18 U.S.C. § 4. Misprision of felony. Whoever, having knowledge of the actual commission of a felony cognizable by a court of the United States, conceals and does not as soon as possible make known the same to some judge or other person in civil or military authority under the United States, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than three years, or both.
  5. These fraud-related aviation disasters are detailed in my documentary book, *Unfriendly Skies*.
  6. Initial attempts to report criminal activities included the following lawsuits: *Stich v. United States, et al.*, 554 F.2d 1070 (9th Cir.) (table), *cert. denied*, 434 U.S. 920 (1977)(addressed hard-core air safety misconduct, violations of federal air safety laws, threats against government inspectors not to report safety violations and misconduct); *Stich v. National Transportation Safety Board*, 685 F.2d 446 (9th Cir.)(table), *cert. denied*, 459 U.S. 861 (1982))(addressed repeated criminal falsification of official airline accident reports, omitting highly sensitive air safety misconduct, making possible repeated crashes from the same sequestered problems); Amicus curiae brief filed on July 17, 1975, in the Paris DC-10 multi-district litigation, *Flanagan v. McDonnell Douglas Corporation and United States of America*, Civil Action 74-808-PH, MDL 172, Central District California.)(addressing the long standing FAA misconduct, of which the cover-up of the DC-10 cargo door problem was one of repeated instances of tragedy related misconduct); U.S. v. Department of Justice, District of Columbia, Nos. 86-2523, 87-2214, and other actions filed by Stich seeking to expose and correct the powerful and covert air disaster misconduct.
  7. Federal filing in the U.S. district court, Washington, DC (1-02CV01172), which was sua sponte dismissed by judge Henry H. Kennedy immediately after filing on the basis that in 1991 U.S. district judge Stanley Sporkin rendered an unlawful and unconstitutional order permanently barring me access to the federal courts. That action sought to report criminal and subversive activities to a federal court under the federal crime reporting statute (18 U.S.C. § 4). Sporkin blocked my attempt to report these federal crimes. If not blocked, the evidence would have enabled actions to be taken that would have blocked the actions of 19 hijackers on September 11, 2001, and many other offenses against national interests and national security. Following my appeal (02-5240) of that unlawful dismissal, district of Columbia judges (Ginsburg, Edwards, Sentelle, Henderson, Randolph, Rogers, Tatel, and Garland) rendered an order filed March 26, 2003, upholding the district court's blocking of the reports of federal crimes related to 9-11, and the order permanently depriving a former federal agent of his civil and constitutional rights guaranteed by the laws and Constitution of the United States.
    - a. In addition, federal judges blocked a similar filing submitted to the U.S. district court for the Southern District of New York that was submitted on August 8, 2002, along with the filing fees and all required papers. Letters to the court, including chief judge Michael Mukasey, showed the filing was blocked, but not rejected. By these unlawful acts—and many not stated here—these judges are covering up for people involved in criminal and subversive activities, including those that enabled 19 hijackers to seize four airliners on 9-11, Their

obstruction of justice—as in prior judicial obstruction of justice—will enable the continuation of fraud-related tragedies upon the United States and its people.

8. The judicial orders, and judicial and Justice Department retaliation, blocking present and former federal agents from reporting criminal and subversive activities, enabled major criminal activities to go unreported, to continue, and for the resulting harm America and its people to continue. These judicial acts are felonies.
9. Felonies arising from retaliating against a former federal agent and witness for seeking to report criminal and subversive activities are based upon, for instance, Title 18 U.S.C. § 111. Assaulting, resisting, or impeding certain officers or employees. (a) In general.—Whoever— (1) forcibly assaults, resists, opposes, impedes, intimidates, or interferes with any person designated in section 114 of this title [federal agent] while engaged in or on account of the performance of official duties; or (2) forcibly assaults or intimidates any person who formerly served as a person designated in section 1114 on account of the performance of official duties during such person's term of service, shall, where the acts in violation of this section constitute only simply assault, be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than one year, or both, and in all other cases, be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than three years, or both.
  - a. Title 18 U.S.C. § 1512. Tampering with a witness, victim, or an informant—(b) Whoever knowingly uses intimidation or physical force, or threatens another person, or attempts to do so, or engages in misleading conduct toward another person, with intent to — (1) influence, delay or prevent the testimony of any person in an official proceeding: shall be fined... or imprisoned... or both. [1988 amended reading]
  - b. Title 18 U.S.C. § 1513. Retaliating against a witness, victim, or an informant. (a) Whoever knowingly engages in any conduct and thereby causes bodily injury to another person or damages the tangible property of another person, or threatens to do so, with intent to retaliate against any person for—(1) the attendance of a witness or party at an official proceeding, or any testimony given or any record, document, or other object produced by a witness in an official proceeding; or (2) any information relating to the commission or possible commission of a Federal offense...

After receiving a non-responsive letter from Congressman Davis, I sent him a second letter on October 23, 2003:

**From the desk of Rodney Stich**

P.O. Box 5, Alamo, CA 94507; phone: 925-944-1930; FAX 925-295-1203

Author of *Defrauding America*; *Drugging America*; *Unfriendly Skies*; *Blowback, 9-11, Lies, and Cover-Ups*;

*Terrorism Against America*; *Lawyers and Judges—American Trojan Horses*

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[www.blow911.com](http://www.blow911.com) [www.terrorism-against-america.com](http://www.terrorism-against-america.com)

October 23, 2003

Representative Tom Davis, Chairman  
 Committee on Government Reform  
 2157 Rayburn House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515-6143

Ref: Response to your letter relating to my offer to provide information provided relating to murders committed in New York area by organized crime with complicity of FBI agents

To Representative Davis:

Your October 16, 2003, letter stated that the commission investigating FBI misconduct is bringing its investigation into FBI misconduct to a close, and that you would keep my letter on file.

The information that I offered to you was information provided to me by a New York City crime-family insider on the relationship between a key Mafia figure and FBI agents. This information related to how FBI agents provided information on government informants to a member of one of the New York City's crime families the subsequent murders of the informants based upon the FBI insider information.

Your letter stated:

I am in receipt of your materials regarding FBI misconduct in New York City and circumstances surrounding September 11, 2001. The Committee is currently bringing its investigation into the misconduct in the use of FBI informants to a close. However, I will keep your letter on file and contact you should additional information be needed. It is interesting to see that the 40 years of recorded cover-ups by members of Congress hasn't changed one iota. I first started documenting this practice—and the resulting grave consequences—while I was a key federal aviation safety inspector-investigator, which included acting as an independent counsel, linking the relationship of deep-seated misconduct in the government's aviation safety offices with numerous airline disasters.

I also offered to provide you and your committee with information and documentation on corruption that I and other former government agents had discovered that had a far greater role in the successful hijackings of four airliners than the limited issues being addressed. An ordinary person could reach the decision that a former federal agent, who acted as an independent counsel in the FAA, who has over 60 years of unusual aviation background, and who has reams of government documents to support his charges, might receive something more than a brush-off.

You and other members of Congress have legislated draconian prison sentences for people who promptly fail to report a criminal act. Here, government insiders are offering you evidence of murders committed with the help of FBI agents (similar to what happened in Boston with the Winter Hill gang), and evidence of existing conditions that made the events of 9-11 possible—and which continue to exist.

Based upon my official findings as a government agent, and the information provided to me by dozens of other former and present government agents on corruption by people in key government positions, I repeatedly attempted to provide the information and evidence to members of Congress. These efforts were pursuant to the federal crime reporting statute (18 U.S.C. § 4) and the responsibilities of member of Congress to receive such information.

Several admitted the gravity of what I said, but none was responsive to his or her moral and legal responsibilities. The consequences of such cover-ups include the seizure of four airliners on 9-11, but those were only one-day's consequences and in only one area of national security adversely affected.

Several things keep people like you in office and protected against prosecution for misprision of felonies: the cancerous growth of corruption in government offices,

the cover-ups by most of the media, and the pathetic apathy by the American people.

Sincerely,

Rodney Stich

I sent an additional letter to Congressman Davis advising him of the actions by DOJ's prison officials blocking my source, Gregory Scarpa, Jr., from providing me information on the FBI's criminal activities.

**From the desk of Rodney Stich**

P.O. Box 5, Alamo, CA 94507; phone: 925-944-1930; FAX 925-295-1203

Author of Defrauding America; Drugging America; Unfriendly Skies; Blowback, 9-11, Lies, and Cover-Ups; Terrorism Against America; Lawyers and Judges—American Trojan Horses

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October 27, 2003

Representative Tom Davis, Chairman  
Committee on Government Reform  
2157 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515-6143

Ref: Supplement to my October 23, 2003, letter concerning FBI agents acting with Mafia figures in murders, as it relates to Justice Department personnel blocking former organized crime figure from providing information concerning these criminal activities

To Representative Davis,

After I sent to you the last letter dated October 23, 2003, I received in the mail a letter from the warden of the federal prison at Florence, Colorado, revealing his continued intent to block a former crime figure, who is incarcerated at Florence, from providing me details on the links between FBI agents in the New York City area, organized crime, and their role in a series of murders. The murders resulted from FBI agents providing the names of government informants to crime figures. Attached is a copy of Warden Robert Hood's October 20, 2003, letter, showing his continued intent to block communications. Although he cited a shotgun list of reasons, common sense shows intent to block the exposure of criminal activities by Justice Department personnel relating to the crimes by FBI agents working with organized crime figures, relating to the murders of U.S. citizens. The gravity of this information would be to show the culture of corruption within the FBI, the inability to correct this through cover-ups, and the effect of such culture in the FBI and Justice Department on national security.

As I stated in my last letter to you, in response to your letter, your cavalier decision not to pursue this information reflects what I documented for the past 30 years, the absolute 100 percent cover-up (obstruction of justice) that I encountered, starting while I was a federal aviation safety agent uncovering deep-seated corruption by people in the government's aviation safety offices. For 30 years a series of déjà vu



aviation disasters were made possible by the corruption and the cover-ups. The events of 9-11 were only the latest one-day's consequences of this corruption, in only one area of national interests adversely affected by the combination of misconduct.

