

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/PRIVACY ACTS SECTION

SUBJECT: CHARLES "SONNY" LISTON

FILE NUMBER: 92-7389

FBI

Date: 2/26/64

Transmit the following in _____

AIRTEL

(Type in plain text or code)

Via *ST*

AIRMAIL

(Priority or Method of Mailing)

TO: Director, FBI

FROM: SAC, Miami (92-515)

RE: SONNY LISTON - CASSIUS CLAY
 HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHT
 MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA
 2/25/64
 -AR

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Attached is a clipping appearing in the "Miami News," 2/26/64, wherein it is noted State Attorney RICHARD GERSTEIN, at Miami, had ordered today a complete report on the medical examination of SONNY LISTON, whose torn shoulder tendon lost him the heavyweight crown to CASSIUS CLAY.

It is further noted in the clipping attached that there was a diagnosis of eight doctors who went over the x-rays of LISTON, as well as examining him for more than three hours last night and concluded that LISTON when he missed on one of his punches "twisted a tendon in his massive left shoulder."

The clipping and above is submitted for the Bureau's information. Bureau will be kept advised of developments.

- ③ - Bureau (AA) (Enc. 1)
- 1 - Miami

(4)

ENCLOSURE

REC 7

MCT-14

92 - 7389

6 FEB 27 1964

EX-117

66 MAR 6 1964

Special Agent in Charge

Sent _____ M Per _____

(Mount Clipping in Space Below)

Gerstein Orders Doctors' Report On Liston Shoulder Injury

By WILLIAM TUCKER
Reporter of The Miami News

State Attorney Richard Gerstein ordered today a complete report on the medical examination of Sonny Liston whose torn shoulder tendon lost him the heavyweight crown to Cassius Clay.

Gerstein said the sudden end of the fight with Liston unable to come out for the seventh round "left me wondering whether what I had seen happen actually did happen."

No complaints or evidence or a "funny" fight have been received by his office, Gerstein said, but he wants to study the medical reports on Liston "to see if there is a basis for going any further."

Jabbing, jabbering Clay was declared the winner on a technical knockout after six rounds. The Miami Beach Boxing Commission held up Liston's \$367,000 purse until a team of doctors confirmed that his shoulder injury was sufficiently bad to make him unable to continue the bout.

Gerstein said he wanted the examination report and X-rays studied by "doctors of our own choosing" — including Dr. Joe Davis, Dade County medical examiner, and Dr. Franklin J. Evans, medical-legal adviser to the State Attorney's office.

Wires from all over the country flooded the Boxing Commission today denouncing the fight as a "disgrace" and "an insult to boxing."

Despite the agreement of eight doctors as to Liston's condition, the Commission said it also wanted to have Liston examined by its own physician. The Commission was to have a special meeting later today.

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

1-A

MIAMI NEWS

MIAMI, FLORIDA

(UNDER INVESTIGATION)

Date: 2/26/64

Edition:

Author:

Editor:

Title: CASSIUS CLAY

Character:

or

Classification: MM 105-526

Submitting Office: MIAMI, FL

72-7389-1
ENCLOSURE

Liston left St. Francis Hospital early today with his injured wing in a sling and was in seclusion later at 6351 Pine Tree Dr., Miami Beach, where handlers said he was sleeping. Doctors said his injury was not of a permanent nature.

Clay ruled as the new champion in an incredible upset because of one punch — and he didn't even throw it.

Sonny Liston, the supposedly unconquerable "killer," threw the punch and when it missed the follow-through, twisted a tendon in his massive left shoulder.

That was the diagnosis of eight doctors who went over the 7-1 favorite with X-rays and other devices for more than three hours last night and early today at St. Francis Hospital.

The sudden ending when Liston failed to answer the seventh round bell — catapulting Clay into the title — left the crowd of 6,297 stunned. Clay, 22, may have his laurels on ice for a long time because the contract had no return clause and the gabbing champ may go into the Army soon for as long as two years.

A group who paid \$50,000 for the right to promote Clay's next fight said, however, Liston is "obviously the No. 1 challenger" and Clay said that Sonny "can have a return fight if he wants it."

The crowd barely half-filled the 16,000-capacity of Miami Beach Convention Hall and cost Promoter Bill MacDonald a cool \$400,000. The "live gate" was \$402,000 of which Liston took \$367,000 when his purse was released after the doctor's report. MacDonald had said it would take twice that to get him even.

The fight was expected to gross close to \$4 million, however, in TV and other income to top all previous records.

When Liston didn't get up for the seventh round, Clay began a dance in his corner and the crowd thought he had finally flipped. But when Referee Barney Felix held Clay's hands high it began to dawn on the audience and muttering — but no cheers or wild screams — swept the hall.

The announcement five minutes later that Liston had "thrown his shoulder out" still fell on unbelieving ears.

At St. Francis Hospital, a tense crowd of fight officials and close followers of the fighters awaited Liston's arrival and examination. The Miami Beach Boxing Commission ordered his purse withheld until the report was made.

After hours of waiting, Dr. Alexander Robbins, chief physician for the commission, reported that the injury to Liston's shoulder "would be sufficient to incapacitate him and prevent him from defending himself."

The 30-year-old fallen champion "suffered the injury to the long head of the biceps tendon of the left shoulder with the result there is separation and tear of muscle fibers with some

hemorrhage of the muscle belly," the statement said.

