

# Schizophrenia Weaponized:

A False Flag Operation Aimed at the  
Jewish Peoples and the Republic



Bergendahl Hawkins

My name is Bergendahl Hawkins, I am mentally ill. I was meant to become a killer.

The American Government became interested in me when I was a sixteen-year-old student in Germany and a sailor in the United States Navy befriended me. In 1988, in a contrived setup in Santa Monica, California, I was wrongly charged with attempted theft and arrested, which lay the groundwork for future attempts to exploit me. For decades thereafter, efforts were made to turn me against Jews. I was given access to guns, upon which my fingerprints were (and possibly still are) imprinted. I was to become an assassin, with plausible deniability built-in for my would-be Masters. When this effort failed, I was made to leave this country, although I later returned.

This is not the first time the Government has ill-used the mentally ill. See the case of Sami Osmakac (among many others), a schizoaffective man serving a forty-year sentence after an FBI sting.

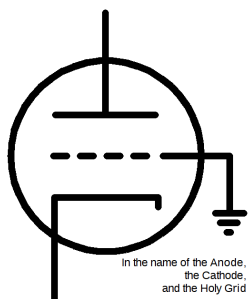
When I eventually saw through their manipulation, the Government tried to stop me from writing about it. On one occasion, as part of a desperate cover-up, I believe, they even drugged me. Also, an active account disappeared from a bank's records, as though it had never existed.

I am convinced this criminal madness was motivated by elements of this Government attempting to counter the Jewish, Zionist and Israeli lobbies, by means untraceable.

There is also the matter of what is called the National Security State. As with a matrioshka doll, this story may hide an even larger scandal, one involving this Republic and the American people as a whole. Namely the slow, perhaps inexorable, loss of their civil liberties. How did it come to this?

Lastly, I declare here my support for the BDS movement (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions) against the Israeli apartheid regime. It seems to me (I am only a handyman by trade) that what America does relentlessly (interfere in other countries), Israel does here, as well. Irony of ironies! There may be some justice in this world after all. See the work of Finkelstein, Measheimer, Walt, Blumenthal and, recently, B'Tselem.

However, I must also immediately and sincerely acknowledge a debt to my likely protectors: elements of the Jewish communities, the Zionist interest, the Los Angeles Police Department, the State of Israel-Palestine and other institutional backers. Without them, I believe I would soon have been ground to nothing under the iron heel of America's security services. I owe you much. You have my heartfelt gratitude!



I don't have to walk,  
I won't run,  
I don't need their money,  
I want a scandal.



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Český voják, dobrý voják! (The Czech soldier is a good soldier!)  
(Quote from the novel *The Good Soldier Schweik* by Jaroslav Hašek)

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PEOPLES AND THE REPUBLIC

Bergendahl Hawkins

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# DEDICATION

For Irene Hawkins (upon whose enemies, confusion) who has been more than a sister to me. Thank you, Beloved.

For Tom Ellsberg (deceased) who taught me, not least by his example, the true meaning and uses of the expression "the Clark Load." You were what I expected Americans to be when I came to this country. Would that I had had your courage.

For Colette Walczak (deceased). "Everything from without informs man that he is nothing. All within tells him that he is everything." (Quote of unknown origin). You were everything to me.

"An autobiography is only to be trusted when it reveals something disgraceful. A man who gives a good account of himself is probably lying, since any life when viewed from the inside is simply a series of defeats."

- George Orwell

When my love swears that she is made of truth,  
I do believe her, though I know she lies,  
That she might think me some untutored youth,  
Unlearnèd in the world's false subtleties...  
Oh, love's best habit is in seeming trust,  
And age in love loves not to have years told.  
Therefore I lie with her and she with me,  
And in our faults by lies we flattered be.

- William Shakespeare (Sonnet 138)

"In my childhood and teenage years I witnessed serfdom at its worst. It saturated all strata of social life, not just the landlords and the enslaved masses, degrading all classes, privileged or otherwise, with its atmosphere of a total lack of rights, when fraud and trickery were the order of the day, and there was an all-pervading fear of being crushed and destroyed at any moment."

- Mikhail Yevgrafovich Saltykov-Shchedrin

William Roper:

So, now you give the Devil the benefit of law!

Sir Thomas More:

Yes! What would you do? Cut a great road through the law to get after the Devil?

William Roper:

Yes, I'd cut down every law in England to do that!

Sir Thomas More:

Oh? And when the last law was down, and the Devil turned 'round on you, where would you hide, Roper, the laws all being flat? This country is planted thick with laws, from coast to coast, Man's laws, not God's! And if you cut them down, and you're just the man to do it, do you really think you could stand upright in the winds that would blow then? Yes, I'd give the Devil benefit of law, for my own safety's sake!

- Robert Bolt (A Man for All Seasons)

"You would have me cut down the Law in order to chase after Devils. What will you do, with the Law cut down, when the Devil comes after you?"

(Unknown source, possibly corrupted from the above quote)



# PREFACE

I must first apologize for the quality of the writing in this book. And for some of the contents as well, unfortunately. When undertaking to clean Augean stables without benefit of a river to ease the task, expect sewage.

Any defects in my prose reflect on me and me only, not on the kind people who were willing to "brave the elements" and help.

In telling this story, I have chosen to practice a "scorched earth" policy. I mean to reveal everything about the last fifty years of my life and the lives of those whose paths have intersected mine, regardless of the consequences; so long as the information revealed is truthful, complete and relevant. These have been my only criteria when considering the possible inclusion of an event, an utterance or the mention of a person; however painful or embarrassing the recollection for me or others.

I don't care who you are.

In these pages, willing to court disaster, I will therefore dispense with the pablum of the *bien-pensant* (the right-thinking, conventional people).

This book is not only an examination and criticism of the so-called "Organs of State Security" of this country though they get first billing, of the owning classes or of its political leadership. It is also an implicit examination and criticism of the citizens – that is: you, Gentle Reader, for reasons which, I hope, will become apparent. It is equally meant to be a ruthless examination and criticism of me: *Le dindon de la farce*. Sorry, no translation available here.

The book has turned out to be bigger and less lively than could be wished. It is more shopping list than memoir. A shopping list of interest to the magistrate, I believe. My one regret is that, at times, due to inexperience and lack of sophistication, I may have displayed an unfortunate "excess of zeal" which I apologize for in advance.

I would also ask that, should you find the facts recounted here sufficiently intriguing, you consult the included CD. It contains much more corroborating information: over a hundred additional pages in the form of emails sent out over several years to a group of people, selected diary entries and a list of events occurring in my bungalow. The emails lay out things that, in the interest of brevity, are only touched on here. I would especially recommend email #7, Technical Edition. In it you will find a detailed list of some of the means and methods used against me by the Government's security services in the last decade.