This is a grave matter with dire consequences for the security of the United States. I am requesting that you intervene with the Justice Department to halt the block to the communications between certain inmates and myself that has been blocking the exposure of these crimes against the United States.

Also, please send me whatever reports your committee has and will release on the hearing into the FBI conduct with organized crime in the Boston area that implicated Washington FBI personnel.

Sincerely,

Rodney Stich

Despite the gravity of the matter, the effect upon national security and other major national issues, Congressman Davis never responded to these last two letters.

I contacted another member of the committee, Congressman Henry Waxman, seeking a copy of a report by the committee and also notifying him that I had a source that could prove that the committee's hearings on the FBI misconduct in Boston also existed in the FBI's New York offices.

**From the desk of Rodney Stich**

**P.O. Box 5, Alamo, CA 94507; phone: 925-944-1930; FAX 925-295-1203**

**Current print and E-books: *Defrauding America; Drugging America, Unfriendly Skies, Terrorism Against America, Lawyers and Judges—American Trojan Horses***

Association Former Intelligence Officers (AFIO) Association of National Security Alumni International Society of Air Safety Investigators (ISASI) Lawyers Pilots Bar Association (LPBA)

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July 1, 2003

Representative Henry Waxman  
House Government Reform Committee  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Ref: Request copy of Congressional hearing transcript on date of testimony of William Bulger, believed to be on or about June 19, 2003.

To Representative Waxman:

This is a request for the transcript of hearings related to the congressional hearings on matters relating to the FBI activities in Boston, and especially the date of the hearing obtaining testimony from William Bulger. I am a former federal agent, an investigator with many contacts among government agents, and an author and investigator relating to misconduct in government offices—including within the various divisions of the U.S. Department of Justice.

For your information, among the many sources that I have acquired over the years since becoming an activist, is a former member of the Colombo Crime Family. He has provided me with information showing similar activities between FBI agents and organized crime in the New York City area, particularly as it relates to FBI agents revealing the identities of government informants to organized crime figures, followed by the murder of these revealed informants.

I include some of this continuing influx of information in my latest book, *Terrorism Against America—from Inside and Outside*.

Sincerely,

Rodney Stich

These letters offered to provide the names of the Mafia figure—Scarpa Jr., who I did not name in the letters, and people close to the figure who would also have information. True to form, not a single recipient responded, allowing the serious charges to go uninvestigated, and assuming the criminal activities still existed, allowing them to continue avoiding justice.

**Information for Murder Indictment Assisted by  
Information Provided by Scarpa Jr. To a Book Author**

A *New York Post* article (April 3, 2006) stated that author Sandra Harmon was writing a book with Gregory Scarpa Jr. and that the information she obtained from Gregory Jr. helped Brooklyn prosecutors obtain the 2006 murder indictment against retired FBI agent DeVecchio. This had some interesting ramifications.

In 2002, four years earlier, I had signed a contract with Gregory Scarpa, Jr. to write a book about him, and started receiving information about former FBI Supervisory Agent DeVecchio. DOJ prison officials blocked Scarpa Jr. from providing me any more information. His daughter, Kori Eagle, then asked me to cancel the book contract as she found another author to write the book. I signed a release.

**Decades of Congressional Cover-ups of Criminal Misconduct**

Starting while I was a key federal aviation safety inspector-investigator seeking to report criminal activities related to a series of airline disasters, every attempt to provide evidence to members of Congress related to matters in their areas of responsibilities encountered cover-ups.

After leaving government, and upon learning of criminal and even subversive activities<sup>7</sup> by people in key government positions and in covert gov-

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<sup>7</sup> Among the criminal activities that I and a group of other former government agents sought to report, which we discovered as part of our professional and official duties, involved corruption in the government's aviation safety offices that enabled a long series of aviation disasters (and which constituted the primary area of blame for the conditions enabling terrorists to hijack four airliners on 9/11); decades of drug smuggling into the United States by personnel of the CIA and involving the complicity of people in other government offices; various financial fraud schemes involving covert CIA companies—as told to me by the heads of these companies; secret funding and arming of Iraq and Iran; extensive corruption in the bankruptcy courts involving federal judges, trustees, and law firms; and many other forms of

ernment operations, I could never get any meaningful response from members of Congress. A citizen covering up for a criminal act is charged with a crime and sentenced to prison. But members of Congress, who provide for the prosecution and imprisonment of citizens, routinely commit the same crimes and worse, and escape punishment.

### **Scarpa Jr. Infiltrating Al Qaeda**

While confined in the Metropolitan Correction Center in Manhattan waiting for trial for his role in multiple murders, Scarpa met Ramzi Yousef, who was also waiting trial for his role in the bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993 and his plan to bomb multiple airliners departing from Far East locations.

FBI agents told Scarpa that if he helped getting information from Yousef, they would consider reducing the charges or recommending a reduction in whatever sentence he would otherwise receive.

Scarpa, seeking to obtain Yousef's confidence, provided Yousef with money for commissary items and also promised help from Scarpa's outside Mafia contacts. Scarpa, provided with a miniature camera by the FBI, photographed the many notes given to him by Yousef, along with relaying information Yousef provided.

Yousef gave Scarpa al Qaeda secrets such as passing explosives through airport screening procedures; how to hide electrical wiring for a bomb to escape airport detection equipment; plans to hijack U.S. airliners; the code name for Bin Laden people (Bojinga); putting explosives in the heel of shoes; and bombing plans for the Olympic games.

Scarpa arranged to have Yousef reach his al Qaeda contacts through the use of a phone number provided by the FBI. The procedure was for Yousef to dial the number given by Scarpa and when the operator answered, to say, "Ronnie calling; I'd like to make a phone call." Yousef provided Scarpa inside information about al Qaeda operations.

Through the phone procedure, Yousef received information in December 1996 that bin Laden needed a half dozen passports for the use of al Qaeda members to board and hijack U.S. airliners.

These contacts ended when Yousef was convicted in September 1996 and sentenced to life in prison at Florence, Colorado.

### **DOJ Prosecutors Withheld Leniency Promised to Scarpa**

Scarpa was convicted of conspiracy and murder in October 1998. During his trial, Scarpa and his attorney, Larry Silverman, described the help provided to the FBI by posing as a friend of Ramzi Yousef. The prosecutor downplayed Scarpa's role in providing information about Ramzi Yousef and made no attempt to reduce the charges or the length of imprisonment.

### **Most Probable Reason For Refusing Scarpa Any Credit**

The most probable reason for FBI and DOJ personnel not providing Scarpa any relief was to keep public attention from him and prevent anything favorable being said about him. Otherwise, his information about FBI

involvement with the Colombo mafia family could surface and bring about an investigation into his charges and the criminal role of the FBI.

#### **Further Example of the True Culture in the FBI**

After DeVecchio was charged with grave criminal offenses while criminalizing his FBI position and the FBI offices, a group of other agents established a website<sup>8</sup> and funds to defend DeVecchio. Included in that group was James K. Kallstrom, the FBI agent who directed attention away from the missile downing of TWA Flight 800. Their website (April 11, 2006) stated:

In 1994, allegations were made that Lin had provided secret information to a top-echelon informant who was a made member of the Persico faction of the warring Colombo family. These allegations were extensively investigated by the FBI and the Department of Justice, Office of Professional Responsibility. After a comprehensive inquiry, the Department concluded that there was no basis for the allegations and dismissed the probe.

#### **[Pattern of Cover-Ups by U.S. District Judge Weinstein]**

Senior District Court Judge Jack B. Weinstein, (EDNY), who concluded, after extensive hearings, that the claims were meritless. ... Judge Weinstein found these claims to be completely lacking in credibility, and he dismissed them [Thereby protecting DeVecchio and the culture in the FBI and DOJ].

#### **Documented History of Judicial Corruption and Cover-Ups**

For an understanding of the widespread corruption of federal judges and their protection of corruption in government offices, several of my books<sup>9</sup> go extensively into that matter.

#### **“If someone’s a bad actor, we’ll get him again.”**

Daniel Clements, a former federal prosecutor, was quoted as stating years earlier of FBI Special Agent DeVecchio, “If someone’s a bad actor, we’ll get him again.” Clements was referring to the criminal acts of the FBI agent in 1976. An AFT agent caught DeVecchio selling guns at the Valley Forge Gun Show at Kink of Prussia, Pennsylvania, without a license, which was a felony.

Flax reported this to Clements, a federal prosecutor in Baltimore, stating, “You’re not going to believe this. I have an FBI agent selling guns illegally.”

Clements, before filing charges against DeVecchio, out of courtesy, informed the FBI that he was investigating an FBI agent for illegally selling handguns. Clements then heard from Rudolph Giuliani, an aide to the deputy attorney general. Clements said that Giuliani contacted him and said, “He didn’t want to embarrass the bureau.”

Clements stated, as reported in a New York Times article (April 15, 2006) that other people selling guns illegally as DeVecchio, were charged and sent to prison.

<sup>8</sup> Website of group protecting DeVecchio’s conduct: [www.lindevocchio.com](http://www.lindevocchio.com).

<sup>9</sup> Although almost all of my books show details of judicial corruption, those with the greatest detail on that sordid matter are *Lawyers and Judges: American Trojan Horses*; *Blowback, 9/11, and Cover-Ups*; *Defrauding America*; and *Unfriendly Skies*.

### **Corrupt FBI and Department of Justice Culture Threatened By State Prosecution of FBI Supervisory Agent DeVecchio**

The prosecution of “retired” FBI Supervisory Agent DeVecchio threatened to expose the culture in the FBI and its Department of Justice, showing that the criminal activities of DeVecchio were not that of a lone rogue agent gone bad, but of a culture that was approved for decades by people in control of these agencies.

A former DOJ prosecutor, Doug Grover, was one of the lawyers defending DeVecchio. DeVecchio's legal team filed papers in the U.S. district court in the Eastern District of New York<sup>10</sup> seeking an order transferring the case from state court to federal court. The advantage of this was that the lead defense lawyer was well known in that federal court, knew the tricks that lawyers can use under federal procedures, and knew that the defense could be raised in federal court that could not be raised in the New York courts.