Liston, also wearing two pieces of tape under his left eye where Clay opened a cut in the second round, said he injured himself late in the first round.

"I tried to throw a left hook," he said in a voice almost inaudible. "It missed, I felt something snap.

"I just couldn't throw a punch . . . not the jab anyway. My arm was killing me."

He did not appear in too much discomfort with his arm down when he arrived at the

hospital or when he left with it in a sling. A cast was not necessary.

Both camps loudly disclaimed any suggestion of a rigged match.

"Put a Bible before me and I'll swear it was on the level," said Jack Nilon, Liston's manager.

"This is no fix," screamed Clay. "I am the greatest. He didn't touch me. I closed both his eyes."

Former heavyweight champion Joe Louis commented after the fourth round that Clay "is surprising the whole world."

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

at

Mr. Tolson	_____
Mr. DeLoach	_____
Mr. Mohr	_____
Mr. Casper	_____
Mr. Callahan	_____
Mr. Conrad	_____
Mr. DeLoach	_____
Mr. Evans	_____
Mr. Gale	_____
Mr. Rosen	_____
Mr. Sullivan	_____
Mr. Tavel	_____
Mr. Trotter	_____
Tele. Room	_____
Mr. Holmes	_____
Miss Gandy	_____

TO : Mr. Evans *Ear*

DATE: 2-25-64

FROM : A. B. Eddy

SUBJECT: CLAY-LISTON HEAVYWEIGHT FIGHT
February 25, 1964

[REDACTED]

b7C In accordance with your instructions, night supervisor [REDACTED] telephonically contacted ASAC Harry J. Morgan, Miami Office at approximately 11:00 PM, 2-25-64 regarding the outcome of above-captioned world championship fight. In view of the unusual manner in which the fight was conducted and its results, ASAC Morgan was requested to remain alert through informants and other sources available to the Miami Office for any information bearing upon the possibility the fight was not legitimate. It was pointed out to Morgan no investigation is to be conducted but any information bearing upon this subject should not be treated casually and the Bureau should be advised immediately.

ACTION:

None. For information.

[REDACTED] (6)

Q ch8
ds
Q

W. King
b7C

9-24

[REDACTED]

REC 5

92-7389-7

4 MAR 3 1964

EX-114

59 MAR 9 1964

SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE DIVISION

March 3, 1964

The Washington Field Office is ^{b7C} being instructed to interview [REDACTED] for full details in the absence of information which would make such an interview inadvisable.

A *V. J. [unclear]*

Viper

FBI

Date: 3/2/64

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plain text or code)

Via AIRTEL AIR MAIL
(Priority or Method of Mailing)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

FROM: SAC, LOUISVILLE (62-NEW)

RE: SONNY OCASINS b7C
LISTON - CLAY CHAMPIONSHIP
FIGHT
MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA
2/25/64
INFORMATION CONCERNING

[REDACTED]

*2nd fight
was on Feb 23rd*

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

*b7C
b7D
C*

[REDACTED]

- 3 - Bureau
- 2 - WFO (Info.)
- 4 - Louisville (2 - 62-NEW)
 - (1 - 100-4558)
 - (1 - 100-4290)

REC-34

192 - 7389 - 3

6 MAR 3 1964

(9) *3/6/64*

EX-114

Approved: _____ Sent _____ M Per _____
Special Agent in Charge

cc Evans

XXXXXX
XXXXXX
XXXXXX

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
FOIPA DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET

2

Page(s) withheld entirely at this location in the file. One or more of the following statements, where indicated, explain this deletion.



Deleted under exemption(s) b7C, b7D with no segregable material available for release to you.



Information pertained only to a third party with no reference to you or the subject of your request.



Information pertained only to a third party. Your name is listed in the title only.



Documents originated with another Government agency(ies). These documents were referred to that agency(ies) for review and direct response to you.

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For your information: _____



The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:

92-7389-3 pgs 2,3.

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X FOR THIS PAGE X
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3/6/64

Airtel

To: SAC, Washington Field (62-New)

From: Director, FBI (62-New)

EX-114 REC-34 92-1357-3

LISTON - CLAY CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHT
MAIMI BEACH, FLORIDA, 2/25/64
INFORMATION CONCERNING

Re Louisville airtel 3/2/64.

b7c

Immediately interview [redacted] for any specific information he may possess that the captioned fight was possibly fixed. Interview should be conducted in the absence of any information available to you which would make such an interview inadvisable. Ascertain if he has made any comments of this nature and the basis for such comments.

[redacted]

Background information on [redacted] was furnished to your office by copy of Bureau letter to Richmond dated 3/26/62 captioned, [redacted]

Furnish results of interview to Bureau promptly.

