

street, but fortunately a cab did come along. He must have been lost. I had him drive me downtown. And went to a bar that stayed open late, and I was waiting for this--I thought this other newspaperman would show up there later--I really wanted to kill him--for leaving me in that spot. Well, it developed that the other one wanted to too, because I talked to this so-called hoodlum--called me next day, and he said, "Are you all right?" I said, "Yeah, but why didn't you stop that man?" He said, "I couldn't stop him. He said 'You don't know the whole story. He drove about six blocks right smack into a gas station, slammed on the brakes when the attendant came over, he said, 'this is a stick-up.'" He said, "If the police had come, I'd've gotten 100 years in prison." He said, "I jumped out of the car and ran all the way home." It could have had a very serious consequence indeed. He, and, incidentally, the driver--had very little recollection of this when I talked to him about it. I don't know if that was by

design, or he really didn't remember much about it. But he professed not to. He was the same one that I should have known enough to stay miles away from him when he was drinking. But one night several of us from the three papers in Detroit attended a party that was given by a bootlegger who had been kidnapped and paid \$25,000, the standard rate, for his release. The kidnap ring was rounded up later on--many years later--and the last of them was convicted so this man gave a party in his home for those of us who had been covering the trial. It was two or three in the morning; it was a nice party, in his home. At two or three in the morning three of us left together, one the same guy who had left me on the east side, and another one I knew pretty well--another friend. The one who had left me stranded before he drove into a gas station and said, "This is a stick-up," was pretty tight--he had had way too much to drink, so I said to my friend, I said, "We'll get him in the car and we'll take him home. We got in the car and I said, "Where do

you live? We'll drive you home." He says, "Screw you."

So I said, "Well, look, it's late, I gotta go to work in the morning, and I knew he'd moved out a long ways from where we were. So I said, "Tell me where you live, let's be nice about it, we'll drive you home" and he said, "Screw you." So this time I was on a main street and I saw a policeman in uniform walking the beat. We were headed towards each other. So I sat in the car and I said to the other fellow with me, who was sober, "Let's throw him out and let him lie there, and we'll tell the cop to get the address." So we did that, we threw the drunk out, drove up to the policeman, explained our trouble to him, and said, "I'll drive around the block, and when I get back, by that time you'll have his address for us." So the cop said, "Fine, that's good. Don't leave him, though, I'd hate to have him sleeping in the sidewalk. So I said, "Don't worry, we'll get him, we'll come right back." So we came back, and the policeman says he says he lives at so-and-so, giving us

the address. So we thanked him very much and started to drive off, and I'd driven several blocks and said to the third one, "What was that address again that he gave you for this guy?" He says, "He didn't give me any address", he says, "didn't you get it?" I said, "No you were sitting right next to him" and he said, "Hell, you're driving." I didn't pay too much attention to it, so neither of us knew what the address was. We were just as bad off as we had been. So we proceeded into the general area, it was way out in the outskirts of the city. So we got out where there was no building, no nothing but fields. So I said, "Let's throw him out again, we'll drive around a little bit, and by the time we come back, he'll be shaken up by being alone here, he'll be glad to tell us where he lives." I was a great psychologist. So we drove and drove and came back and drove some more and couldn't find him. He'd wandered off. We looked for him quite a while and finally said the hell with it, it was a nice summer's night--so--it was morning, I should say. So we had time for an hour's sleep before we went downtown to go to work,

before we were due, so I went with this other fellow who lived in a hotel, and I stayed with--went to his room, I was going to stay with him that night--and we just got in and the phone rang--and it was the fellow that--no, it was the police, from the precinct--where we had left this man, and they said, "Do you know this guy?" And we said, "Yeah, we know him--where is he?" And they said, "Well, we got him locked up. He was swinging on somebody's porch swing. In a house near where we left him off." So we said--we told them who he was--and we said--we had a golden rule and all then--so that means they just keep him until early morning and let him sleep until he's sober enough and then let him go home.

MK: He actually was being held on an attempted B & E--

RG: That's right--the people whose porch swing he was enjoying thought to call the police frantically, thinking a legion, I guess, of burglars were trying to break into their house, from the noise he was making. So a cruiser came--that's a four-man car--

and grabbed him and threw him in the back, and sat on him until they got him to the station. But he was one to avoid, when he'd had a drink, there were several like that. But sometimes circumstances would just throw you into a spot like that. I knew better than to try to do him a favor by driving him home--now, he's like a psychopath, that when he's drinking, you try to help him, and you come away bleeding, with your clothes torn, no matter what. It's the same as a true psychopath. He acts normal, you think he's all right, but you go to help him and you wind up with a broken arm, with your clothes torn and bleeding, and he goes on his way, just as gaily and happy as any man, not realizing or caring that you're--that he's leaving another one suffering in his wake. [I should have thought of it sooner] (strange voice)

I had the same kind of \_\_\_\_\_.

MK: Well, at one time newsmen knew professional criminals and could relate to them and could do business with them, isn't that correct?

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RG: Well, by doing business, I'll have to explain this--

MK: I'll put it in quotations.

RG: Yeah. Some of us were--it was our job--to know--criminals as well as police. I mean just as a society reporter knows people in society or as a sportswriter knows professional athletes, those of us who specialize in crime knew the cops and the robbers. Both sides of it. So we often had a rapport--with both sides. And I think those of us who had it--the trust of both sides--had it because they had complete confidence that we wouldn't betray a confidence. And I never have. And I know other newsmen who never have--betrayed a confidence. And I think this is one of the most important things that a newspaper person who deals in important breaking stories has to live up to. Criminals will tell me many things that they wouldn't tell other people. And I never will repeat it--or repeat where it came from, at least. On the other hand, the police would tell me many things in confidence. And they knew I wouldn't repeat it, and I didn't. But they helped me

in writing stories, for background materials, knowing when things are going to break, for having the stuff ready for the time when it would be printable, and we, of course, can think of several things, for instance, on different occasions, when newspaper people, including me, were able to get back things that had been stolen in burglaries. One friend who had his house burglarized and lost a lot of valuables, both jewels and silverware, came to me about it; of course, he reported it to the police, but I was able to put out enough feelers, so that the stuff was returned and it was customary to give the person who had stolen an amount of money--just a courtesy thing --because it took him some time to steal it and we paid him for that time, and showed you appreciated it. That often happened, and I said, "often happened"--it happened frequently.

MK: Those kinds of contacts were helpful in getting fellow newsman out of jail, weren't they?



RG: Yeah, one serious one--a friend was--took his wife and children for a summer vacation in the northern wood of Michigan--and left them in this log cabin and went right to Hurley, Wisconsin--and it was a wide open town, and he lost money gambling--he started to drink--lost a lot of money--and he wrote a lot of bad checks--and that's not a healthy thing to do in a town like that, because the gamblers don't take kindly to receiving bad checks, or to having debts welched on. I--he--called the office and I answered and he got in touch with me, and he said he's in big trouble up there and knowing the kind of people that might be in and out of there, something might happen to him. Well, I was able at that time I knew somebody who had a connection in Hurley. We found that he pulled \$3,000, so the office magnanimously advanced that amount of money to him-- we went it up there to settle his gambling debts--and while he'd never been held, he wasn't really free to leave town. The money arrived and he had an escort out of the city and

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back to his family, a very friendly escort. No harm befell him--however, he was in deep trouble, because those people just don't take to that sort of thing. Fortunately, we knew who to get in touch with. Knew somebody. A great deal of successful newspaper work is in knowing people--in knowing, you know, who to call on for any given situation. Or who would know the answer to any particular difficult question or problem. And we spent a lot of years cultivating contacts.

MK: That's harder to do these days, isn't it, Ray, because of the changing nature of <sup>crime</sup> the crowd?