The federal statute being relied upon by DeVecchio's defense team provides for a federal agent to remove a criminal prosecution against him from state court to federal court if the offense for which the agent is being prosecuted was committed while acting in his official capacity.

#### **Government Immunity to Murder People**

The defense argument stated that “DeVecchio was acting under the express authority of guidelines adopted by the FBI regarding the use of informants, and he acted under circumstances where he reasonable believed his actions were necessary and proper to perform his official duties, with full knowledge and approval of his superiors.”

DeVecchio's defense, then, would be that FBI agents were immune from the consequences of using his official position and the offices of the FBI to (a) murder people; (b) become a mole in the FBI for a murderous Mafia group; (c) inform criminals of the locations of wire taps, pending indictments, and other classified information. Although that appears to be real whole conduct, it is strictly unlawful and a misapplication of the intent and the wording of the statute.

#### **DOJ Filing Motion to Take the Case from the Brooklyn DA**

Shortly after the Brooklyn district attorney filed murder charges against retired FBI supervisory agent Lindley DeVecchio, Department of Justice lawyers filed a motion in federal court to remove the case from the state prosecutor. The most probable reason for this was to control the case, hold DeVecchio innocent, and thereby protect the culture from within the FBI and DOJ from being known to the public.

Despite the enormous ramifications arising from the murderous culture and its cover-up in the FBI—and its obvious effect upon the intelligence gathering and prosecution ability or willingness of FBI agents—there was a virtually blackout in the nation's media about the FBI murders involving the Boston and New York agents.

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<sup>10</sup> That filing was assigned to U.S. District Judge Frederic Block.

### Attempted Murder of a Private Investigator

One of the private investigators who played a key role in getting the Brooklyn district attorney to file murder charges against retired FBI supervisory agent DeVecchio was left for dead when she met a source who told her that he had additional information on the murders involved DeVecchio. In describing the attack, the article in the *New York Post* (June 17, 2006) stated:

The Gutsy single mom who helped prosecutors crack the case against accused FBI mob mole Lindley DeVecchio was found choked and left for dead early yesterday in a remote section of Brooklyn.

Cops, responding to a 911 call at 5:45 a.m., found Angela Clemente in the driver's seat of her car, its door open, her body sprawled half in and half out, near the Caesar's Bay strip mall in Bensonhurst.

Based on what she said, investigators believe Clemente—a forensic-intelligence analyst volunteering her services to prosecutors—was set up by the would-be tipster, who lured her to the meeting with promises of information about two Long Island murders she believed were linked to the recently indicted DeVecchio and his underworld canary, the late mob boss Gregory Scarpa.

From her bed at Lutheran Hospital in Brooklyn, where she suffered a seizure yesterday while being treated for neck and body injuries, a groggy Clemente told investigators she had received several messages from her assailant before agreeing to the early-morning meeting.

Clemente's daughter told investigators her mom did not think the meeting was dangerous "because the guy had something to do with law enforcement."

Clemente, a 5-foot-4 divorced mother of three, spent 20 years testing blood and doing autopsies before becoming one of the country's top forensic-intelligence analysts.

Prosecutors revealed Clemente made a phone call to a journalist about midnight, informing the reporter about the meeting. "If I'm not back by 6 a.m., call the Brooklyn prosecutors." The journalist called the DA's office at 7 a.m.

Prosecutors made calls and learned of the attack.

Clemente made contact with her anonymous tipster at 82<sup>nd</sup> Street and 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Bensonhurst, and they agreed to drive their cars nearby to the southern end of Bay Parkway, at Gravesend Bay. There, the bearded would-be informant got into her black Hyundai and started talking about the case. She told investigators he pretended he had information.

And then, Clemente said, he asked her, "Are you going to continue on this case?"

"Yes," she answered. With that, she told cops, he whacked her on the right side of her body with something hard, and then put his hands around her neck and started choking her. Apparently convinced he had killed her, he took off.

At 5:45 a.m. Clemente was spotted lying halfway out of her car door by a passing dog-walker and a jogger. She was taken to Lutheran Hospital, where a huge bruise was found on her right side, and choke marks were found on her neck. There were also injuries to her head and lips.

She didn't know the name of her assailant, but she did provide cops with a description. She remained in the hospital, under police guard.

Assistant Brooklyn DA Michael Vecchione, the prosecutor who credited Clemente with helping him get a murder indictment against DeVecchio, be-

lieves the attack is linked to the former G-man. "Let's put it this way, it's not unrelated," he said.

Vecchione also would not discount the possibility that the murder attempt was the work of DeVecchio sympathizers, some of whom are former FBI agents. Earlier this month, Vecchione complained in court that some witnesses had been harassed by DeVecchio's FBI buddies.

A *New York Daily News* article (June 20, 2006) reported:

The beating didn't scare mob buster Angela Clemente, but a threat afterward did the trick. Clemente, a top forensic intelligence analyst credited with helping crack the case against retired FBI agent Lindley DeVecchio, left the metropolitan area and went into hiding with her three children after the threat.

"I'm in danger," Angela Clemente told the Daily News late Saturday. "What happened to me today is far worse than the attack." The threat was so intimidating, said Clemente, 41, that she wouldn't elaborate on its nature.

### **Absence of any DOJ Investigation**

Normally, under these conditions, the FBI and DOJ would be investigating. Instead, they remained very quiet.





## CHAPTER FORTY-THREE

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### Parallel Murderous Conduct in NYPD

Years ago a retired New York police department detective described to me the corruption that he encountered within the NYPD during his official duties. A classic example of the murderous corruption within the NYPD occurred during the same time frame as the murderous corruption by agents in the FBI's Boston and New York offices.

The roles of two NYPD detectives, Louis Eppolito and Steven Caracappa, started out very differently from the way that the true story finally came out. Eppolito was one of the most highly decorated officers in the NYPD and the recipient of over 100 medals. He even received two Presidential Citations.

Upon his retirement from the NYPD in 1990, Eppolito wrote an autobiography<sup>11</sup> called, *Mafia Cop*, portraying himself as an honest and respected law enforcement officer that had grown up in a Gambino Mafia family. His exploits, as portrayed, made Eppolito one of the most decorated officer in the NYPD. Eppolito also wrote a screenplay called *Murder in Youngstown*, for which he sought money for the project.

#### **So-Called Hero Arrested in Las Vegas**

In 2005, Eppolito and Caracappa were arrested in Las Vegas by federal authorities on the basis of drug crimes in that city and crimes in New York while these were on the New York Police Department force.

The indictment, filed in the U.S. District Court, Eastern District of New York, stated in part:

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA                      INDICTMENT  
-against'    Cr. No. (T.18, U.S.C., §§ 1962(d),

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<sup>11</sup> The autobiography, *Mafia Cop*, was written with author Bob Drury.

STEPHEN CARACAPPA and  
LOUIS EPPOLITO

1963, 2 and 3551 et seq.; T.  
21, U.S.C. § 846 and

841(b)(91)(B)(viii)

THE GRAND JURY CHARGES:

INTRODUCTION TO ALL COUNTS

At all times relevant to this Indictment, unless otherwise indicated:

The Enterprise:

1. La Cosa Nostra (“LCN”) was a nationwide criminal enterprise also known as “the mafia” and “the mob” that operated in the Eastern District of New York, other parts of the United States and Canada. LCN operated through entities known as “families.” The five New York City-based LCN families were the Bonanno, Colombo, Gambino, Genovese, and Luchese organized crime families. LCN constituted an “enterprise,” as defined in Title 18, United States Code, Section 1961(4), that is, a group of individuals’ associated in fact. LCN engaged in, and its activities affected, interstate and foreign commerce.

2. Each LCN family operated through groups of individuals headed by “captains,” who were also referred to as “skippers,” caporegimes” or “capodecinas.” These groups, which were referred to as “crews,” “regimes,” or “decinas,” consisted of “made” members of LCN. The made members were known as “soldiers,” “friends of ours,” “good fellows,” and “buttons.” Persons who were not inducted into an LCN family but who committed criminal activity with, on behalf of, or under the protection of LCN family were known as “associates.”

3. Each captain was responsible for supervising the criminal activities of his crew and providing crew members and associates with support and protection. In return, the captain received a share of the earnings of each of the crew’s members and associates.

4. Above the captains of each LCN family were the three highest ranking members of the LCN family. The head of each LCN family was known as the “boss.” He was assisted by an “underboss” and a counselor, who was known as the “consigliere.” With the assistance of the underboss and consigliere, the boss was responsible for setting policy and resolving disputes between members and associates of his own LCN family and members, and responsible for approving all significant actions taken by members and associates of his respective family.

5. The boss, underboss and consigliere of an LCN family, who were sometimes referred to collectively as the “administration,” supervised, supported, protected and disciplined the captains, soldiers and associates within the family and regularly received reports regarding the activities of the members and associates of each crew. In return for their supervision and protection, the boss, underboss and consigliere received part of the illegal earnings of each crew.

6. The ruling body of LCN as known as the “Commission,” the membership of which at various times included the bosses of the five New York City-based families, to wit: the Bonanno, Colombo, Gambino, Genovese and Luchese organized crime families.

7. At all times relevant to this Indictment, the defendants STEPHEN CARACAPPA and LOUIS EPPOLITO were LCN associates. Specifically, they were associated with the Luchese organized crime family of LCN and, at

times, they provided sensitive law enforcement information to the Luchese Family that was utilized by various New York City-based LCN families.

8. LCN was an ongoing organization, whose members functioned as a continuing unit for the purpose of achieving the objectives of the enterprise. The principal purpose of LCN was to generate money for its members and associates. This purpose was implemented by members and associates of LCN through various criminal activities affecting interstate commerce, including arson, credit card fraud, drug trafficking, extortion, kidnapping, illegal gambling, interstate transportation of stolen goods, loansharking and robbery. The members and associates of LCN also further LCN's criminal activities by threatening economic injury and using and threatening to use physical violence, including murder.