As I review this manuscript prior to publication, it is with trepidation that I prepare to publish. I don't think a normal person could fully grasp the enormity of the environment I have lived in for over three decades or swallow whole the story I tell here.

One of the salient aspects of this business, an affair that threatens to become a scandal, is the obvious incompetence displayed by all parties involved.

1. On the one hand, the American *Securitate*, selecting me as their target. Me, a nobody with, to put it politely, an interest in underage girls, an utter lack of sophistication and common sense, and mentally ill to boot. Ultimately, they have failed in their efforts despite the fifty years they spent investigating me — defining and carrying out their dark design.

2. On the other hand, the civil society in which this *Securitate* is embedded and to which it supposedly must answer similarly failed resoundingly in preventing, among other things, a monstrosity (partially sketched out in Figure 31 — the diagram titled "The Infrastructure of Oppression") from being developed and put into action.

3. And, lastly, myself. Consider that I felt it a likely proposition that two Jews (or people with Jewish-sounding names) could and would persecute me, for reasons unclear — pursuing me for years, practically to the ends of the earth. *Kommentar überflüssig!*

The manifest incompetence, ill-will and/or cowardice of all involved is clearly on display here. To quote: “It is worse than a crime; it is a mistake.” (Opinions differ on the quote’s source.) This is pitiful.

Moreover, others, quietly watching this circus, may be taking detailed notes.

Bergendahl Hawkins, Los Angeles, 5/25/2021

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My gratitude goes out to R.E. and S.F., without whose editing I scarcely dare show my face.

To B.W. and, from you, to the very edge of the karass.

# INTRODUCTION

## *J'accuse...! "Lettre au Président de la République"*

- Émile Zola (Regarding the Dreyfus Affair)

I am prepared to make the following accusations against elements of the United States Government regarding their actions towards me and others, acts I have witnessed over the last fifty years:

- That they are guilty of crimes against humanity as defined by the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC)
- That they are guilty of numerous instances of making terrorist threats
- That they are guilty of numerous instances of threatening sexual violence
- That they are guilty of multiple Racketeer Influenced Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO) offenses
- That they are guilty of civil and human rights violations
- That they are guilty of numerous instances of computer hacking
- That they are guilty of attempted blackmail
- That they are guilty of numerous instances of burglary and theft
- That they are guilty of instances of attempted embezzlement
- That they are guilty of numerous instances of auto insurance fraud
- That they are guilty of assault
- That they are guilty of numerous instances of restraint of trade
- That they are guilty of numerous instances of credit card fraud
- That they are guilty of numerous instances of destruction of evidence
- That they are guilty of auto theft
- That they are guilty of numerous instances of vandalism

From my limited understanding of the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO), the statutes specifically enable prosecution of the leaders of a criminal organization for having ordered or assisted others to commit crimes. There is also, I believe, the precedent, set down at the Nuremberg trials conducted after WWII, that anyone ordering a subordinate to commit a crime is also guilty of that crime.

Article 12 of the UN Declaration on Human Rights also states: "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honor and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks."

Similarly, according to the 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the United States Constitution: "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or Affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized."

As regards my allegations of crimes against humanity, may I make an analogy between this situation and an iceberg? With the visible part consisting of me, Bergendahl Hawkins, a florid, shocking example with many grave violations which have taken place over the last fifty years. There is, of course, another part to the iceberg. Submerged, it consists of an invisible, necessarily voiceless (because deeply compromised) multitude.

We then have two components to this ongoing tragedy, both illustrating the different meanings of the phrase: "crimes against humanity." In the case of the visible portion of the

iceberg, the word humanity refers here to the repeated violations of my humanness which have taken place over the decades. For the other, invisible, submerged part, representing the many individuals caught up in this and countless other operations of the security services, the word humanity takes on its second meaning: large swaths (one can hardly guess at how many are involved) of mankind.

Therefore, considering the inherently heinous acts by means of which a paranoid schizophrenic (myself) was, over the course of years, patiently and patently intoxicated (it matters not to what end), and considering the sheer number of victims implied by the submerged volume of voiceless individuals similarly involved; I believe we have in the sum of the two, the necessary ingredients for a charge of crimes against humanity.

Finally, we come to the subject matter alluded to by the heading of this page. That hardy perennial – the Jew as victim (Zionist or otherwise – again, it matters not). It would seem that elements of the security services of the United States have, in their utter depravity, if not body count, perhaps surpassed a certain previous and well-known security service.

My sister, Irene Hawkins, was once induced to make an attempt at persuading me to embezzle funds from our somewhat demented father. This is unspeakable. What we are dealing with here are destroyers of individuals, of organizations, of societies, even. This is, after all, their *raison d'être*. Should we be surprised when they turn their attention inward, to us, the citizens of this country? We funded them, and now they have turned on us. We have nursed a viper in our bosom, and, not surprisingly, the snake has bitten. Repeatedly. What do you do with a cancer? Do you tell the cancer to “cut it out” or do you take it upon yourself to cut out the cancer?

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# CHAPTER I

## About Myself, About the Book

I am that most foolish and ridiculous of creatures: the Black snob.

To my dear sister, Irene Hawkins: As a child, I was the turbulent one; you were always *Sage comme une image* (Good as gold). "The furrier gets the skin of more foxes than asses." (Italian proverb). Unfortunately, this seems to have been proven true in your case, Irene.

My dear Irene, my dear Colette (now deceased), my dear Tom Ellsberg (also deceased), I am so sorry I waited so long!

This is, of necessity, an autobiography, not a memoir. I have not the skill for such work and the material is too important to be compromised for the sake of readability. Neither do I have the time to rework this into something akin to literature.

Though the number of victims of the depredations of elements from this Government's security services is legion, I cite, in particular, the case of Colette Walczak, a woman I knew for over thirty-five years and who was as close to me as my sister, and Irene and I as representative faces of victims as well as perpetrators of evil in this scandal. Here are the four reasons.

- Colette was at hand, and, therefore, her suffering was more visible to me. I could read her face, see her tears, guess at the moral injury she suffered. Her anguish at having to choose among terrible options, even the one instance of her utter hysteria, was terrifying to me. Similarly, I could, at times, witness the suffering she inflicted on others. My sister, living halfway around the world and whom I seldom see is, to me, at least, less egregious in her cruelty and her willingness to inflict pain. Both qualities, however, were acutely apparent in Colette.
- The fate of Colette Walczak may also be of more general interest than mine. She was an innocent from deepest Indiana. Upper middle class, she was well-behaved and in no way as repugnant in character (at least, initially) as I might appear to be. Yet, ultimately, none of this could save her from an awful fate.
- Though I was pro-United States back home in Europe, upon arriving in this country, I soon changed my perspective and have since become increasingly critical of America. My reversal was due partly to the influence of the kinds of people I interacted with on campus when I arrived here – namely: the Black students and, even more so, the mostly left-wing foreigners. Since then, the reasons for my anti-United States sentiment have only become increasingly pointed.
- In the case of Irene, completing her medical residency in Manhattan in the late eighties, she came to within months of passing her boards and becoming a specialist in oncology. I am convinced that elements of this Government chose that precise moment to hijack a promising career. In what seemed to me at the time like a rush, she left this country for Europe, never to live here again, nor to practice medicine again. This raises puzzling questions. And I want answers.