RG: All, the whole nature is changed. I don't know, really, anything about it anymore, because it's changed so. For instance, <sup>a factory</sup> traffic worker could go out on his lunch hour and rob a bank--burglaries--big burglaries--are being committed by fourteen, fifteen-year-old kids. They are robbery armed. These times they're not planned like they used to be. They're done habitually, without any reason, they--they'll rob somebody at

the point of a gun, have a gun and get eight dollars, and they can spend 20 years in prison for that. It used to be that a criminal, before he'd go with a gun to hold up either an individual or a place of business or a bank, would have the whole thing "cased," to use that term, their term, that is-- figured out ahead of time--right down to the amount of money-- and he knew about what he'd get--and how long it would take, if it were that case, and where he would dispose of the stolen property--that is, where it would be "fenced." But now, it's a hit-or-miss thing, and there's so many involved in it that it doesn't make sense, and I don't know who any more is--is doing what. It used to be that you'd see a crime and you often could tell by the M.O.--by the way it was done--just about who did it. Now that wouldn't mean--and the police knew this--that they could go out and arrest and convict them. Because while you might know that this was the way he always committed a crime, you couldn't show that he was the one who committed that crime. Willy Sutton,

for instance, was just recently released from prison, now in \_\_\_\_\_, one of the most publicized bank robberies--and one of the most scientific--usually it could be determined that he was the one that held up the bank by the manner in which he did it and the amount of money, which was always big, that he got--but the police couldn't necessarily prove that. So while he did serve a lot of time in prison, he robbed a lot of banks, but he never was arrested or even questioned about it. The whole thing -- it was more of a science--they took pride in their work--safe-blowers--they took pride in their work. Pickpockets took pride in their work; stick-up men did. Even auto thieves. Now an auto thief is usually a 14-year-old kid. But--who wants a joy ride. The old auto thieves made a lot of money out of it. Because there'd be rings, they would steal a car and either resell it in another stat, or strip it and sell the parts. It was a good livelihood.

MK: Do you think it's just part of a larger pattern of breakdown in the competence, or pride of craft?

RG: Yeah, we don't make--we don't make things--as well as we used to.

We don't do our crimes as well. We're in too much of a hurry.

We've lost the craftsmanship; we've lost the pride in many of our fields of endeavor, including, I'm afraid, crime.

MK: Ray, what are the implications of the kind of special access a crime reporter has, in some criminal quarters, to being Police Commissioner at a later point in your career?

RG: Well, not many of those people are around anymore, but this was kind of interesting. When I left the newspaper business, I became head of the Probation Department, Criminal Courts, where all the criminals were in Detroit. Now I sort of thought that all must have had a cousin, a friend or somebody, going through the courts, therefore Probation Reports, and I thought maybe some of them would call me for favors; I never got one request in all that time for any favor from anyone. I worked as an executive in the Mayor's office for a year and a half; and never got one request, for a favor of any kind from any of those people. I was Police Commissioner for four years and seven months and I never got one request. Not only didn't

I get any requests, but I never heard anything from them. I haven't to this day, and this is--I've been out of the Police Commissioner's office--well, for three years now, and I haven't even <sup>heard</sup> from them. They just wouldn't bother me; I think--I like to think it's because they had enough respect for me--that they wouldn't ask any favors. I did run into a few at a funeral home one night, and I think I was working in the Mayor's office then. And at the funeral home I saw some of them and I said, "Where have you been?" and they said, "No, certainly wouldn't want to burn you up--we'll stay away, we'll stay away." And that was the only contact. And that is true. One of my jobs on the paper was to be to work with the law firm that always represented the Times in libel threats or libel action. And--

MK: Ray, let me just butt in to indicate that this is August 28th--

RG: Oh, yes.

MK: . . . and we're talking about your function as investigator in cases where the Times was sued for libel.

RG: Umm-hmm. That's right. Um--we had a large number of suits over the years, and a large number of threatened suits. Now this is when the--before the libel laws have been--shall we say, liberalized by Supreme Court decisions. It's harder to prove libel now than it used to be. And it's more difficult to--well, to libel a person. One I recall that we--we usually got rid of them--the policy was not to settle. The policy was to go to court if you had to--but try to get enough so it would not be enough on the persons worth suing. Because usually it was a legalized form of shakedown. To discourage their going to court, so then they couldn't win. And I, as they say, worked with the law firm, and had a lot of help from the paper, this organization that I needed, but three lawsuits came out of the story that were rather interesting, because we went to trial in Circuit Court in Detroit and in all three of them--in all three the verdict was the same. It was that we hadn't libeled the party and we were assessed six cents--so we lost a total of 18 cents in the court, but we felt that we were

victors in all three of the cases, because these people--we thought we had successfully shown that they didn't have a reputation to be sullied. That they'd taken care of that themselves, and that what they wanted was money. And that this was the big thing they wanted, the money. They made--our correction--we ran a correction on the story--which was, I thought, more than adequate and fair, and so did many people, but it was pretty obvious that this isn't what they wanted, that they wanted cash, because they were making the terms of the correction just impossible; for instance, they wanted it in a double 8-column headline on Page 1, and then a column down on page one with a runover. The original story went almost that way. And they wanted the same space in that size of type for the correction. Well, of course, the original story also carried a lot of things about what the grand jury in general was doing at that time. Having no connection with them. The story was headlined: GUN GANG DEPOT BLOCKED FROM CITY HALL. And the story said that gangsters in Detroit--and there were gang wars going on then; this was



in the early '30's--there were gang wars going on--that the gangsters were buying their guns in this particular establishment which was at Griswold and State--the building is now, I believe, torn down. But it was a very fine store for guns; it was owned by a Major on active duty in the United States Army--a graduate of West Point. He, however, was off around the country with his war duty, with his army duty, and his wife and a man--had no connection, when we started out the investigation, ran the store. So the first thing I--through they attorney, sued us one at a time. The first lawsuit was started by the man--the employee of the Major, and the Major's wife. Now--he--so we started out by finding out first of all did the gangster ever buy a gun? And so far as I could determine, through all the connections that I had and that the rest of us had, nobody ever did--all of the sales were legitimate sales. It wasn't--well, they had a pretty good stock, they weren't making much money and weren't doing a big business, but it was legitimate, and a legal business, and our reporter who got the information that they

guns to  
were supplying gangsters, just made one hell of a big mistake.

His source was obviously wrong, as he couldn't back it up. Well,

we ran a--what we thought was a very adequate correction and

apology. But the--it wasn't acceptable, they wanted money, so

we finally felt the only thing we could do was to go to court.

Now our policy was never to settle out of court, because--if

word got around to say that the Times would settle rather than

go to trial we thought it would encourage more people to sue us

and we'd be having more than we could handle. However, when that

policy changed when the juries in--about the 1950's, I believe,

started bringing in huge enormous verdicts in libel cases. One of

the early ones was the lawsuit between a Westbrook <sup>Pegler</sup> peddler and

Quentin Reynolds--it was a hundred or \$150,000 dollars. And then

big ones against the Saturday Evening Post. So we began looking

around the country and seeing that the juries were assessing publishers;

the trend completely changed. So then we started settling these things;

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however, until that time we would go to court rather than give up anything, and let them decide, if we had to. I remember when an employee of the--of this gun company--owned by the Army Major-- took the witness stand--our attorney--lead counsel for the Times-- in cross-examining said, "Now witness, what is your name--is it Mr. So-and-so?" And he read off six names. And this came as a hell of a body blow and a surprise to the man, because we had shown that he did business and lived under six different names, because we went back to the day he was born and knew about everything he had done. So he admitted that his name was So-and-So. It was one of the six; his right name. We knew that. Then [we] asked him about his residency. Now he and the wife of the Major lived in the same hotel in rooms with a connecting bath. However, all the accounts from those two rooms had been destroyed when I got to the hotel. So the fact that they had rooms that were next to each other really meant nothing, unless one uses his imagination. But I kept digging into old records of payments and I found that

whoever destroyed them didn't destroy enough, because going back, it showed that she would pay for the rooms either by the week or the month--she'd pay one time, he'd pay the other, for both; their laundry would be charged to one or the other. There were several things charged that might be charged to either room rather than completely separate. In addition to that I got two former employees at the hotel to testify as to how they--what they saw on different occasions when they went in the room. Well, this was an awful rough thing to do because I felt sorry for that poor Major who was sitting there listening to the case and hearing all these things about his wife--incidentally, they were divorced afterwards. The--we brought out that the man was not--was not much of a citizen in that case: it went to the jury; the jury deliberated and came back with a six-cent verdict for him, then the wife's trial went on and the same thing happened; pretty much the same; a lot of the same testimony, practically. And then the Army officer. And I was a little bit worried about him, because he