9. Although the primary purpose of LCN was to generate money for its members and associates, members and associates at times used the resources of their respective families to settle personal grievances and vendettas, sometimes with the approval of their respective families. For those purposes, members and associates of the enterprise were asked and expected to carry out, among other crimes, acts of violence, including murder and assault.

10. The members and associates of LCN engaged in conduct designed to prevent government detection of their identities, their illegal activities and the location of proceeds of these activities. That conduct included attempting to determine the identities of persons who were cooperating with law enforcement authorities or potential witnesses against members and associates of LCN. That conduct also included murdering and attempting to murder members or associates of LCN families who were perceived to be informants or potential witnesses against members and associates of LCN.

11. The organized crime families within LCN shared information and coordinate criminal activities. This included but was not limited to the following:

- a. Promotion and carrying out joint ventures between and among LCN families to obtain money through illegal activities;
- b. Conduct and control of illegal activities including interference with interstate commerce through extortionate extensions of credit and the collection of debts by extortionate means, commonly referred to as "loansharking," infiltration and control of labor unions and labor organizations, illegal gambling, money laundering, fraud and narcotics trafficking;
- c. Sharing information regarding government witnesses and potential or perceived government witnesses;
- d. Taking steps to preserve order in, between and among the LCN families, including authorizing acts of murder;
- e. Approving or disapproving the ignition of new members or soldiers in LCN families;
- f. Controlling relations between LCN and members of the "Sicilian Mafia," an enterprise distinct from LCN in the United States.
- g. Establishing certain rules governing the families, officers and members of LCN;
- h. Keeping persons inside and outside LCN in fear of LCN by identifying LCN with threats, violence and murder; and
- i. Extending formal recognition to newly-elected bosses of LCN families, and, from time to time, resolving leadership disputes within LCN families.

## COUNT ONE

## (Racketeering Conspiracy)

12. The allegations contained in paragraphs 1 through 11 are realleged and incorporated as if fully set forth in this paragraph.

13. On or about and between March 1, 1983 and March 22, 2005, both dates being approximate and inclusive, within the Eastern District of New York and elsewhere, the defendants STEPHEN CARACAPPA and LOUIS EPPOLITO, together with others, being persons employed by and associated with LCN, an enterprise that engaged in, and the activities of which affected, interstate and foreign commerce, knowingly and intentionally conspired to violate Title 18, United States Code, Section 1962(c), that is, to conduct and participate, directly and indirectly, in the conduct of the affairs of that enterprise through a pattern of racketeering activity, as defined in Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1961(1) and (5).

14. The pattern of racketeering activity through which the Defendants STEPHEN CARACAPPA and LOUIS EPPOLITO, together with others, agreed to conduct the affairs of the enterprise consisted of the racketeering acts set forth below as racketeering acts one through sixteen of this Indictment. The defendants STEPHEN CARACAPPA and LOUIS EPPOLITO agreed that a conspirator would commit at least two acts of racketeering in the conduct of the affairs of the enterprise.

## RACKETEERING ACT ONE

## (Obstruction of Justice)

15. On or about and between December 13, 1983 and March 18, 1984, both dates being approximate and inclusive, within the Eastern District of New York and elsewhere, the defendant LOUIS EPPOLITO, together with others, did knowingly, intentionally and corruptly obstruct, influence, and ..... the due administration of justice to ..., ... disclose ..... identify is known to the Grand Jury, in violation of Title 18 United States Code, Sections 1503 and 2.

16. The defendants STEPHEN CARACAPPA and LOUIS EPPOLITO, together with others, committed the following acts, any one of which alone constitutes racketeering act two:

## a. Kidnapping Conspiracy

17. On or about and between September 14, 1986 and October 31, 1986, both dates being approximate and inclusive, .... Knowingly and intentionally conspired to abduct James Hydell, in violation of New York Penal Law Section 135.20 and 105.15.

## a. Kidnapping.

18. On or about and between September 14, 1986 and October 31, 1986, ..., together with others, knowingly and intentionally abducted James Hydell, in violation of New York Penal Law Sections 135.20 and 20.00.

## a. Murder Conspiracy.

19. On or about and between September 14, 1986 and October 31, 1986, ... together with others, knowingly and intentionally conspired to cause the death of James Hydell, in violation of New York Penal Law Sections 125.25(1) and 105.25.

## a. Murder.

20. On or about ..., together with others, under circumstances evincing a depraved indifference to human life, recklessly engaged in Conduct which created a grave risk of death to James Hydell, and thereby caused his death, in violation of New York Penal Law Sections 125.25(2) and 20.00.

The remainder of the indictment charged the Eppolito and Caracappa with additional murders, including those of Nicholas Guido, John “Otto” Heidel, Salvatore “Sammy” Gravano, Anthony Dilapi, James Bishop, Bruno Facciola, Bartolomeo “Bobby” Boriello, John Doe # 1, John Doe # 2, John Doe # 42; and “together with others, did knowingly, intentionally and corruptly endeavor to influence, obstruct and impede the due administration of justice, to with, by disclosing sensitive law enforcement information regarding the imminent arrest of John Doe Luchese, Family Member # 2, an individual whose identity is known to the Grand Jury, .l...

### **Federal Prosecutors’ Selective Prosecution**

Federal prosecutors charged the two former NYPD detectives with numerous crimes that included providing confidential police information to the Luchese organized crime (OC) family of La Cosa Nostra (LCN), and particularly the Luchese Mafia; multiple murders, drug dealings, and money laundering. These were similar crimes that the same DOJ prosecutors covered up when perpetrated by FBI agents.

Prosecutors charged that they used their official positions to catch and then turn over to the Luchese group individuals who were then tortured and murdered. In one instance, prosecutors charged, “Eppolito and Caracappa followed Lino from a social club, pulled him over as he drove down the Belt Parkway, and shot Lino dead.”

The prosecutors charged that the Luchese Mafia group paid Eppolito and Caracappa \$4000-a-month and also paid them \$35000 for bringing to them a victim, James Hydell in 1986.

### **Caracappa Forming Unit That Helped Provide Information to Mafia Crime Families**

While employed by the NYPD, Caracappa helped bring about the Organized Crime Homicide Unit, which brought together information acquired by the different police districts—enabling Caracappa to have access to more information concerning crime elements—which he then provided to the Luchese Mafia family.

### **Eppolito Knew the Horror Resulting From His Betrayal**

Louie Eppolito knew the horror and suffering that came with the murder of a loved one. His father was a soldier in the Gambino Mafia family, and his grandfather was associated with mobster Lucky Luciano. His brother, James Eppolito and his son were murdered by members of the Gambino Mafia family on October 1, 1979. That didn’t stop Louis Eppolito from corrupting his position with the New York Police Department, as he himself, or with his help, was involved with nearly a dozen murders.

### **Providing Public Support To Gain Release of Convicted Murderer**

While living in Las Vegas, before the public learned about his true background, and while the public considered him a former police officer of integrity, Eppolito provided public support for Sandy Murphy who had been convicted of murder in the death of Las Vegas casino owner Ted Binion. This support may have altered the jurors’ judgment when Murphy was retried for the murder and held innocent by the jury.

### Media-Dubbed “Heroes” Found Guilty of Multiple Murders

On April 6, 2006, after only a few hours of deliberations, rendered a verdict holding Eppolito and Caracappa guilty as charged in the indictment. An *Associated Press* article (April 7, 2006), titled “Jury Convicts N.Y. Detectives of Murders While on Mob Payroll, stated:

New York. Two highly decorated former detectives were convicted Thursday of moonlighting as hitmen for the mob in one of the most sensational cases of police corruption in New York history.

Louis Eppolito and Steven Caracappa, ... for their roles in eight murders committed between 198 and 1990 while they were simultaneously on the payroll of both the NYPD and Luchese crime family underboss Anthony “Gaspire” Casso.

Federal prosecutor Daniel Wenner described the case as “the bloodiest, most violent betrayal of the badge this city has ever seen.”

Prosecutors said the two men carried out two hits themselves—in one case after pulling a mobster over in a phony traffic stop—and delivered up some of the other victims to the Mafia to be killed.

Prosecutors said the two used their law enforcement positions to help the Mafia at a price of \$4,000 per month—more if they personally handled a killing. They earned \$65,000 for the phony traffic stop slaying, prosecutors said.

The two officers also supplied Casso with inside information on law enforcement interest in the mob, prosecutors said. Casso was said to have referred to the two men as his “crystal ball.”

They were convicted of charges that included racketeering, conspiracy, witness tampering, witness retaliation and obstruction of justice.

Caracappa, who retired in 1992, helped establish the city police department’s unit for Mafia murder investigations. Eppolito, the son of a Gambino crime family member, was a much-praised street cop, although there were suggestions that some of his arrests resulted from tips from mobsters.

In his autobiography, “Mafia Cop,” he portrayed himself as an honest cop from a crooked family.

Eppolito also played a bit part in the mob movie “GoodFellas.” After retiring in 1990, he unsuccessfully tried his hand at Hollywood script-writing.

Casso, known as one of the most brutal mobsters in the city, is suspected of involvement in 36 murders himself. Both sides considered calling him as a witness but ultimately decided Casso came with too much baggage.

According to testimony, the detectives “arrested” a mobster named Jimmy Hydell in 1986, but instead delivered him to Casso for torture and execution.

That same year, the pair furnished the underboss with information on where to find Nicholas Guido, a mobster involved in a planned hit on Casso.

Their inaccurate tip led to an innocent man with the same name, who was killed after Christmas dinner at his mother’s house.

Frank Santora arranged to have Eppolito and Caracappa to be paid \$4,000 a month, plus bonus with the Luchese Mafia family. Santora was the connection to Burton Kaplan in the Luchese Mafia family, who arranged for this financial arrangement. So when Santora was killed, Eppolito was furious, thinking that his financial connection might be in peril.