NOTE:

[redacted]

- Tolson _____
- Belmont _____
- Mohr _____
- Casper _____
- Callahan _____
- Conrad _____
- DeLoach _____
- Evans _____
- Gale _____
- Rosen _____
- Sullivan _____
- Tavel _____
- Trotter _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Holmes _____
- Gandy _____

MAILED 25
MAR 6 - 1964
COMM-FBI

MAR 11 1964
(4)
[Handwritten initials]

MAIL ROOM TELETYPE UNIT

[Handwritten initials]

F B I

Date: 3/10/64

Mr. Tolson	_____
Mr. Belmont	_____
Mr. Mohr	_____
Mr. Casper	_____
Mr. Callahan	_____
Mr. Conrad	_____
Mr. DeLoach	_____
Mr. Evans	_____
Mr. Gale	_____
Mr. Rosen	_____
Mr. Sullivan	_____
Mr. Tavel	_____
Mr. Trotter	_____
Tele. Room	_____
Miss Holmes	_____
Miss Gandy	_____

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plain text or code)

Via AIRTEL

(Priority or Method of Mailing)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

FROM: SAC, WFO (62-8986) (C)
Son. J. Liston

LISTON - CLAY CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHT
MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, 2/25/64
INFORMATION CONCERNING

b7C

Re Louisville airtel to Bureau 3/2/64 and Bureau airtel to WFO 3/6/64.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

b7C
b7D

[REDACTED]

- 3 - Bureau
- 1 - Louisville (62-New) (Info)
- 1 - WFO

RL

(5) [REDACTED] *b7C*

EX 104

REC-9 92-7307-4

NICHOLS

AIRTEL

C. C. Wick
Approved: *[Signature]*

Special Agent in Charge

Sent _____ M Per _____
10 MAR 12 1964

100 - Leads - Clay fight (1539)

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION FOIPA DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET

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92-7389-4 p 2

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WFO 62-8986

In view of the non-specific information concerning
the fight [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] no further investigation
is contemplated by this office UACB.

b7C

Date 2/24/64

To

Director

Att. Asst. Director

FILE #

N. P. CALLAHAN

SAC ADM. DIVISION

Title DAUGHTER OF

ASAC

Supv. *5115* BUAP

Agent

SE

CC

Steno

Clerk

- Mr. Tolson
- Mr. DeLoach
- Mr. Mohr
- Mr. Bishop
- Mr. Casper
- Mr. Callahan
- Mr. Conrad
- Mr. Felt
- Mr. Gale
- Mr. Rosen
- Mr. Sullivan
- Mr. Tavel
- Mr. Trotter
- Tele. Room
- Miss Holmes
- Miss Gandy

ACTION DESIRED

- Acknowledge
- Assign.....Reassign.....
- Bring file
- Call me
- Correct
- Deadline.....
- Deadline passed
- Delinquent
- Discontinue
- Expedite
- File
- For information
- Initial & return
- Leads need attention
- Return with explanation or notation as to action taken.

- Open Case
- Prepare lead card
- Prepare tickler
- Recharge serial
- Return assignment card
- Return file
- Return serials
- Search and return
- See me
- Send Serials.....
- to
- Submit new charge-out
- Submit report by.....
- Type

Note last paragraph of Honolulu sport columnist RED McQUEEN indicating that heavyweight boxer SONNY LISTON's step-daughter has applied for a job with the FBI.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

See reverse side

SAC..... *[Signature]*

Office HONOLULU

Anything Can Happen—Louis—

DID YOU KNOW CASSIUS rode an elephant when he led a circus parade in Miami a couple of weeks ago?

"He should have been the clown!"

"Don't write the fight off," Joe Louis interrupted. "Clay has a longer reach than Sonny." (Sonny interrupts.)

"The distance to the canvas is the same, Joe! (Both men laugh.)

Louis continues: "Clay isn't a bloated-up heavyweight. Natural heavyweight, 208 pounds. Better style than Patterson. Got the fastest hands of any heavyweight. (Sonny snaps:)

"Yeah, as fast as his mouth."

Joe continues: "When two big guys get in the ring anything can happen."

Clay called the eighth round as the one in which he'll win. What do you think?

"One way or the other, somebody goes earlier than that."

How early?

"I hope to break my 2 minute-6 second record with Patterson and rock Cassius to sleep in less than that. I don't want to make Patterson look bad."

What is the record for a quick kayo?

"I knocked Eddie Simms out in 18 seconds," said Louis.

If you and Joe fought in Joe's prime, Sonny, who do you think would be left standing up?

"That'll never be answered," Joe said, "but I'd like Sonny and me to split the closed TV money on that one."

★ ★ ★ ★ Mrs. Liston Won't See Fight

TWAS MENTIONED that the top priced seats would be \$250.

"Each?" Sonny gasped. "No kidding. I'm lucky I'm in the ring. I couldn't afford to be in the audience."

"See," Joe smiled, "I told you he makes jokes now."

Are you going to see the fight, Mrs. Liston?

"No, I'll stay at a hotel near Tropical Park and read a book. I never watch my husband fight. I get tired waiting for it to start, having to watch the prelim boys first."

How long have you been married?

"Twelve years."

Any children?

"Two—17 and 13. (Ed's note: by a former marriage.) The older girl is going to business college, taking pre-law, and has applied for a job with the FBI."

At the mention of a Liston working for the FBI, both Sonny and Joe broke up the interview and howled with glee.