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wasn't in Detroit, even, but I'd gone into his background, since before he went to Grosse Pointe--to West Point--and talked with his commanding officers over the years, and he didn't stand out as any great, wonderful credit to the United States Army; yet there was nothing criminal against the man. But there were a lot of things that we could ask him about that didn't make him look like the poor wronged gun merchant. He, however--he --I thought it the best case. But the jury apparently didn't think so; because (this is the third jury, now) they brought back a six-cent verdict, too. Right after that he sued his wife for a divorce, and they got divorced and all left the city, and the business closed. It was a tragic thing, I think, if the moral of it--if there is one-- is the danger that careless reporting, the damage that careless reporting can do. Because our reporter who had that story at a time when there was great interest in gangster shooting in Detroit-- just didn't check far enough into it to be able to substantiate that this was true. He believed it, but he couldn't prove it. And the other thing was that--I really felt badly about their marriage being

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broken up--because I didn't think it was much of a marriage--

I'm no good at assessing those things, and whether it was a good marriage or a bad one, it was none of my business. Irrelevant, but that broke up, the business was shattered. While none of the papers printed anything about it, it was a standing, unwritten, unspoken agreement in those days that one paper didn't write about another's libel--no one wrote about it. But nevertheless the word got around, and it didn't help the reputation, and the whole damn thing was tragic; the rest of them, I suppose, was greed. I remember one--they were not irreparably or seriously hurt in any way, but the original story, when we came back with not once but twice with corrections on the thing, and then got the corrections in more papers than the original story. So I think that was like that.

If they were, well, yeah, they were greedy, they wanted money, and if they hadn't been, and if they'd dropped it they could have gone on living happily in sin, ever after. But people always got hurt in those things; I suppose they do in most lawsuits, but in libel

suits they did, because I found that almost everyone has something in his past; this sounds like a cliché, and it is a cliché: they can't stand the bright light; and if you work hard enough and have any luck, you can find out what that is, and my conscience never hurt me about that, because these people who were suing us really, as I say, it was legalized shakedown. The reasonable--I mean the other people--if you put correction in the paper, that satisfied them. Persons who probably had much better reputations than the ones that got lawyers--or wanted to get money. Oh--do you have a question?

MK: Yeah, Ray, who was the attorney who handled most of the Times?

RG: \_\_\_\_\_ was the law firm, and Isador Levin, who tried those three cases, and I don't think he tried many cases; I know he didn't in the years that I dealt with him; Chris Young<sup>John</sup> was doing the court work; and then later on Henry Sills. But Levin did a masterful job in all those trials; I was--I've never seen better work done in a courtroom in all the kinds of pieces I've covered as a newspaperman. He was excellent--now he--and he didn't practice

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much--but those cases were prepared. That work was done on the street and in their office. And what went on in the courtroom was just bringing out all that had been done. So the lawsuit was won pretty much in their office. But he did a masterful job; and he was a brilliant man, but he didn't do a lot of trial work.

MK: Was any Ray Girardin story ever the subject of a libel action?

RG: No, um, neither that--and I don't think even a threat--of libel.

I'm happy that that was the case, because I had to handle all the kinds of stories that were not designed necessarily to make the people about whom they were written happy. But no, I was never sued, or threatened, nor did we have to retract. I don't mean that I was 100% right always, but if these retractions are tricky things, incidentally. If people call me and want to ask me about a story in our paper, or in another paper in which they were--or thought they'd been--wronged, asked me what to do, and I'd say, "Forget it," because I'd seen more harm done by retractions than was originally done in the first place. A lot of people didn't read the original



story. But the chances are pretty good that if you give 'em two stories, that one they'll read, and they'll read the second, and then they get the wrong impression. They think that the person did what the paper said he didn't do. Then--some stories seem to be hoodoo--a mistake often gets into the correction which makes the original thing ten times worse. And you've got to drop it at some point because you'll have the person--you'll make a Jack the Ripper out of the poor victim. Because really, I believe that some stories are just jinxed from the very beginning. And the more you try to correct them, the more difficult it gets because somebody along the line is going to make another mistake. Either the re-write man who writes it, a copy desk editor who says, "Oh, they've got this wrong, puts it back the way it was originally. Because he remembers it. For a printer--and it's not caught in proof-- and I've advised I don't know how many people to forget the whole thing. There's nothing really hurt--nothing but your feelings a little bit, and you'll fool around with that and you'll come out looking

read bad. And I still think that's good advice.

MK: You've told me on more than one occasion, Ray, that the way to prevent error from being perpetuated is simply to remove and destroy the newspaper file and ruin your story.

RG: I used to do that with no authority at all--when a thing like that would come up I would go--would personally go to the morgue and tear up the clippings--because the files by that time would be away in storage and it would be remote if any reference were made that they'd ever get the files. That they'd just go to the--by the files, I mean the entire paper. The destroy the clippings. And I think there ought to be a standard rule in every newspaper office that when something is gotten in print, and it's wrong, that somebody be responsible to look into the files and destroy it. Because when the next story comes up, you see they <sup>send for</sup> ~~cancel~~ the clips and the reporter won't know anything about it, but he reads it, and he assumes, therefore, that it's true, and he repeats it. Write it all over again. And this might come as--after you've done all sorts of things to

convince a person that the original story was an error, that there was no malice, you love them, and then--boom. They get hit with the same thing again. So that's a lot of \_\_\_\_\_.

Papers don't do it. Duncan C. McCrea was elected Prosecuting Attorney of Wayne County and Detroit in the mid-'30's after he'd been an Assistant Prosecutor for many years. He was the kind of person who made news--made headlines--naturally. And at the time he was prosecutor there was a great deal of graft and corruption between--or among--gamblers, prostitutes, police, prosecutor's office, sheriff's office, Mayor's office. It resulted in a Grand Jury and hundreds of people from public payroll going to prison. Now I had a feeling that McCrea, who sued our newspaper for libel because we said he was a member of the infamous Black Legion--gone through with that lawsuit, the Grand Jury would not have been necessary because ~~he~~ we had collected enough material to--I'm sure--to cause a warrant to be issued for some of the staff and for others with whom he was taking graft. But the Black Legion is a story in itself. It was a gang of men mostly

from the south who had come to Detroit to somewhat suburban towns and worked in factories or--in Pontiac, I believe, there were some in the Police Department and Sheriff's office, and then we had about the same rulebook as the Ku Klux Klan which reached its height in the '20's. They were very much against Catholics, Jews and Black people. They beat people up at night, they killed two people in Detroit,--murdered two people in Detroit--and one of our reporters shortly after this story was broken by the Police and some twenty Black Legionnaires were arrested in Detroit, and it was a very weird, wild story, hard to believe that people would be so moronic, but they were at least twenty were later convicted in Circuit Court. The--one of our reporters--got a membership card signed by Prosecutor Duncan C. McCrea--it was his handwriting. In fact, when confronted by it, he said, "It looks like my handwriting, it could be my handwriting, but I never belonged to it." So he then sued us because we ran a picture of the card on the front page of the paper and--saying that he had been a member--he sued us for libel.

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So I went to work on the thing and I first was able to collect about--around eighteen affidavits from members of the Black Legion who attended his initiation, which took place in an apartment on Harmon and Woodward in Detroit. These eighteen were all mostly--most of them were--they'd all been definitely identified as members; they were admitted members. Some were under indictment. And, however, they did give me freely their affidavits that they participated at his initiation. And--'cause I'm sure he was initiated.

MK: It should be pointed out as irony, really, that it was McCrea, or at least, his office, that was prosecuting these criminal offenses against them.