Eppolito and Caracappa were both found guilty (April 6, 2006) and sentenced to life in prison. During a hearing in federal court (June 23, 2006), the defendants filed a motion for a new trial, claiming their lawyers, Bruce Cutler and Edward Hayes, two of New York's most prominent lawyers, had bungled their defense.

### **Corruption in NYPD Told By Retired NYPD Detective**

A retired NYPD detective, Jim Rothstein, had years earlier told me about the corruption that he found in the New York Police Department, including the CIA's furnishing of drugs to blacks,

Rothstein was given the assignment to protect Maurita Lorenz, the girl friend of Fidel Castro, who bore a son for him. She was hiding out in New York City and Rothstein conducted a 24-hour surveillance because CIA asset Frank Sturgis was expected to carry out a contract against her. Rothstein arrested Sturgis when he arrived at her apartment. When Rothstein persisted in reporting the CIA drug trafficking with New York City blacks, he was given the choice of taking a medical disability or suffer the consequences.

These matters are detailed in my *Defrauding America* book.

Also described in that book was the plight of NYPD detective Albert Corone, as described to me by his daughter, Dee Ferdinand. Internal politics within the NYPD resulted in her father, who was also a CIA asset, being falsely charged with child molestation and then giving him the choice of retiring or being prosecuted.





## CHAPTER FORTY-FOUR

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### FBI Culture and 1993 WTC Bombing

**T**he culture in the FBI, created by a small section of corrupt individuals that spreads like cancer, had its tentacles in the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center. I discuss various aspects of this in the book, *Blowback, 9/11, and Cover-Ups*.

In September 1991, Ramzi Yousef entered the United States with Mohammed Ajaj. Customs agents discovered Ajaj had bomb-making manuals and other terrorist-manuals, causing him to be arrested. Yousef claimed political asylum and was allowed to enter the United States, pending a court hearing.

Yousef<sup>12</sup> joined up with a group in Jersey City<sup>13</sup> composed of Yousef's uncle, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, Omar Abdel Rahman (the blind Sheikh); Mohammed Salameh; Mahmud Abouhalima; and Abdel Rahman Yasin.

They started building a bomb in a public storage unit in Jersey City, with the intention of causing the collapse of one of the World Trade Center towers. During the late 1980s, the FBI New York office knew the names and activities of some of them, but failed to follow up.

#### **FBI Mole Inside the Jersey City Terror Cell**

FBI Special Agent Nancy Floyd befriended a former Egyptian army officer, Emad Salem, who was hired at her request as an FBI informant. Salem's Arab background made him accessible to terrorist activities, which he passed on to Floyd. These tidbits included planned terrorist activities occurring in a Jersey City Mosque, Masjid al Salaam.

Salem's handlers were FBI Special Agent John Anticev and NYPD detective Lou Napoli, who were members in the Joint Terrorist Task Force (JTTF) between the FBI and the New York police Department.

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<sup>12</sup> Aliases used by Ramzi Yousef included Adam Ali Qasim; Arnaldo Forlani; Naji Haddad; Dr. Adel Sabah; Adam Baloch; Abraham Kamal; Kamal Ibrahim; Adam Ali; Dr. Alex Hume; Abdul Basit Mahmud Abdul Karim; Dr. Richard Smith; Dr. Paul Vijay; Azan Muhammed; Muhammad Ali Baloch, and Khurram Khan.

<sup>13</sup> Years earlier, in my youth, I went to high school in Jersey City.

After Administrative Special Agent in Charge (ASAC) Carson Dunbar took over the FBI's terrorism unit in the New York office, he changed the conditions under which Salem was working, causing Salem to quit working undercover for the FBI.

Dunbar interrogated Taus during the FBI's initial arrest of Taus (November 4, 1988) and testified against Taus at the state trial in October 1990.

The information that Salem had earlier provided proved to be reliable. However, he did not want to have his name publicized by being called as a witness. Salem had family in Egypt, and if his name were publicized as helping the FBI, his family would be in danger.

After severing connections with the FBI, Salem discovered that two of Yousef's companions, Mahmud Abouhalima and Mohammed Salameh, were building a huge bomb in Jersey City. Salem alerted FBI Special Agent Floyd, recommending that Abouhalima and Salameh be followed so as to discover where the bomb was being fabricated. Dunbar blocked the previously assigned handlers, Anticev and Napoli, from following through. The huge urea-nitrate-fuel-oil bomb was then completed and taken into the World Trade Center underground parking, where it was detonated. That FBI oversight made possible over 100 injuries and deaths.

#### **The Guilty Charging Floyd with Insubordination**

Possibly to protect his own incompetence, and to discredit Floyd, Dunbar charged FBI Special Agent Floyd with insubordination, resulting in her suspension. That reminded me of what I endured when I sought to report, as a federal aviation safety agent, the violations of major federal aviation safety requirements that were resulting in a series of fatal airline crashes. This doing nothing appears to be a culture in government offices.

#### **FBI Incompetents Rewarding FBI Incompetents**

After FBI agent Floyd was suspended, Dunbar, whose incompetence made possible the 1993 bombing of the WTC, received various promotions and financial rewards.

#### **Yousef's Subsequent Terrorist Schemes**

The night of the 1993 WTC bombing, Yousef fled to Pakistan on Pakistani Airlines. Later, he went to Manila, where he and Abdul Hakim Murad produced bombs for placing on airliners and planned other terrorist acts. These plans included placing bombs on 11 U.S. airliners departing Far East locations.

Yousef fabricated bomb devices using a Casio databank watch to act as a timer, connected to a small battery, which would then set off the bomb. The first test of the bomb mechanism was in a Manila movie theatre in December 1994. The device worked, exploding as planned. Within a couple of weeks, Yousef tested the bomb going through security at Manila Airport as he boarded a Philippine Airlines 747 flight from Manila to Cebu. Before he got off the plane, he set the timer on the bomb to go off during the next flight, which it did, when the aircraft was at 33,000 feet.

The explosion damaged the floor below the seat and killed a passenger. The aircraft itself did not explode, as Yousef had planned. He decided that

subsequent bombs should be placed in seats directly over the center-wing fuel tank.

Fortunately, by accident, he never got to place any other bombs on the 11 aircraft that he had planned. During mixing of bomb chemicals in the Manila apartment he shared with Murad, an explosion and fire occurred. (January 6, 1995)

While neighbors called the fire department, Yousef and Murad fled. After the firemen left, Murad returned to the apartment to retrieve Yousef's laptop computer that contained critical information on their bombing plans. Upon returning to the apartment, Murad was arrested by police. Yousef fled, catching a plane for Pakistan.

Under intense questioning by the Philippine Police intelligence unit, headed by Col. Rodolfo Mendoza, Murad revealed the activities and the plans of the terrorist cell. He identified Yousef as the leader of the cell, described the Bojinka scheme to down 11 U.S. airliners, the training of suicide bombers in U.S. flight schools, and the plan to hijack U.S. airliners and fly them into major buildings in the United States, and.

#### **Philippine Law Enforcement Provided**

##### **Evidence of Planned Airline Hijackings Prior to 9/11**

Col. Rodolfo Mendoza reported to U.S. authorities what he had learned. That information about U.S. airliners being hijacked should have caused people in the government's aviation safety offices (FAA and NTSB) to *finally* order the simple and inexpensive measures that they knew for years would have prevented years of hijackings throughout the world.

The primary measures would be insuring that the cockpit doors remained locked throughout the flight, and that the keys to the cockpit doors be removed from the cabin flight attendants. Almost any male can overpower a female flight attendant and grab the keys to the cockpit (as probably happened on 9/11). None of the required measures to prevent hijackers from entering the cockpit were taken.

The many reports that I made while a federal aviation safety agent pertained to the simple and inexpensive measures necessary to prevent airlines from being hijacked. Instead of being adopted by FAA management, I became the target of harassment and other punitive measures for having made such reports.

##### **Salem Provided Information Leading to Yousef's Capture**

Salem, who was removed from providing information about the terrorist cell prior to the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, then provided information to FBI Special Agent Floyd about Yousef's location in Pakistan. With this information, Pakistani and U.S. personnel captured Yousef and returned him to the United States in 1995.

##### **Terrorists Reunited in Metropolitan Correctional Center**

Ramzi Yousef was reunited with Abdul hakim Murad, Wali Khan, and Eyad Ismoil in the Metropolitan Correctional Center (MCC) in New York City, as they were waiting to go on trial for their role in the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center.

Yousef and Murad were in separate prison cells separated by one occupied by Gregory Scarpa, Jr., a former member of the Colombo Mafia family in New York, who was also waiting to go on trial on RICO charges.

Scarpa and Yousef became acquainted, and Scarpa, seeking to gain Yousef's confidence, claimed that he and his Mafia group were also interested in bringing down the government. Eventually, Yousef considered Scarpa as a co-conspirator in the scheme to inflict harm upon government offices.

Yousef told Scarpa about the plan to bomb 11 airliners departing Far East locations. Yousef stated that Osama bin Laden was known as Bojinga, as distinguished from the scheme to place bombs on 11 airliners that was called Bojinka.

A practice developed wherein Yousef and Murad passed notes to each other through Scarpa's cellblock. These notes, or "kites" as they were called, contained drawings for preparing bombs, drawing for bomb circuitry, passing undetected through airport screening, planned aircraft bombings, and other terrorist acts.

Scarpa's attorney arranged with FBI officials for Scarpa to continue the process. In return, FBI officials promised Scarpa that the FBI would recommend a downward departure from whatever prison sentence arose from Scarpa's trial. This process was authorized by Federal Rules of Criminal Procedures 5K1.1.

As the relationship between Yousef and Scarpa continued, Scarpa offered to provide Yousef a confidential telephone link for Yousef to use in contacting his associates outside of prison and overseas. Scarpa told Yousef that his Mafia associates outside of prison had a company called Roma Corporation and that Yousef could make phone calls through their local phone number. Roma was a fictitious company provided by the FBI, which would be staffed with FBI personnel to handle the phone calls.