After having heard my story, you, Gentle Reader, should be able to draw your own conclusions about the general applicability of elements of this scandal without my having to spell them out for you. My case may also be of particular interest due to the early age at which I came under scrutiny by United States security services.

I, Bergendahl Hawkins, am willing to undergo any number of lie detector tests regarding the contents of this book or any aspects of my life, so long as such tests are administered by a competent and fair-minded authority.

Before and after I became aware of the nefarious and surreptitious role the Government and its security services have played in my life over most of the last fifty years, I was, on several occasions, threatened with death by people usually, but not always, unknown to me. My sister, in particular, (in a non-threatening way, of course) has expressed to me on three occasions since 1995 her concerns for my physical well-being and even my life.

Furthermore, on more than one occasion, I have witnessed incidents wherein both she and Colette Walczak were also threatened with violence. In the case of Irene, the menace of sexual violence took the form of threatened gang rape by a number of Black men. I was present at that incident, as I was, as well, at an incident at the P.F. Chang restaurant in Santa Monica. During that meal, Irene said, "I don't care when I die, so long as it's quick." At that moment, one of the young men from a nearby table said distinctly and in a loud voice, "We can arrange to make it slow." In addition, verbal intimidation of Irene in my presence has been so frequent that I consider it routine.

In the case of Colette Walczak, I witnessed her being physically intimidated (by persons unknown) while entering the emergency room of the Kaiser Permanente Hospital in West Los Angeles in the summer of 2018. She was then within weeks of her untimely death from metastatic breast cancer and was physically frail. I witnessed this scene from a few feet away, powerless to help her. And, at other hospitals where she was being treated, I also saw her verbally intimidated by members of the staff.

### **Book summary:**

Since my teens, elements of the security services of the United States Government have surveilled me and interfered surreptitiously in my life. This unsolicited attention continued after I moved to the United States to attend college.

In 1988, through an engineered arrest at a local library, a coordinated attempt with several parties involved, was partially successful in painting me as a drug-using "SPIV." In 1991, repeated attempts were made to turn me against Jews, starting with the peculiar atmosphere at a company where I was employed.

On more than one occasion, attempts were made to connect me with guns, likely to facilitate violent acts on my part. When these attempts failed, my hole-in-the-wall business was ruined and I was induced to leave the United States, perhaps permanently. Some months later, after I managed to return from Europe and take up my business again, I was seriously destabilized psychologically while working on some technical projects. When, after decades of enduring this treatment, I finally realized the Government was at the root of it, they attempted to dissuade me, by various means, from exploring this issue and writing about it. As 2021 begins, I firmly believe that prior to a scheduled visit to a Kaiser Permanente facility in Los Angeles in 2014, I was drugged without my knowledge or consent.

This situation is, above all, shocking and frightening. From the start, I was simply not courageous enough to face my predicament squarely. Instead, in a classic case of protective stupidity, I evaded what had been staring me in the face for decades.

My purpose in writing this book is several-fold:

- **Publicizing this state of affairs**



To bring to the attention of the general public (the taxpayer is always the last to know what is being done with his money) some of the, perhaps, unfortunate practices of this Government's security services so they can realize how vulnerable they are and the prevalence of these activities. To bring to the attention of major organizations such as: police departments, universities, hospitals, banks, individual military personnel and veterans, social workers, medical personnel including doctors, major corporations, credit reporting agencies, the Social Security Administration, lawyers, academics, and bank and city employees the extent to which they, as individuals or organizations, are vulnerable to penetration and/or turning – and how often, in my actual experience, this happens.

In addition to conventional efforts to more widely publicizing my life, I am also considering eventually placing the facts of my entire personal life, additional documents and, possibly, this book in the public domain.

- **Filing civil and/or criminal complaints against the United States Government and others**

To bring one or more federal complaints, civil and/or criminal, possibly class-action, on behalf of myself, my sister Irene Hawkins, the late Colette Walczak, and countless others currently suffering under the yoke of a cruel and insane system which I am unable to name – so unfamiliar am I with it – and against the Government and the relevant security services responsible for this state of affairs. And, by means of a thorough and public investigation, to attempt to uncover a set of concrete facts regarding these matters, and make them more widely known.

- **Publicizing the anti-Semitism of elements of the Government and its security services inherent in this scandal**

To focus the attention of various American Jewish communities and the American people, the Israeli public and the world in general, to some peculiar attitudes of elements of this Government and its security services to what used to be, somewhat prudishly, called "the Jewish Question." I am referring here to a new wrinkle on an old idea. Namely: manipulating, intoxicating, then attempting to use a paranoid schizophrenic (myself) to "Beat the Jew" (as the blunt phrase goes) with plausible deniability built in as a bonus.

And I had thought there was no daylight between the two of them. America and Israel: *frère et cochon* (intimate friends).

- **Exploring the reasons for such mad acts by the Government**

There had to be antecedents to these demented acts. What were they? What was/is the general background against which this operation was conceived and conducted? Are there other operations of this type going on now? How prevalent are these practices?

- **Accessing my file**

I want my file and that of Father, and expect, eventually, to place all of them in the public domain as a cautionary tale to be made available "*Urbi et Orbi.*"

# Chapter Overviews

## Introduction and the Three Shocks – Chapter 1

In this section, I discuss three astonishing events that should immediately cast doubt on the probity of elements of the Government as well as buttress my contention that there is something very much amiss here.

I strongly believe I was set up for the first event, when I was arrested on felony charges in Santa Monica in 1988. Not only do I believe the arrest was engineered but that there was cooperation with other parties both before and after the event in question. Nor do I believe this was entirely the work of strangers.

The second event involved dead rats found on the doorstep of my psychotherapist on the days of my meetings with him. Soon after that, my employer, with whom I had never discussed any aspect of my private life, made a distasteful, crude and potentially violent reference to the nature of these events.

In the third event, a bank account belonging to Colette Walczak, then dying of cancer, and over which I had been given power of attorney, mysteriously vanished as I tried to assert control when she could no longer care for herself. Yet she had, in the previous month, paid bills out of that same account. I include among the following pages, proof that the account had existed.