FBI

Date: 3-20-64

Mr. Tolson	✓
Mr. DeLoach	✓
Mr. Mohr	✓
Mr. Casper	✓
Mr. Callahan	✓
Mr. Conrad	✓
Mr. Felt	✓
Mr. Gale	✓
Mr. Rosen	✓
Mr. Sullivan	✓
Mr. Tavel	✓
Mr. Trotter	✓
Tele. Room	✓
Miss Holmes	✓
Miss Gandy	✓

Transmit the following in _____ (Type in plain text or code)

Via AIRTEL _____ (Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI

FROM: SAC, MIAMI (92-515) (P)

SUBJECT: SONNY LISTON - CASSIUS CLAY
HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHT
MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA,
2-25-64
AR ANTIRACKETEERING

[REDACTED]
b7C

Re Miami airtel to Bureau, 2-26-64.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

b7C
b7D

REC-23 97-1089-5

[REDACTED]

REC-100

6 MAR 23 1964

3-Bureau
1-Miami

b7C

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Approved: _____
Special Agent in Charge

Sent _____ M Per _____

53 APR 1 1964

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION FOIPA DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET

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92-7389-5 pgs 2,3

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(Mount Clipping in Space Below)



HONOLULU

By **RED McQUEEN**

SPORTS EDITOR

Liston Learns To Smile

TIME WAS WHEN he was probably the most hated man in the history of boxing.

If he can knock loud-mouth Cassius Clay cold with one punch Tuesday night he will become the most popular champ of all time.

Anyway, Sonny Liston, after an unsteady start, is beginning to wear the mantle of heavyweight king in the best tradition of his predecessors.

Tired of being the bad boy of boxing, the champ is determined to change his image.

"You'll be surprised the way Sonny talks a blue streak and keeps smiling," the once taciturn and poker-faced Joe Louis told Hy Gardner of the New York Herald Tribune as they met in the theater-restaurant of the Thunderbird Hotel in Las Vegas where the



Liston



Louis



Clay

champ was breaking up his training camp preparatory to leaving for Miami Beach to finish his training.

Louis and Gardner were joined at a table by Sonny and his wife Geraldine and the following tape-recorded interview ensued:

How come you've suddenly learned how to smile?

"Before I had nuthin' to smile about when they wouldn't let me fight Patterson."

Does Cassius Clay make you smile?

"He makes me laugh out loud."

Do you think you'll have any trouble with him?

"Not in the ring."

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city and state.)

THE HONOLULU ADVERTISER
HONOLULU, HAWAII

PAGE C-1

Date: 2/22/64

Edition: ***

Author: RED MC QUEEN

Editor: GEORGE CHAPLIN

Title:

Character:

or

Classification: 67-

Submitting Office: HONOLULU

92-7384-15
NOT RECORDED
128 MAR 17 1964

MAR 18 1964

File

PERS. REC. UNIT

Tolson ✓
 Belmont ✓
 Mohr _____
 Casper _____
 Callahan _____
 Conrad _____
 DeLoach ✓
 Evans ✓
 Gale _____
 Rosen ✓
 Sullivan _____
 Tavel _____
 Trotter _____
 Tele Room _____
 Holmes _____
 Gandy _____



MUHAMMED ALI, OR AS THE man who used to be Cassius Clay pronounces it, Mohammed A. Lee, might be getting a bad rap from the World Boxing Association.

There are so many better reasons to suspend him than the big one stated by WBA president Ed Lassman—"Setting a very poor example for the youth of the world."

True, the WBA is also moving the world away from Muhammed because he took \$50,000 from Sonny Liston's matchmaking corporation, Intercontinental Promotions, to sign for a rematch.

The WBA would have been wiser to proceed on the rematch contract alone.

THAT IS AGAINST THE LAW, as defined by the Supreme Court in 1955, and against the boxing rules, as defined by the WBA.

As it stands, the WBA appears to be turning a pretty good case into a religious persecution.

Clay, or Ali or whatever he chooses to call himself today, has every right to belong to whatever nutty group that will have him. With an I.Q. of 78, his decision was not particularly surprising.

There are darn few professional fighters that any clear-thinking parent would want his children to emulate. There have been world champions who were dope addicts, procurers, drunks, thieves and worse. None of them was disciplined.

In many ways, the WBA is acting like a hunter who fires before he has his target in his sights.

The best course would be to determine all the facts, then act. That is the job Sen. Phil Hart (D.-Mich.) begins today.

THE SENATE STILL HAS BEFORE it the Kefauver Bill, which would regulate the monopolistic practices in boxing—such as return bout contracts—and set up a National Boxing Commission as part of the Justice Department.

Today, more than ever, the bill needs action. But Sen. Hart is going about his task as quietly as possible.

—With nearly 100 witnesses heard before Sen. Kefauver's death, Sen. Hart plans to limit his probe to the dealings that went into the staging of the Liston-Clay fight.

He, too, is disturbed by Clay's rematch contract, but he is waiting until the evidence is in before he makes a move. You can't argue with that.

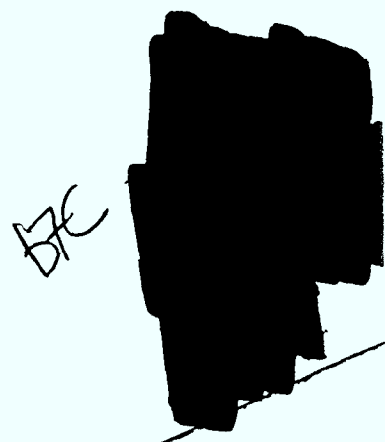
IN A STATEMENT YESTERDAY, Sen. Hart hinted that he was less interested in the fighters themselves than the men around them.

He spoke of the public's lack of confidence in boxing, and the "suspicion" that "hidden manipulators" are the ones who make the big money from the \$5 million gates.