RG: It was, and because, however, of his alleged involvement, the Attorney General came into the case, too, and had an Assistant Attorney General participate in the trial of these people in the Circuit Court; so they were prosecuted by both the Attorney General's office and the Wayne County Prosecutor's office. Yeah, that's

absolutely right. Well, he said that no, he didn't know any of the people, had never been in this apartment, and was not initiated. But then we began delving further into his activities while in the prosecutor's office and his background and we got-- the first time I was able to get definite--and I think--admissible evidence that he was being paid off handsomely to permit whore-houses and gambling to go on--some of it in Detroit and some outside, but in Wayne County--and that his bag man was his chief investigator, Harry Colburn. We also got--learned of--the involvement of several others in the Police Department, Sheriff's office, Mayor's office at that time, and was just waiting--so anxiously for the suit to get started--however, for what reason I don't know that Mr. McCrea did not pursue the libel suit. So, we were--we had all this information and then in the summer, in August of 1939-- a woman named Janet MacDonald wrote letters to the FBI, to several newspapers and to the Police, saying--telling about big payoffs from gamblers to the police. And she then killed her little girl and

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took her own life. And all this because she was jilted by the lover, who was a gambler and with whom I had gone to grade school in Detroit. He--these are stories he had told her--but this came on top--these letters and the murder-suicide came on top of many other things--for instance, <sup>the Board of Commerce</sup> ~~aboard the Commodore's~~ cruiser that year, at least one police officer distinguished himself in the dice game by shooting \$500 with one roll of the dice. Others aboard were gambling huge amounts of money. Far beyond what they could afford, with their living on their salaries. The handbooks were wide open in Detroit, but it was almost common knowledge that there is a general payoff, that the city had become terribly corrupt and that it was being run by, really, by gamblers--you see, not long before that--so a couple of weeks before the murder-suicide there had been a holdup of a doctor--an osteopath who had an office on the Boulevard and Woodward Avenue. A Dr. Robinson. And I think the holdup guys who were sort of fringe members of the Purple Gang they got about \$25,000 and as they were driving away with the guns and money in the

in the back seat, they were going through an alley and they almost ran over a Captain of Police of the mounted bureau they came out on Bethune--he was headed for the north barns where he had his office at Bethune and John R. And he arrested them, not knowing what he had and marched them all to the police headquarters-- to the police precinct station, also at Bethune and John R. The old 9th Precinct. They had \$25,000, these holdup men, but no report of a holdup. They held the men but weren't successful in holding the money, because within a few days it had all disappeared from the station. We found that out, of course, and that was a big story. So, with all these things accumulating, we just about had to be a Grand Jury. However, I think if our libel suit had gone ahead we would have been able to bring out so much of this so probably there wouldn't have been a Grand Jury. So the Grand Jury started in September; and ironically, as Prosecutor, Duncan McCrea could have handled this Grand Jury himself. But he pooh-poohs the whole thing and said it was all a lot of nonsense, so the Grand Jury was



formed on petition of citizens and Judge Homer Ferguson of  
 Circuit Court was the Grand Juror and Chester P. O'Hara, who  
 was then an Assistant Prosecutor and then a Circuit Judge--was  
 the Chief Prosecutor. And then they had a large staff of Assist-  
 ant Prosecutors and that resulted in McCrea going to prison as well  
 as most uniformed police inspectors, precinct heads and the Mayor  
 the Sheriff, and others high up in the Sheriff's office. And, the--  
 as I say, McCrea--and of all people who turned on McCrea--McCrea  
 covered himself pretty well--it was almost im--it was impossible to  
 show a direct payoff from any \_\_\_\_\_ to McCrea. But he, McCrea,  
 had complete confidence in Harry Colburn, his Chief Investigator;  
 Colburn was the bag man; he collected, and he was the only one who could  
 put mony in McCrea's hands--and he collected on a regular basis and  
 paid off regularly. During then, he was a defendant with McCrea and  
 several others and during the trial he changed and turned State's  
 evidence. I had the exclusive story on ohat. They knew the Grand  
 Jury knew that he could do it. And that about 3:00 one morning I got

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a telephone call in my home from a friend who said that Harry Colburn just told the Grand Jury the whole story and put McCrea right in the middle of it. And they're writing it up right now. And he gave me a lot of detail. So I had this story and several side stories; of course, I worked the rest of the night, on a \_\_\_\_\_ release. And in my release something happened and Colburn didn't take the stands. As it was said, he was to be the first witness when the trial of McCrea resumed that morning at say, nine, nine-thirty. I was covering the trial; about a hundred defendants. And--the trial was late getting started. And I knew why it was late. And nobody else did--that is, except the judge and the Grand Jury people and Colburn. Now Colburn's lawyer, who is a friend of mine, came over to me and said, "Ray, the reason we're late--Harry had to go to the Internal Revenue this morning." Well, he believed that, because Colburn had called him and said he was going to be late. 'Cause he had to go over there. He didn't know that Colburn had turned State's evidence, and I couldn't tell him.

And the story was in type but we couldn't put it--and I didn't want to take a chance on putting it in the paper, and \_\_\_\_\_ follow; and this--the trial was being held in the supervisor's room of the old County Building. Judge Fergusob's office was just down the hall--so finally the door opened and two men were leaving Harry Colburn, who was deathly pale, whose legs wouldn't hold him--and he just practically staggered to the witness stand-- and I called the office and said "Release the story," and he got on the stand, and he said--of course, McCrea was so badly shaken, never expected this, didn't know anything about it, and he told the story briefly, convincingly, and McCrea jumped rightup and started to cross-examine him--obviously he lost his head and his questions were not good questions and one of them --one of them was-- "You know that's not true, Harry." And his answer, I think, did more with the jury to destroy McCrea than anything else he said: "I know it's true, you know it's true, and God knows it's true." And with that, he slumped on the witness stand. That ended the

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cross-examination. So everybody--McCrea and everybody with him.

So everybody--McCrea and everybody with him--that conspiracy was found guilty. But that's where the Black Legion card landed him away.

MK: You have a theory, Ray, as to why McCrea joined the Legion?

RG: Oh, yeah, I don't think that he really believed the things that they professed to believe, and I think that he didn't take time to examine what it was. I think he thought, "Oh, fine, here's an organization"--somebody asked him--he thought, "here's an organization, there's probably some votes there, I'll sign up with them. But if you listen to the oath that he took and understood what they were saying--I don't know if you could even hear it--but it was a pretty wild, awful oath. Because he should've grabbed the card and torn it up and run like a burglar--but he--I think he just joined it for thinking there'd probably be votes in it. But he didn't know what it was. That's a hell of a poor excuse, of course, for a lawyer and a prosecutor, but I know the guy well enough and I don't think he was that kind of a person.

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. . . and it was a woman's voice, and as a result of this phone call, Buckley went down to the lobby of the LaSalle Hotel and sat in the large chair. The lobby wa empty. And three men ran in and shot him several times--killed him instantly; 45; and ran out again and only one person apparently got a good look at them outside the hotel and that ~~xx~~ was the room clerk. There were all sorts of stories about people passing on ~~xxx~~ the street who saw a lot of cars turning around, and got partial license numbers and the more the publicity the more tips the police would get. But I worked for almost a year on that one story before anyone was brought to trial, and incidentally, no one was convicted of the murder of Jerry Buck<sup>1</sup>ey. We on the paper got an extra out early that morning, and as a result of our extra, we lost about 25,000 circulation because we printed that <sup>B</sup> Buckley had dealings with some unsavory characters, that he was reputed to have been shaking people down and this was our best information and the truth as we knew it--as we believed it. But so many people loved him