## My Negatives – Chapter 2

To enhance my credibility which, given that I am at times seriously mentally ill, could be questioned, I have chosen to reveal in detail every element of my life that does me no credit and could, if not fully brought to the surface herein, possibly be used later to diminish my credibility and/or embarrass others. This stance has the additional benefit of making clear to those who may be looking upon me rather favorably what I really am so that there would be no surprises in store for them.

One such as I, making what may seem like outlandish assertions and connected with some previous grave, disreputable elements as well as mental health problems, must be entirely forthright about his past. In this way, I am left with a more secure foundation from which to speak – perhaps in ways others may not always find agreeable. Additionally, it seems to me that dirt has a scarcity value: the fewer in the know, the higher the value of the material.

In this chapter, I have therefore divulged everything. If anyone can find a single lie, a single exaggeration or a material omission anywhere in these pages, the rest of the book or any of the hundreds of additional pages I have written about the last fifty years of my life, they are welcome – indeed, entitled – to disbelieve my entire story and hang me out to dry.

*Ne dites pas trop de mal de vous-même : on vous croirait.* (Don't speak too badly of yourself: you might be believed.)

- André Maurois

"Write books only if you are going to say in them the things you would never dare confide to anyone."

- Emil M. Cioran

## Life in Europe: An "Ersatz" Frenchman – Chapter 3

Here I discuss the atmosphere I grew up in and the life I lived both in France, where I was born, and in Germany, where I spent another five years prior to coming to this country.

It is interesting to note that I seem to have come to the attention of the security services of the United States Government as early as 1971, if not before, when I was befriended by Robert Seidenstein and his wife. Seidenstein was a member of the United States Navy, stationed in Bremerhaven, Germany, when I was introduced to him by a school teacher. I was sixteen years old and a senior in high school. In retrospect, I no longer believe this was an innocent friendship.

#### **Life in the United States: The Cataclysm" – Chapter 4**

In 1972, following my interest in science and the wishes and expectations of my family, I traveled to the United States to attend the California Institute of Technology in Southern California. This was the beginning of a long string of failures on my part. Following my disappointing performance at Caltech, I went to work as a technician and gradually progressed to other technical jobs.

In none of these jobs did I perform well, the fault resting primarily with me: my human capital, character, and personality. In hindsight, for the first fifteen years I spent in the United States, I would assign most of the fault for my failures to myself and very little to "outside forces." In my estimation, the ratio would later roughly reverse. For, yes, the state was lurking in the background and had not lost interest in me after the interlude with Robert Seidenstein.

#### **The Start of the False Flag Operation – Chapter 5**

It was in 1988 that things took a decidedly sinister turn. I was arrested at the Santa Monica Public Library as I was reading magazines and taking notes, something I had been in the habit of doing there for weeks. Up to a few weeks prior to this, I had been working in Oxnard as a programmer, then left under what now seems like odd circumstances.

After my arrest, Colette Walczak, whom I had known for about six years and with whom I was staying, suddenly chose to leave for her parents' house in Indiana, neglecting to leave me a set of house keys. I found myself homeless, living in my car and rapidly descending into a severe psychosis – my first such episode. After a couple of days of this, I contacted my sister, who was then studying in New York, after which I flew overnight to her apartment. It was there that, after a suicide attempt from which I was rescued by the Manhattan police and fire departments, I was hospitalized for six weeks in a mental hospital. Following my release, I flew to France to recuperate with family. In the meantime, due to my sister's efforts, the charges against me had been dropped by the City of Santa Monica.

#### **My Year at Sound Solutions – Chapter 6**

Then lightning really struck!

I was working as a programmer and hardware engineer for a small company in Santa Monica when Government involvement in my life intensified. The atmosphere became surreal, both within the company and outside. I began sensing that my coworkers knew things about me that I had NEVER told them. I could not understand what was going on or the purpose behind it. It all seemed so strange.

Outside the company, equally strange things were happening, as well. After completing the first phase of my computer software/hardware project and seeing it installed at the customer's site, I had an argument with my boss, gave notice, and left. I had been there for a year.

I should mention here that both my bosses had Jewish last names and that some of the odd events around me had begun to take on an ethnic tinge.

### **The Years Between Sound Solutions and Florence (1992-1995) – Chapter 7**

From 1992 to 1995, I experienced numerous provocations and strange events. I was hooked up with a Jewish LAPD police officer and, on two occasions, I was encouraged to handle a number of guns. The Jewish angle continued to be prominent throughout this period – with people, inexplicably, using the word "Jew" as a pejorative. Here again, people I had never met were revealing intimate details of my life. Still unaware of the source of these acts, I instinctively refused to go along with the manipulation. But another plan was put into action, which ruined my business.

### **A Florence Interlude – Chapter 8**

Nearly broke, I moved in again with Colette Walczak in Santa Monica. It was then that my sister called from Italy (she had moved there in the previous years), offering me a temporary place to live. I accepted Irene's invitation, and spent several months with her in Florence. I nearly didn't make it back to the United States. While in Florence, I was frequently destabilized and suffered another nervous breakdown. All the while, my sister was mostly denying there was anything untoward going on.

### **After Florence: Part 1, Part 2, Part 3 (Fall 1995-2012) – Chapters 9, 10, and 11**

Once again living in the United States I tried working, but without much success. Strange things continued to happen, which went on for years. I still felt, for the most part, that my former bosses at Sound Solutions were the source of my problems.

During this time, in an attempt to mend fences with my father, and being chronically short of money, I arranged to have him come to Los Angeles to live permanently. Eventually, he would die here, but it would be years before I learned of his passing.

It was shortly before another suicide attempt in the late nineties that I was introduced to a Jewish friend of Colette Walczak from her college days and began frequenting her and her family. The relationship continues to this day. I believe it was during this period that another team began taking an interest in me – a team I call my Masters. This was perhaps the beginning of the scandal that this affair threatens to become.

### **Epiphany – Chapter 12**

Not until I attended a play at UCLA in 2012 did the real source of these events miraculously dawn on me. I had been used and manipulated by the United States Government for decades, and for purposes quite unknown to me. I had been persistently intoxicated into thinking Jews were persecuting me while I was being offered, on more than one occasion, a "Solution" of sorts: guns. I then realized the seriousness of my predicament and, shocked and frightened, I took to my bed for several days.

### **To Another Suicide Attempt – Chapter 13**

Having recovered from this shock, I began slowly, cautiously gathering my courage and wits about me and, with Irene's encouragement, I started writing. The ensuing pushback culminated in what I call "The Year of Living Dangerously." There were then physical, physiological, and mental repercussions for me and for others.