But he did not draw any conclusions.

They will come from the testimony of the men closest to the action—the men behind Liston and Clay.

The WBA might be smart to sit and listen. It might learn something that would make its action worthwhile.



*No: Liston - Clay F.
 Miami Fla.
 2/25/64
 Miscellaneous*

The Washington Post and _____
 Times Herald _____
 The Washington Daily News 3
 The Evening Star _____
 New York Herald Tribune _____
 New York Journal-American _____
 New York Mirror _____
 New York Daily News _____
 New York Post _____
 The New York Times _____
 The Worker _____
 The New Leader _____
 The Wall Street Journal _____
 The National Observer _____
 People's World _____
 Date _____

NOT RECORDED
46 APR 3 1964

File 92-7389-1A

9-21

MAR 24 1964

Tolson _____
 Belmont _____
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 Casper _____
 Callahan _____
 Conrad _____
 DeLoach _____
 Evans _____
 Gale _____
 Rosen _____
 Sullivan _____
 Tavel _____
 Trotter _____
 Tele. Room _____
 Holmes _____
 Gandy _____



*W. Lester - City, Tex
 Miami, Fla
 1/25/64
 these names*

Cassidy

UPI-66

ADD 1 BOXING, WASHINGTON (UPI-42)
 KEATING ASSERTED THAT CLAY'S ACTIONS BEFORE AND SINCE THE TITLE
 FIGHT WERE BRINGING HOME TO BOXING FANS "THE SEEDY ASPECTS OF THE FIGHT
 GAME."

HE TOOK STRONG EXCEPTION TO CLAY'S ASSOCIATION WITH THE BLACK
 MUSLIM MOVEMENT, WHICH HE SAID WAS "IN FAVOR OF SOWING THE SEEDS OF
 RACIAL HATE AND VIOLENCE."

KEATING, WHO DECLARED HIMSELF IN FAVOR OF A NATIONAL BOXING COM-
 MISSION UNDER THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, CONCLUDED: "I DO KNOW THAT
 AMERICANS OF EVERY RACE, REGARDLESS OF THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD PROFES-
 SIONAL BOXING, LOCK DOWN UPON THOSE IN THE WORLD OF SPORTS WHO MATCH
 THEIR ATHLETIC PROGRESS WITH ARROGANCE AND CONTEMPT FOR THE SOCIETY THAT
 HAS MADE THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS POSSIBLE."

CHERRY, WHO DESCRIBED LISTON AS TOTALLY INCOMPREHENDING OF BUSINESS
 AFFAIRS, RELATED THAT INITIALLY LISTON HELD 50 PER CENT OR 500 SHARES
 OF THE INTERCONTINENTAL STOCK. THE ATTORNEY SAID THAT HE AND ROBERT
 AND JAMES NILON, BROTHERS OF LISTON'S MANAGER, HELD THE OTHER 50 PER
 CENT.

HE SAID THAT IN DECEMBER MARGOLIS BROUGHT HIM TWO BLANK STOCK
 CERTIFICATES SIGNED BY LISTON AND THAT ON JACK NILON'S INSTRUCTIONS,
 275 OF LISTON'S SHARES WERE TRANSFERRED TO THE PHILADELPHIAN.

LATER, CHERRY TESTIFIED, MARGOLIS TRANSFERRED 50 SHARES OF HIS
 HOLDING TO SALVATORE AVENA OF CAMDEN, N.J.

THE ATTORNEY SAID THAT AT THE TIME OF THE STOCK TRANSFER, HE
 DIDN'T KNOW WHY MARGOLIS WAS GETTING THE SHARES. HE SAID HE LATER
 LEARNED THAT MARGOLIS FELT THAT SINCE HE HAD HELPED SET UP INTER-
 CONTINENTAL, HE CONVINCED LISTON HE WAS ENTITLED TO SOME SORT OF
 PAYMENT.

CHERRY ALSO RELATED THAT ALTHOUGH LISTON WAS PRESIDENT OF THE
 CORPORATION, HE WAS PURELY A FIGUREHEAD AND THE NILONS WERE SPE-
 CIFICALLY EMPOWERED TO RUN THE OPERATION.

ASKED HOW MUCH MARGOLIS WOULD GET FOR HIS SHARES, CHERRY SAID
 THAT IT WOULD PROBABLY COME TO ABOUT \$100,000 AFTER TAXES. IN ADDI-
 TION, LISTON GOT 40 PER CENT OF THE PROCEEDS FROM THE FIGHT AS THE
 CHAMPION'S SHARE WHILE CLAY GOT 20 PER CENT.

92-7389-A

3/24--TD1139AES

NOT RECORDED

46 APR 3 1964

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WASHINGTON CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

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HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHT,
MIAMI BEACH, FEBRUARY 25, 1964
ANTI-RACKETEERING

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3/30/64

Airtel

REC-23 92-7389-6

To: SAC, Miami (92-915)

From: Director, FBI

CASSIUS CLAY-SONNY LISTON
HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHT
MIAMI BEACH, FEBRUARY 25, 1964
ANTI-RACKETEERING

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Does Boxing Need a Federal Czar?

Senators Square Off With Liston's
Corner Men

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WASHINGTON, D.C.

The glaring television lights in the Senate Judiciary Committee's paneled hearing room blinded everyone—senators, assistants, witnesses, and spectators alike—as though they were all getting the third degree. In a way it was appropriate.