The procedure for Yousef to make calls to outside contacts was for Yousef to dial the number to Roma and when the operator answered, to say that "Ronnie" was calling and that he wanted to make a call. The operator, an FBI employee, would then dial the number requested by Yousef and then listen in, recording the conversation.

One of the people Yousef talked to using the Roma Corporation third-party patch was Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, one of the planners in the Bojinka plot, the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, and other terrorist activities. He was believed located in Qatar on the Persian Gulf.

During one phone call through Roma Corporation, Yousef, talking in coded message, discussed the planned bombing of a U.S. airliner. A month later, TWA Flight 800 blew up shortly after taking off from New York's JFK Airport.

### **Actual Blame for Downing of TWA Flight 800**

A month before TWA went down, Yousef told Scarpa about plans to bring down a U.S. airliner, along with plans and information that he provided to other members of al Qaeda about the composition of a bomb and

how to get it smuggled past airport security. Evidence of explosive material *was found* on parts of the TWA wreckage.

There is even more evidence that TWA Flight 800 was downed by a missile. I detail the evidence in several of my books, including the fourth edition of *Unfriendly Skies* and *Blowback, 9/11, and Cover-Ups*. It is possible that the explosive residue found in the wreckage could come either from a missile explosion—or a bomb explosion.

#### **Veiled Threat to Scarpa's Family**

During one conversation with Scarpa, Jr., Yousef advised Scarpa that his group had learned the location of Scarpa's wife and children, and also that Yousef could poison Scarpa's meals. This thinly veiled warning made Scarpa aware that his undercover work for the FBI was not without physical risk.

#### **Trial of World Trade Center Bombings**

The trial on the World Trade Center bombing started on May 25, 1996. Yousef and his co-conspirators were found guilty and U.S. District Judge Kevin Thomas Duffy sentenced them to long prison terms, insuring that they would die in prison. The role of Administrative Special Agent Carson Dunbar never surfaced during the trial.

#### **Trial of Gregory Scarpa, Jr. and Betrayal by FBI Personnel**

The jury in the Scarpa trial found Scarpa guilty. The downward departure recommendation that federal prosecutors had promised Scarpa for his work with the terrorists was rescinded by the DOJ prosecutors. They claimed that the information provided by Scarpa was a hoax, unreliable, and that Scarpa was not creditable.

U.S. District Judge Reena Raggi agreed with the federal prosecutors and held that the confidential information Scarpa obtained from inside the terrorist cell responsible for the 1993 World Trade Center bombing, the bombing of a Philippine Airlines aircraft, the planned bombing of 11 U.S. airlines, and involvement in the 9/11 attacks, was not reliable and a hoax. Therefore, Scarpa did not merit a downward departure in the length of prison sentence. (Judge Raggi handled Taus' initial court appearance in November 1988 and denied Taus bail.)

Among the FBI memos that Raggi had to ignore was the following FBI 502, referring to what Scarpa relayed to the FBI:

Yousef told Scarpa I'll teach you how to blow up airplanes and how to make bombs and then you can get the information to your people. Yousef told Scarpa I can show you how to get a bomb on an airplane through a metal detector.

Yousef told Scarpa he would teach him how to make a simple time device. Yousef told Scarpa that during the trial they had a plan to blow up a plane and hurt a judge or an attorney so a mistrial will be declared.

In December 1992—shortly before the 1993 World Trade Center bombing—over the protests of federal prosecutors, U.S. District Judge Raggi ordered DOJ personnel to return to Ajaj the terrorist and bomb-making manuals that were seized by U.S. Customs as Ajaj entered the United States with Ramzi Yousef.

### **“Important” Reason for Denying Scarpa’s Credibility**

There was an *important* reason—for FBI officials and federal judges—to label Scarpa as not creditable, despite the overwhelming evidence to the contrary. Scarpa’s impending trial on RICO charges raised the defense that his criminal activities were *known and sanctioned* by FBI Supervising Agent Lindley DeVecchio and DeVecchio’s superiors in New York and Washington.

Also, when it became known to defense lawyers for numerous mob figures, the basis for overturning prior convictions, and also undermine pending prosecutions, existed. It was therefore necessary to discredit anything that Scarpa Jr. stated, despite the adverse consequences upon national security and facilitating further terrorist attacks upon the United States.

### **Deception Relating to Scarpa Expanded to Threats Against Scarpa’s Mother and the Female Friend to Gregory Scarpa, Sr.**

The girlfriend of Gregory Scarpa Sr. was listed as a defense witness. She would testify with details of Scarpa Sr.’s relationship with FBI Supervisory Agent Lindley DeVecchio. Scarpa Jr.’s mother also intended to testify in similar fashion. Their testimony would bolster the serious charges against FBI agent DeVecchio and the FBI and DOJ officials in Washington that approved the criminal acts of Scarpa Sr. and Jr.

DOJ prosecutors told these two witnesses that they would be prosecuted for various criminal offenses if they testified. Faced with prison, they refused to testify at Scarpa trial, increasing the possibility that the guilty FBI and DOJ officials would escape the consequences of their criminal acts. The jury found Scarpa, Jr. guilty and Judge Raggi sentenced him to 40 years in prison.

### **Standard Practice of Rewarding Fraud of Government Officials**

Federal prosecutor Valerie Caproni had falsely labeled the information that Scarpa obtained from Yousef as a hoax, helping to make possible the events of 9/11 and the U.S. Embassy bombings. After the bungling, in 1998, the DOJ rewarded her with appointment to Chief of the Criminal Division in New York.

She was being rewarded for discrediting Scarpa, and thereby protecting the FBI’s involvement in murders in the New York area—similar to the DOJ and FBI cover-up and rewards to FBI agents involved in decades of murders in the Boston office.

In 2003, FBI Director Robert Mueller promoted her to general counsel for the FBI. In the book *Defrauding America*, I describe Mueller’s cover-ups of criminal activities while he was with the FBI’s San Francisco office.

## CHAPTER FORTY-FIVE

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### Only the Tip of Widespread Corruption in U.S.

**W**hat has been described about law enforcement corruption within these pages is only a small part of what has been reported over the years, a small part of what actually exists in law enforcement entities throughout the United States.

What has been described about corruption in government offices is only a sliver of what actually has and continues to exist. My other books, all of which are based upon what I and other government agents had discovered, provide a broader picture of the extent of the corruption.

After the Brooklyn district attorney filed charges against retired FBI Supervisory Agent Lindley DeVecchio, Taus made the following comments to me in a series of letters:

I first met DeVecchio in 1983. He was a “dandy” by all accounts, a ladies man, well dressed. DeVecchio closed a few of my more promising investigations [into Colombo Mafia activities]. The problem between DeVecchio and me was my insistence or tenacity in pursuing cases. During the time that I worked for DeVecchio, I knew that there were problems since he closed several of my Mafia cases without good reason.

The Brooklyn DA, Charles Hynes, pursued DeVecchio because his constituents, all from Brooklyn and many with Mafia ties or loyalties, demanded action lest Hynes would lose their votes. Besides, the Pandora’s box of misconduct by federal officials was in the public’s view.

I still maintain that these “turf wars” between the NY U.S. attorney office, DOJ and the state district attorneys are controlled by higher powers (White House, CIA) who for political reasons precipitated them.

[Higher Officials Involved]

In the end, DeVecchio was “Outed” because of Mafia friends on the outside who wanted their associates in federal prison freed. Greg Scarpa Junior knew the terrible truth about DeVecchio and was speaking out

At this point, I have some difficulty in not believing that a greater force was behind DeVecchio’s work for the Mafia. Given Scarpa’s involvement with covert activities as far back as the mid ‘60s, it stands to reason that DeVecchio did not conceive of this idea of protecting the Mafia alone and only based upon his own greed.

I always felt that DeVecchio purposefully prevented my further investigations of Asaro and Esposito. When DeVecchio transferred me from his Criminal Division squad to a Foreign Counter-Intelligence squad, I was quite upset. As I later discovered, that transfer was to the very squad that had CIA Station Chief and front-company president Dan Priscu as a phony FBI FCI informant.

Vincent Asaro was a Bonanno Capo with Gambino affiliations. He was the grandnephew of Carlos Gambino, the original 1930-40 boss of the family. During my investigation on Asaro I conducted an elaborate investigation (from a bank building's 2<sup>nd</sup> floor offices against Asaro's social club and later from the bell tower of a Catholic church when Asaro moved his location to a realty office after, somehow, discovering my "plant" in the bank building.

I was told that one of the female agents who conducted surveillance from the bank plant flashed a camera out of the 2<sup>nd</sup> story window and one of the Mafioso saw it, effectively "burning" (disclosing) the plant. Or was the plant "blown" by an insider's tip?

Another case involved a known Mafia associate, as I recall by the name of John or Joe Esposito. He was involved with the Lufthansa robbery in 1979 and allegedly turned FBI informant after his friend was whacked by the Mafia as it tried to prevent any disclosures on the whereabouts or involvement of monies and Mafiosi involved in that heist. I reopened the closed informant file on Esposito after a tip from two other FBI agents that he might still have some valuable information.

That information led me to a drug-trafficking operation in Queens which involved a dry cleaning store, a storage garage, and John Gotti. And to a CIA connection given the accusations of Esposito that higher powers were involved. [In *Drugging America*, I wrote about Gotti's involvement with the CIA, how the CIA transferred drugs to the Gotti group at Mena, Arkansas, and how CIA asset Richard Brenneke laundered the CIA drug money through off-shore banks that the CIA was using for other business. That information was based upon a confidential transcript of testimony by Richard Brenneke to then Arkansas Congressman William Alexander. That shocking testimony, as with many others, was never disclosed to the public who continued to be victimized by these criminal and subversive activities. ]

Asaro worked with Gotti, was on good social terms with the Gambino family boss, reflecting the close ties between the Gambino and Bonanno families.

Gotti was upset with Godfather Castellano who refused to let him get into "other areas."

On the Esposito case, there was a very well-guarded garage near an over-head rail in Queens, which was surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by two Dobermans, and two thugs whenever it was open. It also had an alarm system. I could never get any phone tapes to develop the case. In fact, no one in the FBI wanted to show any interest. The local NYPD often looked the other way at Mafia operations I found.