#### ***Walpurgisnacht, Told in the Mode of Innis – Chapter 14***

In this chapter, as befits a chaotic time played out in a discordant fashion, I relate the events around my last and gravest suicide attempt – from which I was saved by what amounted to a miracle of rare device.

#### **Life After My Suicide Attempt – Chapter 15**

I continued writing, while taking frequent and detailed notes of the bizarre events going on around me and then disseminating them to a small group of acquaintances. For example: I sustained nine car accidents, most very minor, one quite serious, in a little over four years since my Epiphany, with two additional accidents (one of them my fault) since. Break-ins to my bungalow have become a matter of routine – as has frequent harassment and provocation. Having accumulated some four hundred pages of diary entries, autobiography, and emails detailing peculiarities of my life, I distributed copies to friends for safekeeping and placed two sets in safe deposit boxes.

#### **Colette Walczak's Cancer Returns: Her Death – Chapter 16**

Colette Walczak discovered her cancer had returned in 2017 when she began complaining of symptoms while on vacation. Returning with her to Los Angeles, I began taking care of her until her death a year later. Some years later, I began writing this book from the hand- and typewritten pages I had accumulated.

#### **Life Since Colette's Death – Chapter 17**

List and description of strange, disturbing events that seem to follow me.

#### **Government Methods: A Summary – Chapter 18**

A more exhaustive series of events, including: twelve car accidents, attempts at entrapment, the use of innuendo of a sexual nature, etc.

#### **This Preterite Shore: Concluding Remarks – Chapter 19**

Here I explore some possible conclusions and speculate about what may happen as a result of the contents of this book going public. I also draw parallels with some historical and literary situations.

#### **Appendices**

Several appendices in which I list technical issues and a vocabulary and list of books that might offer some context to my story. Additional documents are also cited.

# General Comments About My Personality and Mental Illness

Reasons I have taken so long to write this book: cowardice and shame, shame and cowardice.

Besides my mental illness, people who know me suggest that I may be gullible and lacking in common sense. That the Government and security services are the source of my nightmare took me until 2012 to realize – some forty years after what I consider the inception of this operation. I began writing this autobiography in 2013.

I am officially diagnosed with a schizoaffective personality disorder, am prescribed medication, and have been under occasional psychiatric care for over thirty years. I was once hospitalized in a psychiatric institution for six weeks. My sister, an MD, having seen me at my occasional worst over these decades, considers me an out-and-out paranoid schizophrenic. I have made several suicide attempts, one of them requiring six months of hospitalization due to resultant physical injuries. I am now on permanent disability, and have been since before the turn of the century. (I have been prescribed medication for over 20 years but do not at this time take any.)

I also suspect that, in some quarters, I may be considered extreme, which I do not deny. I suspect my extremism likely furnishes a convenient excuse for inaction by those who would rather remain blind to some of the mad and sinister activities of the people they are nominally overseeing. The well-known whistleblower and former NSA high-ranking employee, William Binney, has referred to the use of this ploy by high-level members of the political class as seeking "plausible deniability."

Furthermore, regarding my purported extremism, since when are the opinions, particularly the political opinions of a paranoid schizophrenic, of any importance or interest to anyone – unless, perhaps, accompanied by charm?

I describe my emotional profile as follows:

- Work-shy and often unable to complete a task
- Neurotic
- Possessive of a deep-set inferiority complex
- Sometimes childish
- Occasionally psychotic (with rapid decompensation) due partly to (I believe, and to put it charitably) "environmental cues"
- Massively insecure
- Occasionally descend into a depressive state, often preceded or followed by a high energy phase
- Exhibit an explosive temper
- Feel like a lifelong outsider – (exclusive of my early youth)
- Chronically shy
- Fearful of abandonment
- Passive-aggressive, like my mother
- Marginally opinionated

- Rigidly stubborn, I have been said to have a "hard head," and, yet, I am also suggestible and trusting. What Bismarck said of the Kaiser is also true of me: I am like a cushion that retains the imprint of the last ass that sat on it
- Easily intimidated, which I try to compensate for in other ways
- Terrified of the world, especially of late
- Eccentric; I am, of course, scarcely aware of it
- I belong to no particular political sect – and certainly not to today's left
- As with Hobbes, I suspect my mother gave birth to twins: me (her son) and fear

An anecdote may better illustrate how I seem to present myself. I was having dinner, not too many years ago, with a friend when she casually asked what I was up to. Going for irony, I immediately replied: "Trying to stay hip." She gave me a look of withering contempt, such as I had never seen before. So, there you have it, Gentle Reader.

When I was in college, one of my TAs (teaching assistant) rightly told me I lacked *Sitzfleisch*. The same insightful TA also suggested that I often tried to talk my way through my classes. Someone else, much later, correctly commented that I would rather be right than successful.

It has been suggested to me by more than one person that here in America I am scarcely aware I am considered Black.

During what I call my "dark" decades, from about 1991 to 2012, after which I began to understand some of what had happened (I refer to it in this book as my Epiphany), I frequently experienced the following phenomenon: I would go to sleep at night, usually completely worn out emotionally. Sleep would refresh me to the point where, upon waking, I would feel well again – but only for a moment. For as soon as I became fully awake and aware, the weight of my predicament would sink in. In other words, contrary to most people, I would wake *into* a nightmare instead of waking up *from* one. I frequently experienced that awful feeling throughout those terrible decades.

Later, during "The Year of Living Dangerously," the stress became so intense and constant that I developed neck and shoulder pains that made it difficult for me to turn my head. After the worst of it was over, I had my cortisol (stress hormone) level measured, and found it to be well above normal.

In the former Soviet Union, the authorities sometimes labeled dissidents as schizophrenic, incarcerated them in mental institutions, gave them antipsychotic drugs to the max, and even administered punitive sulfur injections. All this, of course, was for reasons of state. See the work of Snezhnevsky, Lunts, and Morozov regarding a somewhat fanciful psychiatric diagnosis known as "sluggish schizophrenia." Elements of what I call the American Government's *Securitate* (see the glossary for definition) have perhaps gone them one better: attempting to turn a paranoid schizophrenic (me) into an assassin. Ironically, the risk they run here, should the attempt fail (for this country is nothing like the former Soviet Union), is to perhaps create a dissident out of a depressive.

To summarize the last 50 years of my life, could one say (following *Abba Eban*, former foreign minister of Israel), though perhaps with different import, that, like the Palestinians, "I never missed an opportunity to miss an opportunity"? In short, I was able to sidestep the worst of what the American *Securitate* proposed. (Or as an acquaintance of a former friend, Janusz Hetman, once commented: I am "maybe not the worst").