The occasion was the three-day hearing of the Senate antitrust and monopoly subcommittee last week. The hearings were being held in connection with proposed legislation that would establish Federal control over prize fighting and create a national boxing commissioner in the Department of Justice. Testimony centered on the negotiations leading up to the Sonny Liston-Cassius Clay (now known as Muhammad Ali) heavyweight title fight.

Of particular interest to the senators were the activities of Intercontinental Promotions, Inc., the Pennsylvania corporation that promoted the fight and is controlled by Liston; Jack Nilon, Liston's adviser; Nilon's brothers, Bob and Jim; and Sam Margolis, a Philadelphia vending-machine operator.

The Cynics Have a Word for K

This far-sighted group also thoughtfully arranged to purchase from Clay's Louisville backers the rights to promote his next fight. The group neglected to disclose this arrangement to boxing authorities in Miami Beach, where the Liston-Clay fight was staged, a fact that fed the suspicions of a fix after Clay's startling upset. There isn't any evidence that the fight was fixed, although some cynics have noted that the arrangement would allow the corporation to stage a rematch between Liston and Clay. This would be enormously profitable, and many have wondered why Liston's own group showed such an interest in the future of his opponent at a time when Clay's abilities and chances of victory were almost universally scorned.

Rematch clauses for championship fights violate the regulations of the World Boxing Association (WBA), a confederation of the state boxing commissions in the United States (with the exception of New York) and those of several other countries. There is a reason for this: To prevent suspicions of fixing and to keep deposed champions from monopolizing the new title-holders' defenses.

The problem is that there is little that the WBA can do to enforce this regulation. As attorney Garland Cherry, secretary of

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- The Washington Post and Times Herald _____
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- The Evening Star _____
- New York Herald Tribune _____
- New York Journal-American _____
- New York Mirror _____
- New York Daily News _____
- New York Post _____
- The New York Times _____
- The Worker _____
- The New Leader _____
- The Wall Street Journal _____
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- People's World _____
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Garland Cherry (left), lawyer for the promoters of Liston's fights, testifies before the Senate subcommittee investigating boxing. At Cherry's elbow: Liston's adviser, Jack Nilon.

Intercontinental Promotions, put it: "The reality of the situation is such that if we desire to hold a fight in any state, the chances are that the boxing commission of that state would meet us at the plane."

Nevertheless, the corporation failed to notify the Miami Beach Boxing Commission, a WBA affiliate that licensed the match, of the rematch provisions. "Was the commission not told in order to avoid trouble with the authorities?" inquired Sen. Kenneth Keating, Republican of New York. "Precisely right," Cherry responded.

There is another problem. Intercontinental's right to promote Clay's next fight is not necessarily a rematch clause. It can name Liston as the challenger, but it doesn't have to; it can name anyone else it so desires. And rematch clauses are illegal under the Federal antitrust laws only if they are proved to be instrumental

in the monopolizing of a championship by one fighter or promotional group.

Intercontinental's right to promote Clay was a condition Clay's sponsors had to agree to in order to get last February's fight, however. Intercontinental also demanded that half of Clay's purse from the championship bout, amounting to about \$225,000, be placed in escrow to insure that he shows up for his next bout, Gordon Davidson, an attorney for Clay's sponsors, testified. "This escrow was jammed down my clients' throats," he told the subcommittee. He explained that Liston had had to agree to a somewhat similar escrow arrangement before his first fight with Floyd Patterson in the event Patterson wanted a rematch.

Cherry testified that Liston's chances for the rematch depend on how his arm heals and the outcome of his recent arrest in Denver on charges of speeding and

carrying a concealed weapon. There has been talk of an elimination tournament among Patterson, twice heavyweight champion, Doug Jones, Eddie Machen, and Cleveland Williams, all top-ranked fighters, to determine the next challenger.

The subcommittee members were interested in other of the organization's pre-fight activities, also. Much of their interest centered on Liston's gift of more than half his shares of Intercontinental Promotions to Margolis, a long-time friend. When the corporation was formed, Liston received 500 shares—50 per cent—with the Nilon brothers getting most of the rest. Before the fight Liston gave 275 of these shares to Margolis, which will yield him an estimated \$100,000 after taxes of the Liston-Clay fight income.

"It sounds to me like Liston was fleeced," Sen. John McClellan commented acidly. Cherry heatedly denied the senator's allegation. Liston, he contended, "made a better deal with Intercontinental than has ever been made in the history of boxing." Liston's share, he estimated, will still total about \$500,000 after taxes. The gift, he continued, was payment for Margolis' services in introducing Liston to Jack Nilon and in helping to form Intercontinental. "Isn't that a rather large finder's fee?" the senator inquired. Cherry conceded that it was.

Nilon, who testified after Cherry, appeared to be considerably less concerned about Margolis than the subcommittee members. "Personally, I feel that anyone who can put up with Mr. Liston's antics—even if he got the whole thing—he'd be underpaid," he said. Liston "dogged it" in training, Nilon said, complained of minor ailments ("if he caught cold he acted as if he were dying"), and surrounded himself with hangers-on who assured him that Clay would be too frightened to get off his stool.