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~~an~~ that they didn't want to hear anything bad about him; and about 25,000 just canceled their subscription to the Times, immediately. In order to overcome this, we had to eventually get the government board which would--I don't know what the name of it was at that time, but it would correspond to the F.C.C.--to come to Detroit and have public hearings ~~and~~ in which a lot of testimony was given that would reflect disparagingly on Jerry Buckley. Well, we couldn't prove everything we wrote in the paper, any of the main charges. One of them, I recall, <sup>he</sup> was real close to a kidnap gang, and might have been--you know, sharing ~~some~~ of the profits--now, that could be true, but the Board being in Detroit did bring out some things that probably give some of the people that idolized him second thoughts. Well he, as I say was murdered and this was--we found out that he was undoubtedly the most popular man in Detroit by the public mourning, and also that nobody believed he was anything much less than a ~~saint~~. His brother Paul had been <sup>an</sup> the Assistant Prosecutor, and I knew him very well, and had known him for a long time, and of course I talked to Paul about it, and he had no idea why the brother

was murdered, but he then called me up and <sup>a</sup>said Ry, will you do me a favor? We want to bring Jerry home before the funeral, for a couple days in the house, and we just want the family. So will you write something in the paper and ask people not to come? Just for the family--we want to be alone with him. And I said, well Paul, that won't be any problem--so I wrote a box to be insert~~ed~~ed in the main story on Page 1, believing that that would take care of it. Well, the house was almost torn apart by people who wanted to see Jerry, or get a piece of his ~~hair~~ hair or something--they had to have the riot squad out ~~he there~~ there to keep them away. At his funeral there were crowds between 25 and 50,000 lining the roads of the cemetery. They were selling--vendors were selling brief biographies of his life. Selling a song--"Jerry, my Boy" that somebody had written. And men and woman ~~were~~ and children were weeping, all along the funeral line. He was not married; he had a brother and sister and his \_\_\_\_\_ closely in that Irish family. Well, we started to work right away, of course, the newspapers and the police and who did it and why? We found, as you often can, many motives, real or imagined. One was that he was supposed to have accepted \$10,000 to affect the release of a gangster from a Canadian

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prison, and then it was not successful. And another was that he had been too effective in his fight to get Mayor Bowles recalled and that that had hurt a lot of gangsters' pocketbooks, but the city was open in those days, there was gambling everywhere, blind pigs everywhere, but so many of them--they'd all have to be run down as best we could--and finally the police settled on ~~three~~ men as being the murderers and arrested them and charged them with murder. They arrested two ~~on-the-street-and-one~~ in Detroit and one in New York. There was Ted Cusino, who was never much in the gang, or the mob, and Angelo Levecchi, who was never much in the gang, or the mob, and Joe ("Scarface Joe") Bommarito, who at that time was on his way up in the crime syndicate or whatever you want to call it, but was not near the top--oh, he had a higher ~~top~~ position than the other two. Now the police theory borne out by very sketchy statements of witnesses or people who thought they were witnesses --thought they saw something--was that they got some--some woman to call, who knew Jerry--to call and get him down to the lobby. Incidentally we never found out who that woman was. And the jury



Jerry Buckley voice, as she was called. Was a very mysterious figure in columns were written about her, but she was never identified. But at any rate, the prosecution and the police theory was that they got her to call him down, and then Angelo Levecchi had been stationed at the Adelaide St. entrance--and when Buckley got seated in the lobby and the coast was clear--when he was to signal there weren't any witnesses--~~it was a signal~~--and then three men pull up in a car, two of them jumped out and he went in with them and they all shot Buckley. Now that was a police theory. So those three went to trial and it was one of the wildest, most hysterical trials ever covered, and it lasted an excessively long time; there were many recesses, many witnesses ~~xx~~ that fell apart. And while the police, the prosecutor and all their facilities while they were investigating, even after the arrest of these three, there was a 23-man Grand Jury call for the ~~twoc~~ -- to investigate the whole Buckley situation. And they indicted the three who are under arrest altho they also--the prosecutor had also issued warrants. But the main

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witness, who had never made a statement to the police had left town and nobody could find him--and I was in my office, and the Times had me move into the hotel, live right there, and cover this part of my beat and get to know the people who live there better and who work there better, in the hope that that would be of some assistance. Now, many gangsters lived in that hotel, many of whom I had not know before but did come to know as part of my job--I was living there. And the police covered it--the hotel--and selves to such an extent that we often referred to it as "Sub 13"--the hotel was in the 13th Precinct--and this this "Sub 13" meant a Substation. But through a contact I made while living at the hotel I found out <sup>who</sup> ~~what~~ this room clerk was. Now he was in hiding, and he was in Chicago. So I went over and found him, talked to him alone. And I say alone because it was being alone give me some worries later; I had no witness to what he told me. What he told me was that Yes, he saw the three men come in, he had a very good look at them; and he saw the shooting, and he saw them run out again, and he'd know the three men if he saw them again. But he knew--he ~~was~~ personally acquainted with and knew well the three men

Detroit  
who were charged with the murder, that the ~~police~~ police were holding, that were charged with the murder. And the three that were charged with the murder were not the ones who killed Jerry Buckley. Now all the propaganda, evidence, testimony, statements, that the police, the prosecutor and the Grand Jury built up were just built up on these three men who were in jail, waiting trial. And my story just raised a lot of hell in Detroit because it was the story of the only eyewitness. Now the room clerk--former room clerk, ~~xxxxxx~~ told me that was tired--incidentally, he was working when I found him, in a small hotel in Chicago--he was tired of being away and that he was going to come back to Detroit and give himself up. So he came back and the police immediately held him as a material witness and kept him at headquarters. And it was oh, at least two months after he came back before he was called to the witness stand. And all during that time I was worried that he would be brainwashed by the police while he was in their custody. And that he would take the witness stand when it was his turn and identify the three who are on trial and say that he'd never seen ~~me~~ me in Chicago and that he hadn't told me what I'd wrote. However (and I didn't want to

go and see him while he was being held or have anyone talk to him--  
 \_\_\_\_\_ or ask him what he was going to do) however when <sup>he</sup> we took  
 the witness stand--and I think he was the last State's witness--  
 and he told the same story almost word for word from the witness  
 stand that he had told me in Chicago--that these definitely were  
 not the people who killed <sup>Buckley</sup> him. The jury accepted that and they  
 acquitted the three defendants. Two of them, by the way, were tried  
 right after that, for another murder. It happened at the side door  
 of the LaSalle Hotel, the Adelaide St. entrance, a short time before  
 that, and they were <sup>c</sup>convicted of that and sentenced to a life term  
 in Jackson; they served some--that was Cusino and Levecchi--they  
 served time and they've been released--you know, been out of prison  
 many years. But they --the shooting, the murder of Jerry Buckley  
 was never solved, although I know the newspapers worked on it; I'd  
 say for a year, so did the police, and if anyone saw the thing and  
 knew who did it, he just wouldn't come forth and say so. It wasn't  
 healthy to be a witness in those days, in a murder of that nature.

It was a "gangland" killing; he was set up in the lobby of the hotel, which at the moment was empty, and three men went in with 45 caliber automatics, which was the standard weapon used by gangsters in those days; and they ~~had~~ <sup>hit</sup> 'em, in those days, many, many times, and many times in the head, and that was where they aimed, always. But during that time \_\_\_\_\_ one night several people in my room--and a woman reporter on our paper--called me over at the corner--they were mostly newspaper people and--to have a drink and relax a little--and she said, "Why does that one man keep facing the door all the time?" And I said, "Well, he keeps facing the door all the time so he can dive under the bed if it opens --if the door opens unexpectedly"--and she said, "You're kidding." and I said, "I wish <sup>I</sup> were, but he's a very worried man--he can tell he's going to be killed, but I don't know what it's going to be for." And about two weeks later I called her up and said "Look at the headline in the paper today--that was the guy ~~who~~ <sup>who</sup> was sitting in the corer; he's been taken for a ride." I don't know what he was--you know, why--he was killed. But I know that he knew that he had it coming.