## Family and personal background

I was born in Paris, France, of a Black-American father from Virginia (therein lies a tale) and French-speaking mother born in Spain. My one sibling, Irene Hawkins, is a dual citizen of Italy and the United States, currently living in Florence. A former MD, trained in the United States, Irene mysteriously and abruptly ended her residency months before passing her boards in oncology. She and I attended French schools until the age of twelve, at which point we transferred to American schools while still in France. French was spoken exclusively at home until then, at which point we began using English, mostly with our bilingual father. Our mother never learned to speak much English. We then moved to Germany for several years, after which our father retired and our family returned to the United States. Prior to his retirement, Father worked as a mid-level civilian manager of the education facilities provided for American soldiers in Europe. Mother was a housewife.

In short, I am a thoroughgoing petit bourgeois semi-intellectual – a characterization Colette Walczak once made about me. A cousin, better read than I, nicknamed me *Akakiy Akakievich* when we were kids. I didn't learn the meaning of this deadly insult until much, much later. (As I said, she was better read than I.)

My maternal grandparents, Maria and Camille Llorca, were peasants from a village in Spain and economic migrants to France in the 1920s, before the Spanish Civil War. I knew them quite well. Even today, I sometimes imitate my grandfather's Spanish accent and religiously oriented curses. Though little Spanish was spoken in their household, the French they spoke was strongly accented and imperfect.

Both paternal grandparents from Virginia, Virginia and Booker Hawkins, were, according to my father, born slaves. I never met them and I know little more about their lives than what Father told us: that they both died when he was very young and that my grandfather, Booker, worked odd jobs, often as a handyman – much as I was to do, a century later.

### **My current situation**

Since my last permanent position (at Sound Solutions in Santa Monica, California; 1991-1992), I have been almost exclusively self-employed, as I am unable to hold a job for a sustained period. As a handyman, I work on small solar energy projects, software/hardware systems, and, mostly, I repair PCs. For the past decade, I have been living in a rented bungalow in Los Angeles. The Government's hidden involvement in my life and that of my sister and friends continues and has even intensified since I realized who was behind these pernicious events.

I believe I have been and continue to be watched over and protected for the past two decades or more by persons unknown. Following are three concrete examples, which, while some may do me no credit, furnish evidence to corroborate my theory.

- A few years ago, as I viewed a video of a sexual practice known as *Shibari*, within, at most, a few seconds, the window was shut by someone who, apparently, had been monitoring me on the internet. I then reopened the video and found the reason for the censorship: the video featured an underage girl.
- A car accident with a Caroline Stroh, which deprived me of use of my car for a year (later extended to three years) was likely intended to take me "offline," reducing my mobility as well as sending a message to elements of the Government involved in this operation. This was a result of my having downloaded a child pornography image from the internet before attempting to rid myself of the incriminating evidence. Supposedly I backed into her car in a parking lot. I did not think the impacted area matched the bumper height of my car but, before I could



take it to a mechanic for an opinion, she reported the incident to the DMV. Had this accident not happened when it did, I might not be so proud just now.

- An unsolicited email from Carole Lewis, stepmother of Colette Walczak, sent me on September 18, 2020, contents unknown, disappeared as I attempted to download the attached file from Dropbox. A reply to Carole, attempting to elucidate the matter, was unsuccessful.

### **On the gaslighting of a paranoid schizophrenic for decades**

I believe I have been gaslighted by (among others): my sister, Irene Hawkins; my closest friend, Colette Walczak; and now-deceased longtime friend and psychotherapist, Oscar Revey. In the words of Ariel Leve, author of the memoir *An Abbreviated Life* and, herself, a victim of gaslighting: "the erasure of the abuse is worse than the abuse." She refers here to what she endured as a child at the hands of her mother. "A typical tactic: hiding objects from you, and then deny[ing] knowing anything about it" (from Robin Stern, PhD). In my case, the Government's use of this tactic against me has, by now, become routine. (See the glossary definition of *Zersetzung*.)

I believe that in the above-mentioned cases, the gaslighting was either: 1) partially unconscious (as in the case of Oscar Revey, my psychotherapist friend and Government informant who, strongly invested as he likely was in the brief he received from his Masters in the security services, simply could not admit to himself that the real story was other than what he had been told) or, 2) (in the cases of Irene and Colette) mandated from above with the threat of dire consequences were the victimizer to break the enforced veil of silence and deception surrounding me.

Additionally, from what I was told by Oscar Revey's longtime friend, Dr. Michelle Shelley Hurt, about his behavior in the last years of his life, he may have belatedly realized the extent and even the implications of the veritable hoax in which he had, unwittingly, participated.

### **What is a false flag operation? Why is the concept crucial to this story?**

A false flag operation is a way to disguise the authorship of an act. Some third-party (sometimes known as a "useful idiot"), unaware of the bigger picture, is manipulated into carrying out the act. Those oblivious to the plan, will be diverted toward the individual rather than the real authors.

An actual example of this was the attack on German soil, carried out by German units disguised as Polish troops in the fall of 1939. Bodies of concentration camp inmates (referred to by the code words "Canned Goods"), murdered for this purpose and dressed in Polish uniforms, were left behind after the fake attack to be used as proof of an incursion. A few days after the Germans accused the Poles of this aggression, Germany invaded Poland, setting off World War II.

"Operations carried out during peacetime by civilian organizations, as well as covert Government agencies, can (by extension) also be called false flag operations if they seek to hide the real organization behind an operation." (from Wikipedia)

In order for a false flag operation to be successful, there has to be an actor onto whom suspicion can be made to fall without any doubts, thus conclusively resolving any lingering questions. In addition, the actor in question must be wholly free of any visible connections to the real actors operating behind the scenes. Mental problems ascribed to the actor work a bonus, making the concocted story far more believable. The most heinous of acts can then be freely perpetrated, with nothing pointing back to the true instigators.