In the Asaro case, prior to confronting him on the Mafia assassination contract on FBI SA Joe Pistone, an NYPD detective and I went to a known Mafia social club in Queens [as described in earlier pages]. As we entered the club, in plain sight, the members ran their numbers racket despite the presence of the detective and me. In short, they operated with impunity. And you must remember that many people in Brooklyn supported the Mafia because, like the Klan, the Mafia kept their neighborhood (somewhat) protected. (When Gotti died there was a great outpouring of grief from thousands in Brooklyn and Queens! And it was not just Mafioso, but old women and families.)



**[DeVecchio Diverting Attention By Fingering NYPD Detective]**

NYPD detective Joe Simone was fingered and prosecuted as a mole in the joint task force where FBI SA Chris Favo, DeVecchio's assistant, worked. Simone was accused of taking bribes and consorting with known Mafia members. An animosity grew after Simone's trial because he was blamed for the "intelligence leaks" while SA Favo later claimed that it was DeVecchio's doings. As a result, a great animosity existed between the two law enforcement agencies and the New York county district attorney and the U.S. attorney's offices. That led to the revelations against DeVecchio spurred on by the allegations of convicted Mafia capos, soldiers and others who now had an axe to grind against the feds.

While each agency pointed fingers at the other and conducted secret investigations (by their respective internal affairs units), the CIA toted the fact that it was a law-abiding agency by exposing corruption in other state and federal agencies. Recall the David Hardy case, where the CIA exposed Hardy, a NY state trooper, for faking evidence, who had hoped to be hired by the CIA. [Described in earlier pages.]

**[Lying Complicity by FBI-DOJ Personnel and Federal Judges]**

Scarpa Junior's information and testimony to FBI-DOJ personnel and to federal judges, based upon information received from his cellmate and al Qaeda operative, Ramzi Yousef, was ignored, claiming that anything said by Scarpa was not creditable.

**[Federal Judges Implicated in FBI-DOJ Corruption]**

Among the judges implicated in the deception were federal judges Jack Weinstein, John Walker, and Reena Raggi. It was federal prosecutor Caproni, with U.S. District Court Judge Reena Raggi, that dismissed Gregory Scarpa Junior's testimony and evidence against Ramzi Yousef. It was Judge Raggi who refused me bail in late 1988 and who, later, in 2005, refused to recuse herself from the three-judge panel that heard my federal habeas corpus petition in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Circuit. Judge John Walker was the Chief Judge on that panel who also denied me relief. Walker was involved in other nefarious decisions.

U.S. District Judge Jack Weinstein, in January 2004, rejected Gregory Scarpa Jr's testimony about Ramzi Yousef; another federal judge who presided at my initial federal habeas corpus petition! Weinstein also heard and denied my federal habeas corpus petition in 2005. Weinstein denied my appeal in a lengthy written 24-page decision that was worse than what NY Nassau assistant district attorneys ever said about me! Three of the four federal judges on the U.S. District Court and U.S. Court of Appeals for the 2d Circuit that heard my appeals also were involved with the cover-ups in the DeVecchio and Scarpa cases. I find it not coincidental that three of the four federal judges that heard my appeal in 2005 were also involved in all the other aspects concerning DeVecchio, Scarpa, and Yousef.

**The Real Reason For Discrediting Scarpa Jr.**

The real reason for discrediting Scarpa was to discredit his information about the murderous relationship between FBI Supervising Agent DeVecchio and Scarpa's father and the Bonanno Mafia family. Such exposure in the large FBI New York offices, coming on top of the corruption in the Boston FBI offices involving murders facilitated over the decades by FBI agents

with the knowledge of Washington officials, would reflect a culture within the FBI that amounted to treasonous and subversive conduct.

**Unless Media People Continued Their Practice of Cover-Up**

That is, if media people would report these matters. Except for the local newspapers in the Boston and New York areas, there was a blackout in the remainder of the country concerning these serious matters. Media people focused on trivial matters such as rape charges, local murders, a missing tourist in the Caribbean, and other matters that kept the public from discovering the extent of hardcore criminal activities of people in the FBI, DOJ, and other government offices.

Note: Because of the ongoing criminal prosecution of former FBI supervisory agent Lindley DeVecchio, and the attempts by Department of Justice officials to take over the case—and presumably cover up for the serious FBI-DOJ involvement—these pages will be periodically updated. With the advancement in print-on-demand book publishing, corrections can be uploaded and the next purchaser of the book gets the latest editions.





## FBI Terminology and Abbreviations

The following glossary is from the FBI's "List of Terminology Used in Foreign Counter-intelligence and Counter-Espionage Investigations." Commonly used FBI abbreviations are also provided.

**Accommodation Address.** An address used to receive mail or other communications held for pickup, forwarded to, or relayed to a member of an intelligence service. Sometimes called a mail-drop or live-letter box (LLB).

**Agent.** An individual other than an officer, employee or co-opted worker of an intelligence service to whom specific intelligence assignments are given by an intelligence service. An agent in a target country can be operated by a legal or illegal residency or directly by the center. An agent can be of any nationality:

**Illegal Agent.** An agent who is operated by an illegal residency or directly by the center.

**Principal Agent.** An agent who, under the direction of an intelligence officer, is responsible for the operational activities of other agents.

**Redoubled Agent.** An agent whose dual role has been discovered by the service on which he is reporting and who is used, wittingly or unwittingly, voluntarily or under duress, to serve the purpose of the latter service against his former service.

**Triple Agent.** An agent who serves three services in an agent capacity but who, like a double agent, wittingly or unwittingly withholds significant information from two services at the instigation of the third service.

**An Agent of Influence.** An agent of some stature who utilizes his position to influence public opinion or decision making to produce results beneficial to the country whose intelligence service operates him.

**Unwitting Agent.** An agent who furnishes information without knowing the ultimate recipient in an intelligence service or is unaware of the true identity of the government receiving it.

**Potential Agent.** An individual under development or being considered for development as an agent by an intelligence service.

**Agent Net.** An intelligence gathering unit of agents supervised by a principal agent who is operating under the direction of an intelligence officer. An agent net can operate in either the legal or illegal field.

**Airtel.** An FBI communication in the form of a letter addressed to FBI Headquarters and to other FBI Field Offices.

**Asset.** Any human or technical resource available to an intelligence or security service for operational purposes.

**Backstop.** An arrangement made to support a cover story.

**Bogie.** A visitor to an official establishment whose identity is not known. See Stray.

**Bona fides.** Documents, information, action or codes offered by an individual to establish his good faith, identity, dependability, honesty and motivation.

**Brush contact.** A discreet, usually prearranged momentary contact between intelligence personnel when information or documents are passed.

Also known as a brief encounter.

**Build-up material.** See Feed material.

**Bucar.** Bureau automobile, usually a car purchased by the Government Services Administration (GSA) and used as a squad car assigned to a particular FBI special agent.

**Cache.** See Dead drop.

**Carbons.** Paper that produces secret writing through the use of chemicals.

**Case officer.** Intelligence officer with closest responsibility for the direction of an operation or subordinate intelligence personnel.

**Center.** Intelligence service headquarters.

**CIFU. Confidential Informant Files Unit.** A separately locked and secured room where Informant files are kept rather than in the FBI squad area. The CIFU room is staffed by its own FBI supervisor with one other special agent who assists him and several clerical employees. Unlike FBI case files placed upon the rotor files or in the "Closed Files" section, which can be accessed by any FBI agent or employee, CIFU files must be signed for by the reviewing agent and, then, only if that agent is authorized to review the CIFU file.

**Cipher.** A method of concealing the meaning of a message either by replacing its letters or numbers with other letters or numbers in a predetermined manner (a substitute cipher) or by changing the order of the letters or numbers according to certain rules (a transposition cipher). See Cryptosystem.

**Cipher pad.** A small, thin pad of paper sheets printed by machine with a nonrepetitive key used in sending codes. Also known as a one-time pad.

**Communications Intelligence (COMINT).** Technical and intelligence information obtained from foreign communications.

**Communication Security (COMSEC).** Provisions of codes and ciphers to any department of government or military forces requiring them.

**Compartmentalization.** Management of an intelligence service so that information about the personnel, organization or activities of one component is made available to any other component only to the extent required for the performance of assigned duties.

**CONUS.** Continental United States.

**Co-opted Worker.** A national of a country who assists foreign intelligence services. While in most circumstances, a co-opted worker is an official of the country, he can also be a tourist or student. Sometimes referred to as co-opted agent or co-opted.

**Counter-Intelligence.** Actions undertaken to counter the intelligence, espionage and sabotage operations of foreign governments.

**Cover Story.** Plausible account of background, residences, employment, activities and access furnished to an individual who is operating in our behalf in order to substantiate whatever claims are necessary to successfully carry out an operation. Also see Legend.

**Covert Activities.** Activities conducted in a concealed manner that make it difficult or seemingly impossible to trace the activities back to the intelligence service or government that sponsors it.

**Cryptoanalysis.** Conversion of encrypted messages to plain text without having knowledge of the key used.

**Cryptology.** The science of secret communications.

**Cryptonym.** Code word or symbol used to conceal operations, organizations, projects and individuals.

**Cryptosystem.** The associated items of cryptomaterial and methods and rules by which these items are used as a unit to provide a single means of encryption and decryption.

**Cultivation.** Apparently casual but actually deliberate and calculated effort to gain control of an individual, inducing him to furnish information and agree to recruitment. Cultivation can extend over a considerable time period.

**Cutout.** An individual whose services are used to avoid direct contact between members of an intelligence service.

**Dead Drop.** A location where communications, documents, or equipment can be left by an individual and picked up by a second individual without any meeting. Also called a dead-letter box (DLB) or simply "drop." Sometimes called a hiding place, a long-term drop is sometimes called a black cache.

**Dead Letter Drop (DLB).** See Dead Drop.

**Deception Material.** Information passed in any form to an intelligence service or government to mislead. See Disinformation.