Problems of a Fight Manager

Among these hangers-on was gambler Joseph "Pep" Barone, once part owner of Liston's contract along with Frank "Blinky" Palermo, who now is appealing a Federal conviction for shaking down a California boxing manager. "Sonny thinks an awful lot of Mr. Barone," Nilon said. "He thinks Barone is good luck. Sonny's very superstitious—he won't let you throw a straw hat on the bed, for example."

This interested Sen. Philip Hart, Democrat of Michigan, the subcommittee chairman. "Isn't it a manager's duty to train his fighter and get rid of the hangers-on?" he inquired. "You don't know Liston, he's a very difficult man," Nilon sighed. "You have to be around him to appreciate him."

The hearings were something of a break for Ed Lassman of Miami Beach, the president of the World Boxing Association. Two days before they started, Lassman announced that the association was considering taking Clay's title away from him because of his agreement allowing Intercontinental Promotions to handle his next fight and because his conduct, both before and after winning the championship, was a liability to boxing. "He is a detriment to the boxing world and a poor example for the youth of the world," Lassman charged.

Lassman Makes a Hasty Retreat

He got little encouragement from most of the rest of the boxing world. Spokesmen for the Illinois and New York state boxing commissions promptly declared that as far as they were concerned, the only way Clay could lose his title was in the ring.

When the hearings began, Lassman retreated from his stand and said his association would withhold action until the subcommittee had finished considering its proposed legislation. He is scheduled to testify this week and has indicated that he, too, will urge the establishment of a Federal boxing commissioner. Whether this is ever realized, many can agree with Senator Hart's statement that boxing has become "the object of general public disrespect and distrust."

—JAMES R. DICKENSON

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File in → BKC
 9/14 *Re: Liston - Clay Fight*
Miami, Fla.
2/23/69
Messellman



UPI-105

ADD 1 BOXING, WASHINGTON (UPI-66)
 VENDING MACHINE OPERATOR SAM MARGOLIS TESTIFIED TODAY THAT HE HAD A "VERBAL AGREEMENT" WITH LISTON UNDER WHICH HE GOT HALF OF LISTON'S STOCK IN THE FIRM WHICH PROMOTED LISTON'S CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHT WITH CASSIUS CLAY.

MARGOLIS EXPLAINED THAT HE REPRESENTED LISTON AS A "FRIEND" IN NEGOTIATIONS WHICH SET UP THE UNUSUAL PROMOTIONAL VENTURE IN WHICH LISTON SHARED. MARGOLIS SAID HE HAD BEEN FRIENDS WITH LISTON SINCE THE FIGHTER USED TO RUN UP A TAB AT SANSOM'S, THE PHILADELPHIA RESTAURANT HE ONCE OWNED WITH FRANK "BLINKY" PALERMO AND PALERMO'S SON-IN-LAW.

SEN. KENNETH B. KEATING, R-N.Y., ASKED MARGOLIS WHETHER STEPS WERE EVEN TAKEN TO REDUCE THE LISTON-MARGOLIS AGREEMENT TO WRITING. "NO," MARGOLIS REPLIED, "I TRUSTED SONNY."

MARGOLIS, A HEAVY SET MAN WITH SWEEP-BACK GREY HAIR, GAVE A LONG ACCOUNT OF HIS DEALINGS WITH LISTON TO THE SUBCOMMITTEE. TRANSFER OF HALF OF LISTON'S STOCK IN THE PROMOTIONAL FIRM, INTERCONTINENTAL SPORTS INC., HAD FIGURED IN PREVIOUS TESTIMONY.

"WHAT WAS THE CONSIDERATION?" ASKED KEATING, SEEKING THE REASON MARGOLIS GOT HALF OF LISTON'S HALF-INTEREST IN THE COMPANY.

"SETTING UP THE PROMOTION," SAID MARGOLIS, AFTER DETAILING TWO YEARS OF WHAT HE CALLED "DICKERING" WITH BOB NILCN, THE CHESTER, PA., PROMOTER WHO ACTUALLY HANDLED THE MIAMI BEACH TITLE FIGHT IN WHICH CLAY SCORED A STUNNING UPSET OVER LISTON.

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MARGOLIS SAID HE WAS SURE THAT NILON MUST HAVE KNOWN THAT MARGOLIS WOULD SHARE IN LISTON'S INTERESTS. NILON MUST HAVE ASKED HIMSELF "WHAT'S HE DICKERING FOR -- FOR NOTHING?" MARGOLIS SAID.

HE SAID HE FIRST GOT INTO THE NEGOTIATIONS WHEN PHILADELPHIA BOXING WRITER JACK FRIED TOLD HIM OF NILON'S SCHEME INVOLVING LISTON'S SHARING IN THE PROMOTION. MARGOLIS SAID HE FIRST WENT TO SEE NILON ABOUT IT IN 1961 AND THEREAFTER NURSED THE PROPOSAL THROUGH MANY OTHER MEETINGS WITH NILON AND LISTON DURING WHICH LISTON WAS BOUND BY OTHER CONTRACTS FOR OTHER FIGHTS.

"SONNY AND I HAD A VERBAL AGREEMENT THAT ANYTHING I GOT WAS HALF MINE," SAID MARGOLIS, COMMENTING THAT THE DEAL INVOLVED ONLY THE PROMOTIONAL EARNINGS AND NOT PURSES OR FEES FOR EXHIBITIONS AND THE LIKE. HE SAID HE WAS NOT PRESENT WHEN THE STOCK WAS FORMALLY ISSUED IN INTERCONTINENTAL BUT UNDERSTOOD THAT HALF OF LISTON'S WAS ISSUED TO LISTON "IN BLANK."