Had the Government's plot not misfired, any of several scenarios might have characterized my future:

- I could have been manipulated into carrying out some act(s) of violence against Jews or Jewish interests with a target selected at random – perhaps by me in a moment of madness. Motive for the crime would likely have been found, partly manufactured, from my history. (See definition for "Legend" in the glossary.) My frequent comments regarding David Epstein and Michael Dubrow of Sound Solutions, my former employers, would have been introduced as damning evidence. My prior arrests would have underscored my depiction as a common criminal with a past of violence and instability. My mental health record would have provided further high-quality evidence. The Government might then have received credit for foiling yet another "terrorist" attack or, if successful, the attack could have been pointed to as evidence of the need for further funding and/or legislation.
- The possibility also exists that I would have been informally, psychologically manipulated and thus steered to one or more specific target(s) to be killed.
- Another possibility is that I, after having allegedly committed one or more of such acts, would have been liquidated. A monitor customer called this the "oven cleaner" concept, a phrase he curiously mentioned in the early 1990s. A machinist in the San Gabriel Valley, he alluded to the AIDS epidemic then raging in the gay community and said that the AIDS virus, after having eliminated the gay population, would then cease to exist. I have the impression this fellow might have had more on his peculiar mind than this "solution" to what he evidently considered the "gay question."
- One more scenario involves me having attempted to spontaneously (and unsuccessfully) lash out at one or more Jewish targets with the weapons made available by the security services – had I bought any from my "sources." I would then be quietly apprehended and "turned" under threat of a stiff sentence into a criminal under control of the security services. (See the attempt to make a case for premeditation using a friend, James Lazell, mentioned below.)
- Lastly, since my fingerprints were found and still exist on some guns I handled and I have a history, easily discovered and made public, of seemingly peculiar statements about Sound Solutions' David Epstein and Michael Dubrow, as well as a "suitable" criminal record (partly manufactured from whole cloth) and a florid mental health history, I could also have been bypassed as a perpetrator and simply turned into a "patsy" with the real crime(s) having been committed by someone else. This last option is, potentially, still viable.

### **Some puzzling questions:**

What is the "function" of Jews here?

One question remains in my mind: were Jews the main and ultimate target or were they selected as suitable initial victims due to my perceived ethnicity? (It is well-known that Blacks are reliably anti-Semitic.) In other words, was I to be ultimately used against ANY target or was I to "specialize" in those of Jewish ancestry? Connected with this thought is the question of whether this is a straightforward case of anti-Semitism *tout court* or whether the American *Securitate* (see the glossary) has concluded that the "Zionist element" has gotten too big for its britches or both? The answer to this is something I am wholly unaware of.

Why is this scandal being allowed to become public?

Another question that comes to mind: from what I have heard, disputes or struggles between security services of different countries are almost always resolved privately. Win, lose or draw. I would thus expect that my case, once the operation had been compromised, would have been settled in this way, as well – an outcome potentially leaving me high and dry. If this story ever becomes widely known – which is the best possible outcome for me and mine – the only conclusion I can draw is that I am indeed involved in the Mother of all Battles.

Is there a pattern of Government exploitation of the mentally ill, victims of childhood abuse, and the handicapped? A dozen cases to consider:

- (Name unknown): Homeless Black man at Albertson's supermarket: erratic behavior, verbal outbursts, panhandles on Venice Boulevard near Culver City.
- (Name unknown): Possibly disturbed woman at Trader Joe's market on La Brea Avenue: cut in ahead of me in queue, looked prepared to defend her spot if challenged.
- (Name unknown): Approximately thirty-year-old Black man wearing shorts at Vons supermarket on Lincoln Boulevard in Santa Monica: physical disability (visible prosthetic leg).
- "Baba Outrom" (deceased): Older Hispanic female, neighbor in bungalow across from mine: occasionally peculiar speech patterns, verbal outbursts. Colette Walczak once told me she was mentally ill.
- Fernandez, Ivanka: Obvious personality disorder according to my sister, an MD, who met her briefly.
- Havens, Patrick "Geno" (deceased): Former customer: pronounced curvature of back, very short stature, prostate cancer survivor.
- Hawkins, Bergendahl: Schizoaffective personality disorder or paranoid schizophrenic.
- Horns, Matt: Frequent drunk. A customer and friend who, according to Colette Walczak, was once hospitalized by police, unconscious, with a skull fracture after intervening to break up a fight and becoming a target of violence himself. He and Colette had, by this time, worked together as gardeners for some years. Some days later, in retelling this story, our "Little Miss Sunshine" then asked me the (rhetorical ?) question, "should Matt file a police report"...
- Howard, Jon: Occasional bouts of severe mental illness (psychotic episodes), homeless.
- Miller, Wendy (deceased): Spoke to me of previous suicide attempt(s); lived in subsidized housing for the mentally ill.
- Revey, Oscar (deceased): Suffered from degenerative arthritis and ankylosing spondylitis; exhibited hoarding behavior, signs of depression.
- Walczak, Colette (deceased): Severe neuroses, hoarding behavior, hysteria. Possible schizoid personality disorder (according to an MD familiar with her).
- Grogan, Sherry: Self-described victim of child molestation.

Why were BOTH my sister and I targeted at such an early age? Is this an anomaly? Was Irene actually turned and used until now?

How is it that the massive infrastructure — technical, bureaucratic and political, required to carry out operations of this magnitude, to reliably and consistently force people in large numbers to behave in this surprising way for years, perhaps even decades — was allowed to develop?

- On whose say-so were these initiatives approved?
- Who allocated the monies?
- Who carried out the R&D required for some of the dazzling technical feats I have experienced/endured over the years?
- How were the extensive, all-encompassing databases assembled, databases capable of such a devastating impact on unsuspecting individuals?
- Who turned a blind eye to this accretion of capabilities and powers, going on now and likely since the beginnings of the National Security State after WWII?

## Potential Conflicts of Interest

### Biases:

I believe that when truly confronting the might of the State (i.e., "That Hideous Strength") in a fundamental way, it is generally impossible to act on one's beliefs and make one's predicament and political stance known without support and protection – unless prepared to accept dire consequences. The State has always gone to great lengths to avoid such embarrassment. In my case, I think crucial help has come from elements of the various Jewish communities in the United States, from what I refer to as the Zionist interest, the Los Angeles Police Department and, likely – though I cannot prove this, either – what I prefer to call the State of Israel-Palestine, there may also be other participants. Here, then, is for me an obvious potential conflict of interest.

For it would be natural, given human nature, for there to be a bias on my part toward these centers of power who may have made it possible for me, quite literally I believe, to survive. One could thus conceivably suspect me of playing fast and loose with the facts in order to ingratiate myself with those I perceive to be my protectors – a bias potentially impacting my credibility. If much of what I allege proves to be the case, it is also reasonable to assume I am a serious potential embarrassment to elements of the American Government and its security services; a motive for some potentially sinister moves on their part (which have indeed been hinted at), this further motivates me to ingratiate myself with my supposed saviors.

I therefore wish to make quite clear my stance toward these forces who, while currently protective of me, are (with some exceptions) unaligned with my personal, ethical, and political thought. In future (paraphrasing Cavour, the Italian nationalist and statesman of the nineteenth century), "I may astonish... with my ingratitude."

A second possible conflict of interest involves my reaction to those elements of the Government of the country to which I was born a natural citizen, which have treated me in this unusual, mad, cruel, and shameful way. If I could be successfully portrayed as a hater of America, this might, to some minds, weaken the value of my testimony. Something of the sort has already been attempted. At times, people and even friends have asked me leading questions, presumably trying to elicit an intemperate, negative response from me regarding America. This may be part of a payoff for the concerted efforts that have gone into creating what I call the "artificial environment." This refers to the aura of unreality I feel surrounds me, and which I have taken to calling "the play within a play." I have lived in this environment for decades.