We'll that the type person managed the hotel. Except one morning I was coming down the elevator and it stopped at a floor on the way down and the door opened and I almost fainted because two ~~nuns~~ nuns in habit got on the elevator, and it was the most inconsistent, improbable sight I'd ever hope to see. Nuns in that --Detroit hotel. I still think they're probably gangsters in drag who wanted to get out without being recognized. The house detective --it's a wonder there wasn't more being said. One night I got off the elevator, and he was ahead of me and I cleared my throat because I was always afraid he was a little butty, and would do something and he turned around and he had a .38--or maybe a larger caliber--revolver in his hand and I said "What the hell's the matter?" He said "They're making too much noise<sup>shut</sup> in that room and I'm going to ~~shut~~ 'em up." ; He didn't mean he was going to shoot them, he meant he was going to tell them to be quiet, but he was going in with a gun drawn. And I says, "Oh, my God, you're ~~going~~ going to start something all over" and he says, "It's the only way they understand it."

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And I said, "Well lots of luck to you"and I got in my room soon as I could. I didn't hear ~~no~~ any more shots, so I guess his method must have worked. There had, as I say, been--the hotel got off to kind of a bad start, because not long after it opened, a --there was a party in the roof garden-- well, in the penthouse--on the top floor--it would be a penthouse-- and a girl who was pretty well known around town, whose name was Patsy Faye Claire, was thrown out a window--killed. And it developed that some high police officials were attending the party. But I thinkthe records to this day will show that it was accident, that she lost her balance and fell--although the story that we couldn't prove ~~was~~ but--was--I believe--was that she was thrown out by somebody. And there was a lot of names--

the place            Jounry's End

nicknames of ~~police~~--during \_\_\_\_\_ was the popular,

perhaps. And people would--it's funny, but the toughest people in the country, they go to Detroit, and instead of going someplace

would head right for the

where they wouldn't be seen, ~~they-lived-in-the~~ LaSalle Hotel and there it all was. And they did a lot of traveling; and those

were the days of the big gangs. And there was a miniature golf course across the street; miniature golf was popular in those days, and it used to be that there'd be people playing golf all night long--all night. And they were all gangsters. If the police just wanted--you know, the so-called dragnet, they wouldn't have to go far, just to the corner, about a block radius would take in most of the underworld of Detroit. The --think I'll shut it off for a minute.

MK: You mentioned the name Joe Bonmarito in connection with the

Jerry Buckley murder. He was an associate of Pete Licavoli

and ~~xxxxxx~~ Licavoli was a principal actor in the

Prohibition period. <sup>RG:</sup> Yeah, Pete is still occasionally in Detroit.

His brother Johnny is --has been in the Ohio State Penitentiary-- for oh, something like 35 years, at least. Conspiracy to murder in Toledo, and they came up about the same time. There are friends in St. Louis, and they joined up with some others in Detroit that they knew, and took over a large part of the river in bringing whiskey over from Canada. And then they expanded by--selling it



to wholesalers, of course, and then even to retailers, to bars.

And from the start it was practically nothing; they made quite a bit of money. And they didn't get into gambling for quite a while; ~~they~~ there were established gamblers in Detroit, and a lot of gambling then, wide-open gambling; oh, like Danny Sawburn, Lincoln Fitzgerald, Rusty Clark, Sleep-out Louis, St. Louis Dutch, the Wekkimers; Mert and Al; so many --they had very --Bert Morse--very elegant places; lavish, and for top entertainment; people like Ted Lewis were at their height then. And they had these little tough guys convinced that all the money was in bootlegging and gambling was a hand-to-mouth existence. They were just getting by by the skin of their teeth.

It was to keep them --you know, from muscling in on them. And it worked, for years. But finally they got a little smart and started moving in the gambling business. Then, many of those who had been established in Detroit moved out to Nevada--either Reno or ~~Las~~ Las Vegas. And Some of them are still operating out there. But Detroit in those days had--just about any kind of game

you wanted; one would want to gamble--backarack, dice, cards, stud, \_\_\_\_\_; anything, practically; and in ~~xx~~ very convenient locations, right downdown on Woodward Avenue, or on Grand River, ~~xxxx~~ a block or two off Woodward, or up at The Sheraton, where Bert Morris had a very fine cafe, cabaret and gambling establishment there. And of course, Ecorse, downriver and upriver in St. Clair Shores had lavish gambling establishments. Now usually, a man has to be known to get into the gambling part of the dining room. But they were not two careful about that; they didn't pay much attention to the identify of the person, because it was pretty obvious, <sup>that</sup> unless they had protection. The thing that they--<sup>ih</sup>~~and~~ some of the downtown places one would go into a room w<sup>8</sup>th nothing in i t bbut a husky guy who worked for the gambling place and he'd be searched and they looked for two g things--one, a gun; two--to see that the man had enough money to get in. In other words, he'd have to have, in the cheaper places, at least \$5 to let him in. And in these rooms, up above, was a gun turret, with

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a man with a rifle looking down to see that no one's coming in to stick the place up. Because they had a lot of cash--see, those places did a big business and they had alot of cash on hand. And they didn't have guys with guns showing inside, like ~~in~~ they do in Reno or Las Vegas now, but they had protection. Then to a winner--if a person won a large amount of money--they'd pay him; they'd give him a check, if he wanted it; and the check from you know--the places run by these people--and they check was as good as cash. But the check was so he wouldn't be held up. Or, they'd send a couple of men with him to take him home, if he wanted the cash. And if it was in large enough amounts, he might be held up. They'd give him protection until he got home, or give him a check, either way. 'Course, they were, in a way, protecting their own money, because a gambler always goes back and they knew that if he won tonight and got home safely, that he'd be back the next night, or the night after. And the averages being what they are, the house would win it back. Plus some.

MK: Ray, returning to the Buckley murder: you ~~always~~ almost ~~came~~ arrived on the scene at the time of the ~~xxxxxxthexxxxxxofxxxx~~ murder.

RG Yeah, we worked--all the newspaper people worked very hard for sometime ~~that day~~ on the particularly that day, ~~and I~~ recall that Mayor

Bowles; and after all the results were in and our stoires were

written, I remember that Tommy McIntyre and Jack Martin, who

was on the Times (McIntyre was on the News) and I walked over

to Berman's, about a block from the Times--it was then a blind

pig--and we were really too tired to drink anything, or too

hot, and we had a steak sandwich and a bottle of beer. Then

we left Berman's and started to walk north, toward--in the

general direction of the LaSalle Hotel. So I said, "What

/I'm too tired/  
are we going this way for?" and McIntyre says, "Well, come

on, we'll walk as far as the hotel" so Martin and I told him

he was crazy, that we couldn't walk at all, we were too tired,

so I left them and Martin did too, and I took a cab and went

over to the Leland for the night. If we had proceeded, we

figured out, we'd have arrived at the hotel when Buckley was getting in the lobby. Now we'd have sat down, because we were tired after the walk, and rested a few minutes, at least, but we all knew Jerry Buckley, so we'd have been talking to him. And one of two things would've happened: either the shooting would've been postponed because we were there, or we'd have all been killed. So this is sort of a lady or the tiger--what finish you want to give it. Either one would've happened. McIntyre continued walking--went to the hotel. He didn't see anybody in the lobby--I don't think he did, he might've seen Buckley, but at any rate, he had gotten his room and started to get undressed, had taken off his shirt, and the telephone operator called and said, "There's a shooting in the lobby." So he went down. I think he saw Buckley. And, you know, said hello and went up. But we all knew Jerry. So we --there again, I think if it had been anybody local, it would've been postponed. If there were

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imports who did the shooting, everybody would've been shot, they wouldn't have left anybody around. Another thing about that hotel clerk--I don't know why they didn't shoot him-- the night clerk. Unless they didn't see him or think about him.

MK: Speaking of the night clerk, Ray, he seemed to do rather well financially, even for Detroit.