**Defection.** Abandonment of loyalty, allegiance, duty or principal to one's country. Defector. A national of a country who has escaped from the control of such country and is unwilling to return to that country and is of special value to another government because he is able to add valuable new or confirmatory knowledge of his country. In intelligence operations, a defector is, in most instances, an official of his country.

**Disinformation.** Carefully orchestrated misinformation prepared by an intelligence service for the purpose of misleading, deluding, disrupting or undermining confidence in individuals, organizations or governments. See Deception Materials.

**Documentation.** Documents, personal effects, equipment or anything that will lend authenticity supplied to intelligence personnel to support a cover story or legend. See Cover Story and Legend.

**Double Agent.** An agent who is cooperating with a foreign intelligence service on behalf of and under the control of an intelligence service and/or security service of another country.

**Dry Cleaning.** Any technique used to detect surveillance; a usual precaution engaged in by intelligence personnel when actively pursuing an operation.

**Essential Elements of Information (EEI).** The critical items of information about the enemy and his environment needed to complete an assignment. See Target.

**Electronic Intelligence (ELINT).** Information derived by intercepting and studying electromagnetic radiation from non-communications sources, such as radar.

**Employee.** An individual, other than an officer, employed by an intelligence service. He may be serving in the home country or abroad as a member of a legal or illegal residency. He is usually employed in a service capacity such as a stenographer or radio monitor.

**Espionage.** Intelligence activity aimed at acquiring classified information from a hostile intelligence service.

**False-flag Recruitment.** Occurs when an individual is recruited believing he is cooperating with an intelligence service of a particular country. In fact, he has been deceived and is cooperating with an intelligence service of another country.

**Feed Material.** Information that is usually true but unimportant, given to an individual to pass on to another intelligence service to maintain or enhance his value to that service. Sometimes called "build-up material."

**Handler.** See Principal.

**Hiding Place.** See Drop.

**Human Intelligence (HUMINT).** Intelligence collected by humans.

**Illegal.** An officer or employee of an intelligence service dispatched abroad with no overt connection to the intelligence service which sent him or the government operating the intelligence service. An illegal is operated by the center, not by a legal residency.

**Illegal Net** An intelligence-gathering unit operating under the control of an illegal residency.

**Illegal Operations.** Intelligence operations conducted by intelligence officers, employees and agents under the control of an illegal residency or under the control of the center.

**Illegal Support Officer.** An intelligence officer assigned to a legal residency whose primary function is to support illegals by supplying them with anything that is needed in their daily lives. A secondary function is to gather information and documents that will help illegals avoid detection.

**Intelligence Community.** All components of a government that produces intelligence and counter-intelligence.

**Intelligence Officer (IO).** A professionally trained member of an intelligence service. He may serve in the home country or abroad, as a member of a legal or illegal residency.

**Legal Operations.** Intelligence operations conducted by intelligence officers, employees, co-opted workers or agents under the control of a legal residency.

**Legend.** A coherent and plausible account of an individual's background, living arrangements, employment, daily activities and family given by a foreign intelligence service by an illegal or agent. Often the legend will be supported by fraudulent documents. See Cover Story.

**Lippmann.** A special high-resolution emulsion used in preparing microdots and mikrates.

**Live Letter Box (LLB).** See Accommodation Address.



**Mail Drop.** See Accommodation Address.

**Microdot.** Photographic reduction of documents to 3 by 6 millimeters.

**Mikrat.** Smaller than a dot. Notional. Fictitious; most commonly used to refer to a nonexistent agent but also used to refer to fictitious organizations, individuals or sources of information.

**Official Establishment.** Any offices in this country controlled by foreign governments.

**Officials.** Aliens assigned in this country to official establishments or to the United Nations and its organization.

**One-Time pad (OTP).** See Cipher Pad.

**One-Way Radio Link (OWRL).** Transmission of voice, key or impulses by radio to intelligence personnel who, by prearrangement, can receive and decipher the messages. See Two-Way Radio Link.

**Open Code.** Seemingly innocuous messages that, by prearrangement, convey a different message.

**Overt Activities.** Activities that may be openly attributed to the government responsible for them.

**Parole.** A prearranged verbal exchange used by intelligence personnel to identify themselves to each other.

**Persona Non Grata (PNG).** The official act of declaring a foreign national unwelcome in this country.

**Picket Surveillance.** Placement of surveillance personnel at locations that encircle an area being watched. Also known as Perimeter Surveillance.

**Positive Intelligence.** Interpreted intelligence.

**Principal.** Intelligence officer or co-opted worker directly responsible for the operations of a principal agent or agent. Also known as a Handler. See Case Officer.

**Provocation.** Activity designed to induce an individual, organization, intelligence service or government to take action damaging to itself.

**Pseudonym.** A false name that looks like a true name. See Cryptonym.

**Recognition Signals.** Prearranged visual signals used by intelligence personnel to identify each other.

**Recruitment.** The process of enlisting an individual to work for an intelligence or counter-intelligence service.

**Recruitment-In-Place (RIP).** A foreign official who overtly continues to work for his government and covertly provides the U.S. with information of intelligence value.

**Referentura.** A Soviet term referring to rooms inside Soviet establishments that are protected from outside surveillance and periodically swept for bugs. Inside the rooms are classified correspondence and files and ciphering and radio transmission personnel.

**Residency, Illegal.** An intelligence establishment in a target country consisting of one or more intelligence officers and possibly one or two other employees with no covert connection to the intelligence service that operates it or to the government operating the intelligence service.

**Residency, Legal.** An intelligence establishment in a target country composed of intelligence officers and employees assigned as overt representatives of their government.

**Resident.** The head of a legal or illegal residency who supervises subordinate intelligence personnel.

**Residentura.** A Soviet term that refers to the personnel and activities of an overseas residency and the space occupied by the residency.

**Safe House.** A location controlled by an intelligence service that provides a secure place for individuals engaged in intelligence operations to meet.

**Sanitize.** Alteration of information to conceal how, where and from whom the information was obtained.

**Secret Writing.** Invisible writing.

**Signal Intelligence (SIGINT).** Intelligence obtained by monitoring foreign radio transmissions from any source including missiles, satellites and spacecraft.

**Signal.** A prearranged visual or audio sign that a dead drop had been filled or emptied or that an emergency meeting is needed.

**Sign of Life Signal.** A signal emitted periodically to signify that an agent is safe.

**Singleton.** An illegal who lives in a target country and operates alone. He does not become involved in the operations of agents or illegal residencies.

**Sleeper.** An illegal or agent in a foreign country who does not engage in intelligence activities until told to do so.

**Source.** An individual who occasionally furnishes information to foreign intelligence representatives but is not an agent.

**Spotter.** An agent or illegal agent assigned to locate and assess individuals who might be of value to an intelligence service. Staging sending an illegal or legal agent to another area of the home country or to another country before he is sent to the target country so he can establish a legend and receive training.

**Sterile Funds.** Money used by intelligence personnel and obtained so it cannot be traced to an intelligence agency.

**Sterilize.** Removal of signs that would connect materials or devices to an individual, intelligence service or country using them.

**Stray.** See Bogie.

**Surface.** Public disclosure of an intelligence operation or the identity of intelligence personnel.

**Target.** An individual, organization or an intelligence service against which intelligence operations are conducted. Also refers to documents or instruments which an intelligence service is trying to obtain or to the subject of a surveillance.

**Third Country Operation.** An operation conducted by an intelligence service in one country but based in a second country and aimed at a third.

**Tradecraft.** Specialized techniques used in intelligence operations.

**Two-way Radio Link (TWRL).** Transmission of radio messages between intelligence officers and their command centers. See One-Way Radio Link.

**Walk-In.** An individual who voluntarily offers his services or information to a foreign government.

#### **FBI Abbreviations**

**ADIC. Assistant Director In Charge.** There are approximately 11 ADICs, most are located in Washington, DC at FBIHQ. Since the FBI New York Field Office is the largest it has an ADIC and a DADIC (Deputy ADIC).

**AIRTEL.** Interoffice FBI correspondence, usually a report or a request for investigative actions sent by one Field Office to another or to and from FBI Headquarters.

**ASAC Assistant Special Agent In Charge.** Depending upon the size of the FBI Field Office there may be one or more ASACs who, as the title implies, assists the Special Agent In Charge (SAC) of that Field Office.

**BQMRA.** Brooklyn-Queens Metropolitan Resident Agency. A subordinate Field Office/resident agency to the FBINYO located in Manhattan, headed by a Special Agent In Charge (SAC).

**BUCAR.** Bureau Car, a Government Service Administration (GSA) vehicle, normally a plain sedan used as a squad car for all FBI investigations.

**CIFU.** Confidential Informant Files Unit as noted previously.

**DADIC.** Deputy Assistant Director In Charge. The FBI New York Field Office has the only DADIC, due to its large size, who assists the ADIC.

**FBINYO.** FBI New York (Field) Office.

**JNTF.** Joint Narcotics Task Force. Formerly, as the need arose. Joint Task Forces (JTFs) were operated, pooling the men and resources of several agencies and law enforcement organizations. The JNTF was the result of a need to augment Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) efforts.

**MRA** Metropolitan Resident Agency. A much larger Resident Agency, consisting of several divisions and often larger than many Field Offices in less densely populated states.

**NRMRA.** New Rochelle Metropolitan Resident Agency. Another subordinate office to the FBINYO, also headed by an SAC.

**RA. Resident Agency.** A small FBI office in suburban or rural areas, consisting of 5 to 20 agents.

**SAC.** Special Agent In Charge. Normally the head of an FBI Field Office or a division within a large Field Office, such as in New York.

**SSA** Supervisory Special Agent. The head of an FBI squad normally consisting of 5 to 17 agents.

**TRC.** Tactical Revolver Course. One of the firearms' training courses which qualifies an agent to carry a pistol. Agents are also qualified on the shotgun (Remington Model 870 12 gauge and the M-16 Rifle, 223 cal.).

**302.** The number and name given to the formally typed FBI interview form.



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