HE CONCEDED THAT HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND THAT TERM AND ASKED CHAIRMAN PHILIP A. HART, D-MICH., AT ONE POINT, TO GET THE QUESTIONING "DOWN TO MY LEVEL" AND SAID HE HAD PROGRESSED ONLY THROUGH THE EIGHTH GRADE IN SCHOOL.

AFTER A LONG CONFERENCE WITH ATTORNEY MCLAUGHLIN, MARGOLIS SAID HE IS CURRENTLY IN THE "VENDING BUSINESS." IN THE DISCUSSION ABOUT THE QUESTIONING OF MARGOLIS MCCLELLAN, ONE OF THE SENATE'S TOP INVESTIGATORS, STRESSED THAT THE COMMITTEE NEEDS TO KNOW, FOR ITS LEGISLATIVE WORK WHETHER THERE HAS BEEN "UNDERWORLD INFLUENCE" IN BOXING.

WITHOUT BEING SPECIFIC, MARGOLIS SAID HIS RESTAURANT ENTERPRISE WAS PRIOR TO HIS THREE-YEAR CAREER IN VENDING. HE SAID HE AND A CARLO MOSIANO (OR MUSCIANO) RENTED FACILITIES ON SOUTH 39TH ST., IN PHILADELPHIA AFTER WHICH A CORPORATION WAS FORMED WITH MARGOLIS, HIS WIFE AND PALERMO EACH HOLDING 25 PER CENT OF THE STOCK WITH THE REST HELD BY MOSIANO AND HIS WIFE ROSE.

MARGOLIS SAID MOSIANO IS THE SON-IN-LAW OF PALERMO WITH WHOM HE, MARGOLIS, MAINTAINS A "SOCIAL" RELATIONSHIP.

3/30--GE151P

Probers Search For Underworld Ties With Boxers

By the Associated Press

Senate investigators will ask more questions today about reports that underworld figures hinged around while Sonny Liston trained for his heavyweight championship fight with Cassius Clay.

They also want to know why Liston gave away stock, which brought \$100,000 in profits from the Clay fight, to a man identified as a former associate of mobster Frank (Blinky) Palermo.

These questions came up as the Senate Antitrust and Monopoly Subcommittee sought to wind up its hearings into circumstances surrounding the February 25 fight won by Clay when Liston failed to come out for the seventh round.

Keating Seeks Facts

In the new development, Senator Kenneth B. Keating, Republican of New York, asked the Senate investigators to find out whether associates of Frankie Carbo had been in Clay's and Liston's Florida training camps. Carbo, now in prison, is former underworld czar of boxing.

Keating, a member of the subcommittee making the boxing inquiry, said he had information about a Washington meeting six years ago between Carbo and fight world figures.

Keating said he had been told there was evidence stemming from New York investigations linking figures in the Clay-Listo fight with the Carb combine. He added:

"It is most essential that we

discover whether Carbo has reached out from behind prison bars and placed his cohorts in both the Liston and Clay camps."

Remaining Witnesses

The subcommittee met three days last week and heard only three of seven scheduled witnesses. Still remaining to be heard are:

1. Bob Nilon, brother of Liston's financial adviser, Jack, who was executive vice president of Inter-Continental Promotions, Inc., a firm organized to promote Liston's championship fights.
2. Sam Margolis, Philadelphia vending machine operator identified by the subcommittee as once owning an apartment house with Palermo.

Witnesses last week testified that Liston signed over to Margolis, apparently getting nothing in return, 275 of his 500-share, 50 per cent stock control in Inter-Continental.

Margolis has said he got the stock for helping Liston set up the deal to get a share of the fights' promotional profits, something fighters normally don't get.

3. Salvatore Avena, Philadelphia attorney who figured in organizing Inter-Continental and who later got 50 of the 275 shares of stock transferred to Margolis.

4. Edward Lassman, Miami Beach president of the World Boxing Association.

Trusted by Liston

Margolis was identified last week as a close friend of Liston, one the former heavyweight champion trusted greatly.

Margolis also was identified as a former associate of Palermo, and as having owned a restaurant with Palermo's son-in-law. Margolis told a reporter in Philadelphia he had sold a restaurant to Palermo's son.

Palermo, John Vitale, and Joe (Pep) Barone, all identified as underworld figures in previous testimony before the subcommittee, once reportedly controlled Liston's contract.

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- Mr. Tolson
- Mr. Belmont
- Mr. Mohr
- Mr. Casper
- Mr. Callahan
- Mr. Conrad
- Mr. DeLoach
- Mr. Evans
- Mr. Gale
- Mr. Rosen
- Mr. Sullivan
- Mr. Tavel
- Mr. Trotter
- Tele. Room



Handwritten notes:
1. Liston
2/15/64
Margolis

- The Washington Post and Times Herald _____
- The Washington Daily News _____
- The Evening Star 11-15
- New York Herald Tribune _____
- New York Journal-American _____
- New York Mirror _____
- New York Daily News _____
- New York Post _____
- The New York Times _____
- The Worker _____
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- The Wall Street Journal _____
- The National Observer _____
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