RG: Well--when I saw him, in Chicago, he was clerking in a very small, out-of-the way hotel, and the man to my knowledge never had much money. After the trial--yeah, he purchased an undertaking establishment in Birmingham-- in Dearborn. And as far as I know, he prospered. But--until he died--a natural death. Allen Camp was one of the--getting back to the Buckley trial--one of the defense attorneys. And he had been in the Prosecutor's office as an Assistant Prosecutor trying mostly murder cases for many, many years. And it was sort of difficult for him to get adjusted; I always thought that he'd be sitting at the other side of the table; he met

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with a tragic end. He was talking --he had defended a man for murdering his wife. And the guy was convicted of first-degree murder and serving life imprisonment in Jackson. And Allen Camp went ~~xxx~~ up to the Chief of Detective's office, and talked to him about the case and protested the verdict, protested the way the police handled it, and was demonstrating with a hand gun that it was impossible for Jenkins to have killed his wife the way the State said during the trial that he had murdered hers, because of the angle of the gun and the bullet. And he put the gun up to his head to demonstrate how it was impossible, and pulled the trigger and killed himself right in front of the Chief of Detectives, sitting there. Now it went down as an accident. But many people close to Allen Camp thought it was suicide done that way so his insurance would give his widow double coverage. Because he had been very frustrated in his life, over the way his law practice was going, and several other things. And ~~bx~~ this was, of course, couldn't be proved,

the insurance company paid it off as an accident, but the thinking was that he just deliberately--and what a setting, in the Chief of Detective's office--at his own desk. This man that he defended, his name was Lonnie Jenkins--and he sent for me--I didn't cover that trial, by the way, but he sent for me, sent word that he'd like to see ~~me~~ me, while he was in Jackson Prison. Well, since I didn't know him, I took a Captain of the State Police with me, Ira Marmom, was his name, and rather--the prisoner said that he could--if I could get him out--he could get me the solution to the Jerry Buckley murder. Well, this has happened to me many times. An inmate of a prison will say, "If you put me on the street, I'll solve this thing you're working on." So it's like--like Lazarus--he talked to the Attorney General apparently, and some other star investigators to takehim out and he's going to solve our crime.

MK: Including non-existent crime.

RG: --Non-existent, and he's being charged currently with several counts of perjury. Well, Lonnie Jenkins told me that he was



turned  
walking on Woodward Avenue, just ~~around~~ the corner of  
Adelaide Street, the night of the shooting. He heard  
the shots, saw the men run out of the Adelaide Street  
entrance of the LaSalle Hotel and jump into an automobile  
which made a U-turn and he took down the license number.  
He was carrying a Free Press, and he wrote it on the margin  
of the newspaper. Now, there was a car that made a U-turn--  
the men did run out of the hotel, got into that car; other  
witnesses had seen that much; but nobody had a license  
number. But he could have read that in the newspaper--  
except for the license number. So ~~he~~ <sup>I</sup> says, "Lonnie, look,  
I can't promise you anything except if the information you  
give me leads to the solution of the thing, I know that the  
proper persons will take ~~that~~ <sup>and your cooperation</sup> into consideration. So I'll  
follow it through and do everything I can for you. But tell  
me, ~~where~~ what about this license number, where is it?  
He said, "In my ~~own~~ own home, I tore it off," he said, "I didn't  
stay there too long, because I didn't want to get involved,

but I knew it was important, and I tore the number off the paper,  
and put it in a tin box with some other things of some value  
that I possess, and when I came to prison, before I came to  
prison--took them up to my sister's--I took the box to my  
sister's house, and it's there now. And if you go there,  
you'll find the numbers on that little piece of paper. And  
that is the car they drove off in. So I said, "Okay, write  
me a note to your sister, telling her that I can see what's  
in the box, and give me <sup>her</sup> ~~xxxx~~ name and address. So he did.  
And we went to the sister, and introduced ourselves and  
identified ourselves x \_\_\_\_\_ as we gave her  
the note, and she read it--and I could see she was astonished  
at the note, she didn't know what it was referring to. So  
finally I amplified what <sup>he</sup> ~~x~~ said in the note, I said, "you know,  
that tin box he left here." She said, "Mr. Girardin, there's  
no tin box in this house--he never had a tin box--and I've  
never seen one." She said, "Would you like to<sup>!!</sup>"--she lived  
in a small house,--she said, "would you like to look around??"

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So I said, "No, you'd know if he had a tin box." So there wasn't any. He had never seen, and I never heard another word about it from him, but it is typical of what many prisoners will do. They'll go to any extreme, they'll lie right ~~kn~~ up to the end, thinking that somewhere along the line, something will fall in place for them and they'll get out. Many convicts have told me stories like that in prison. They're just not true, and ~~xxxx~~ cannot be verified, ever. But they want an opportunity ~~xxxxxxx~~ --they want a chance just to get out of prison for awhile, and they think maybe they can turn something up, find something to justify it. But there was no box, it was pure fiction. The --

MK: Ray, do you want to talk about Allen Kent's Cicero argument?

RG: Well, the --yes, the jury --the trial of the three men who were charged with killing Jerry Buckley was one of the wildest in the history of Recorders' Court. It was --the jury heard it, and of course the judge was--Jeffries--father of the man

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who was later Mayor of Detroit. One of the defense attorneys-- the theory was that these three defendants were Italians, so of course the emphasis was on the Italian gang that murdered Jerry Buckley. Well, one of the defense attorneys--a good lawyer--Anthony Maiolo--was trying to counter that by having people of Polish descent responsible for murdering him. And he kept moving the scene of the conspiracy to Hamtramck. And naming people in Hamtramck who actually did the murder. He named one man who's a baker out there and I'm sure never heard of Jerry Buckley.(if there was anybody who didn't). But it was a herring that he was using. So every time the prosecution would put something on Italians, he'd come ~~up~~ back on cross-examination and bring Hamtramck and the Poles back in the picture. Anyway, he really did a good job -- with the herring. But Allen Kent in the final argument-- and he had the last word, by the way; Maiolo argued the case, putting it back smack into Hamtramck, naming Polish with Polish names, who he said murdered Jerry Buckley, why

they did it, some complicated theory. And Kent, in his argument--and I think these words are perfect--verbatim-- said "And before the dawn of the new day breaks--broke-- the real killers of Jerry Buckley were speeding in a highpowered limousine back to their rendezvous in Cicero, Illinois." Maiaolo almost fainted, so did the other defense attorneys, and I know at the Press table there must have been an audible gasp. It was such a shock because after all Maiaolo's hard work to change the venue of the plot and the nationality of the perpetrators-- Allen Kent brought it right back to Cicero; Allen, which of course, which brought only one thing to everybody's mind and that was Al Capone, his Sicilian or Southern Italian pals.

MK: This is September 1, 1971. Ray, you've undoubtedly had many unusual experiences with tipsters--people who have come to you ostensibly with knowledge about a crime, or a story.

RG: Yes, almost every big story --almost every big crime story-- made us disprove confessions. In other words, people would come to the newspaper office or to the police and be convinced --they'd be obviously people with mental problems--and they were convinced that they'd killed the person and wanted to confess it. And they usually had a pretty good knowledge of the detail-- that is, they knew everything that had been printed in the paper and remembered it. And often they'd add a little detail to what had been printed that you couldn't prove or disprove. And it was sometimes pretty difficult and caused quite a bit of work for us on the papers to determine whether the person was telling the truth. Because if it were the truth, we'd naturally want the story. One of the most puzzling that ever occurred --one I spent more time on--was the shooting of Walter Reuther. And a man that came into our office, wanting to help us solve who his assailant was. Now Walter Reuther was shot in the right arm in the kitchen of his home by a shotgun and his assailant has never been convicted.

Some people were tried, but nobody's been convicted of it, but--so the case is still wide open. That was a year after-- April of 1948, I believe, and the year after that his brother Victor was shot through the window of his home and he lost an eye; his assailant has never been convicted. Now the police had various theories and ~~we~~ we had various theories as to who Walter and shot Victor ~~and Reuther~~ Reuther, and why they were shot; and of course to this day, I don't know for sure. But the strange experience that came out of the shooting ~~was~~ of Walter Reuther occurred a couple months after the shooting. And I was home got a on a Saturday, and I call ~~ed~~ from the office asking me to come down because I'd been working on the ~~Reuther Reuther Reuther~~ Reuther case almost exclusively and they said they had a man came in and seemed to know a lot about it and wanted to tell someone. So I went in the office and took him to the restaurant across the street, just so if he did~~nt~~ have anything it would look like a more casual thing of somebody happened to walk in our office and saw him there and might tell one of our--we were always trying to protect our~~s~~ own stories against the opposition

papers, and to be sure that nothing leaked. And people who might have an interest in informing another paper would be less suspicious about me having coffee with a man in a restaurant than \_\_\_\_\_ over in a corner of our office talking to him. Because I--they used to watch me pretty closely, who I talked with and what I did, particularly when a good story like the Reuther story was good for a long time was developing--we hope, developing. Well, ~~xxxx~~ this man told me that he knew the person who shot Walter ~~Reuther~~ Reuther. He gave me his name and he told me he's in Chicago. And that he could get him to tell me the whole story--but--and the fellow was going to give himself up. That he had a good defense. It was a g very involved thing, but we couldn't slough anything off, and saw his story at the time made a little more sense than it would now, because we had had some other ~~in~~ bits and pieces of gossip and



information and misinformation that seemed to blend in with his story about this man in Chicago. So I said, well let's get a plane and we'll go over to Chicago. He said, "No, I wouldn't ride a plane" so I said, "We'll drive over, I have a car." He said, "No--train." So we took the train. First I called some people at the UAW who were working hard on it and told them to be on the plane and others to meet us at the station because I don't want him to get out of our sight at all once we got in Chicago. Now this guy was believable. He was a man in his late '60's, not too well dressed, but well-spoken, and he didn't talk about getting any reward, or any money, or anything for the information, and we got on the train and went to Chicago, and one thing I thought I detected about the man was that from his manner--from the way he sat on the train--almost without moving at all--was that he spent a lot of time in prison--and I tried to draw him out on prisons and got nowhere. For instance, when we --the train

stopped in Michigan someplace after Jackson--and I said, "This is Jackson, this is where the biggest Michigan prison is, and also the biggest prison in the free world." And you can see part of the old one from the train." I pointed that out to him. "You can't see the new one." And he had no interest whatsoever in Jackson Prison or any other. I was sure of this one thing about the man but he puzzled me on the rest of it. Well, I said, "I've got"--when we got to Chicago--I had ~~not~~ noticed the UAW people on the train--saw some in the station--so I told this man, "I got separate rooms for both of us at the Palmer House." And he said, "No, I don't want to stay there" he said, "it's too late tonight to do anything, and I'll go to my place where I like to stay in Chicago, and meet you in the morning." So there was nothing I could do but agree to that. He --and I had him followed--I went to the Palmer House. And it wasn't long before I got a call from the UAW people who were following him that they'd lost him. He had gotten & it developed later--he was a very suspicious guy, and

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was constantly doing things to throw off anyone who might be following him. In fact, he told me a couple of days later-- or the next day--he said, "You know, I was ~~xxxx~~ being followed, but I shook the two guys who were following me." And he says, "So if I am, you probably are being followed. Now what you do is --" and he give me several maneuvers--standard maneuvers-- to throw off --they are employed commonly to throw off people who are following you. And turning corners and suddenly making an about-face and going back in the direction from which you've come, going through buildings, various things like that. So I thanked him very much, and told him I thought he was being overly suspicious, and he said, "no, they'll never follow me very far, but he says \_\_\_\_" So I said, "But how would anybody know that we're in Chicago?" And he said, "I don't know but somebody does." So I said, "Fine, now." And the next mornigg he called me as he said he would and we had a date for like two o'clock that afternoon for me to meet this man. At two

o'clock my informant showed up with an excuse why the other man couldn't be there. He was sorry, but he was going to be a day late, but he'd be there the next day. The UAW was very high in this situation and they induced the Prosecutor, then Jerry O'Brien, and a couple of his assistants to come over to Chicago to be there in case the thing developed. Because, as they say, they were picked up little things around Detroit that sort of tied in with this story, which seems absolutely without any foundation or any credibility now; at the time it seemed to have some. Enough so we wouldn't throw it away. Well, I couldn't take the man to a meal, he preferred to eat alone; he didn't want any money, he wouldn't accept anything; they followed him, by the way. They did succeeding in <sup>locating</sup> ~~finding~~ him; he went to a fifth-rate hotel on Holstead Street where he stayed. And seemed to be familiar--just roamed around Chicago when he wasn't with me most of the time; the next day he had another excuse; the next day--and I'm getting a little bit--naturally suspicious of these excuses, and also the existence of this person--whether

he was a fictitious character, or whether he really existed.

So I said, "I can't fool around much longer. You're going to have to get me this guy or I'm going to have to go back."

He said, "Three o'clock this afternoon--he'll be--" I made an exception--so we made an appointment. In the meantime

I got a hold of a couple of detectives in Chicago, some friends of mine and met them and told them what was going on, and they said, "look, this guy come into my room tonight and when he gets back in the lobby of the hotel, grab him.

All I wanna know is, who the hell is he and what's this all about, does he know anything, and why this run-around?

So --the final --this time I said, it's the final chance, I'm going back, and the man couldn't come that day because his little boy was taking a coat hanger off the closet bar and it slipped and hit his eye and he had to rush him at the last minute to the doctor. Always an elaborate excuse like this. Including the little boy's name and age and how serious the eye was injured and how sorry he was. So

it was that night that I had him picked up. And the police

asked him who he was, what he was doing there, and he said,  
 "Why I'm visiting Chicago, I own property here." And he  
 said to the police, "What's your interest in me, what are  
 you ~~asked~~ asking me questions for?" And I said, "Well, we  
 check up on people who come to town, people who're here  
 from out of town." He said, "It must keep you pretty busy"  
 which I thought was kind of funny, considering the size of  
 Chicago. So they ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ \_\_\_\_\_, fingerprinted  
 them. And I was dying to see the results of the fingerprints.  
 And it developed that his police record went back to 1902,  
 or something like that--went way back. And he had served  
 time for everything under the sun. But con games, robberty,  
 burglary, arson, the whole but--never around Detroit. Mostly  
 in the East and also Illinois. So with this knowledge I went  
 in to see him while he was still in custody and I raised hell  
 with him. For being careless and getting arrested now, any  
 secret plans that we might have to solve this went out the  
 window. Well, he said, it's too bad, but it won't spoil it.  
 He said, "You just ~~took~~ take me out of here while I've still  
 got it" and I said "No, I won't, I'm not going to do a thing,

you can stay here forever as far as I'm concerned, I'll take you out with me on one consideration. You just tell me what this is all about. What the hell'd you bring me to Chicago for?"

~~XXXX~~ He didn't know, that probably 8 other people from Detroit were in the same thing with me. I said, "Tell me why you brought me to Chicago, who this person is and where I can find him." And he says, "Oh no, I won't tell you that, until I get out of here."

And we went back and forth on that. And I said, "Well, you're just gonna have to stay" but he had --so I left--and of course, they're going to release him afterwards--they did. So they had no reason to hold the man. But he wouldn't tell the police anything else except he talked about the yellow kid Wyle with whom he was a confidence man and thief and he had worked with him many, many year ago, and he talked with the Chicago police--the old-timers in the department were getting quite a kick out of him because he knew so much and was talking frankly to them about the things that he had done before. Of course he knew they had his record.

But he wouldn't tell them anything about us. To this day, I don't know what that thing was all about. And I never was able to get any father. But he had kind of a --that isn't the end of him-- that wasn't the end of the story, because about a month later, there was a--I was reading a New York paper and it ~~was~~ seems that two New York detectives had been tail~~ing~~ ing two arsonists and they were setting fire to a loft building--they poured the gasoline, they ignited it, and it exploded and it killed one of the detectives and one of the arsonists and the arsonist that was killed was my alleged informant. So that was the end of him--but I don't know-- he wasn't crazy, he was an interesting guy to talk to. Why, I say he wasn't crzy, I suppose he had to be crazy. To get ~~informed~~ involved in any way with a thing like that, because I don't think he had any knowledge of the Reuther shooting--he remembered every detail that had been printed; but he didn't offer--I knew the thing inside and out--by then, of course, having been working on it for ~~xxx~~ months, but he didn't come up with anything really new. He was always going to produce this guy, and he had a good man who did it. and had a good reason to do it. and told me the whole story. But