I would reply to this potential accusation with a quote from Benjamin Franklin: "Where liberty is, there is my country."

## Things I have Heard:

Lastly, wishing to head off additional, potential criticisms, I will now list the assistance, ranging from muted hints to outright statements (generally by people I had never seen before and would never see again) I believe I have heard and may have benefited from over the years.

Said outright:

- “Watch out for *Baba!*” (Nickname I gave to a harassing neighbor).
- “Don’t pick up any women while I’m gone.”
- “Don’t use social media.”
- “Don’t do bad things.”
- “Watch out for Jeff Robertson.” (Tax accountant and customer).
- That I give a talk at local library, this said during dinner at a restaurant.
- The word “CIA,” apropos nothing, during a Skype call (by my sister, Irene).
- “It’s clean, bright and green; just stay away from the little girls.”
- “No jail time.”
- “Don’t use computers to write your autobiography, use paper instead.”
- “If you want to stay in this country, you’ll have to sue.” (Said more than once).
- “Do you want to see a lawyer? I know an experienced one.” (Said by Tom Ellsberg, now deceased)
- “Your sister is going to need money.”
- “Don’t worry about Nelia.”
- “Don’t delete pictures from your computer.”

Suggested:

- That I keep a diary. (Repeated twice).

Hinted at:

- That I could be kidnapped by elements of the government.
- This whole business is the result of a disagreement between the United States and Israel.
- That the CIA is involved.
- That I make nice with my (mostly Hispanic) neighbors. (Said more than once).

Whether these statements were really meant for me and are relevant to my situation is a question for mental health professionals to debate, given that I am prone to having “ideas of reference.” What is NOT in doubt is the fact that I heard them.

## Disclosures:

I own the copyrights to this book, selling some versions at a profit, others I give away at no cost. I have also uploaded the video of a talk on this subject to YouTube, though I derive no income from it. I own two domain names devoted exclusively to the topics covered here as well as several web sites I use to advertise my business. I work as a handyman in PC repair, off-grid solar energy and computers through a dba: Grounded Grid and have been self-employed for about three decades. In the main, my income comes from a disability check (SSDI) I receive from the government.

### **A promise:**

A word to those poor souls who, manipulated, misled, bamboozled, friendless, threatened, frightened, terrified even, and finally successfully blackmailed by the American security services, are being used against me, my family, my friends and (doubtless) countless other unfortunates in this country with many, in all likelihood, prominent individuals counted among them. You are now on a "journey" (that TV word) similar to mine – a "journey" not likely to end well for you. I confess to sometimes resenting you and your incessant intrusions in my life and the lives of mine. Dismal is the thought that this is your inescapable fate and (potentially) that of any of us so long as this mad, unjust system endures.

During the dark decades I alluded to earlier, before I came to realize some of the true nature and extent of my predicament, my obsession was to, somehow, set down and leave behind a permanent record of the incomprehensible maelstrom I had found myself inexplicably sucked into. What I most desired was pen, paper, a quiet space in which to set things down, and a time capsule in which to preserve it – so that, should this tree eventually fall, there might be someone in the forest to hear it. What was made available instead were guns. I didn't know much then; I did know, though, that I was a "closely watched train." So closely watched, in fact, that a satisfactory solution to this obsession to write eluded me. Until now – until now.

Unlike you, I have (so far) been relatively lucky in that my trajectory could have been so much worse. Also, I believe certain parties, as mentioned above, not entirely unknown to me, seem to have taken an interest in my fate, aiding me in my difficulties and making possible some of the necessary quiet space in which I have been able to write.

Victims of this Government: mired as you are in your predicament, it may be of help to keep in mind that Hell is rumored to have seven circles. In consequence, you must do everything in your power to slow your inevitable slide to its uttermost center. Please, remember the fate of the *Ik*, as told by Colin Turnbull in his book *The Mountain People*. Don't follow in their steps, please.

*I will do what I can!*

## Three Shocks

### Shock, the First: My Arrest at the Santa Monica Public Library

In 1988, I was living at Colette Walczak's apartment when I was arrested at the Santa Monica Public Library. Afterwards, I discussed with her the possible reasons for my arrest and even wrote down a summary of events. Within two weeks or so, Colette abruptly left her apartment for a visit to her family in Indiana, near Chicago. She neglected to leave me keys to the apartment and I do not remember asking her for a set. From then on, homeless and living in my car, I became increasingly anxious and fearful. My thought processes became more confused.

I called Colette from the Santa Monica jail to inform her of the arrest and to request she contact my accountant, Roland Uy. Together, they raised and paid my bail. I owe him for his out-of-pocket expenses, a sum I have never repaid. Though I briefly contacted a lawyer, I did not get a copy of the police report.

I do not believe Colette Walczak had planned this trip to her family in advance. It was a surprise to me, although, in retrospect, I cannot be sure. My thought processes were becoming increasingly confused. I slid into deepening psychosis and florid paranoia within days of my arrest. I have no recollection of having felt that way previously – either in the weeks before my arrest or at any other time. This went on for a couple of days. Mostly, I parked my car in Westwood, near UCLA. I did not for some reason call Oscar Revey or Colette.

Perhaps the night before my departure for New York, I spent part of an afternoon at UCLA. I was joined by a young man, possibly a student there, with whom I chatted for a few minutes. I then went further north to sit near the research library outside, in an open area. I spoke to no one, preferring to sit quietly by myself. After some time, a young woman, seemingly older than the other undergraduates, came to sit next to me, and we began talking. She told me she was from Oxnard, but I do not remember most of what we talked about. When I told her I spoke French, she asked me the French word for "weapons." In my confused state, I could not come up with the answer, and said so. When she excused herself, she agreed to meet with me at the same spot on the following day. Like her, I left campus for the day.

These are people who know whom they are dealing with.

Reproduction of the police report in two pages which is a complete falsehood, a tissue of lies from start to finish, except for the time, date and place. (Obtained in the winter of 2013, transcribed here verbatim with errors uncorrected. The original report is included in the attached CD.)

*ROBBERY STRONGARM/GRAND THEFT FROM PERSON ATTEMPT*

*10-18-88*

*88-26637*

*On 10-18-88 at approximately 1750 hours Officers Trisler and I, (W. S. Brown), were sent to the Main Public Library at 1343 6th Street regarding a theft investigation. When we arrived we were met in front by Library Security Tony Anthony and victim #1 [redacted] and witness #1 [redacted] Anthony informed Officer Trisler and I that he was contacted by employees at the library indicating that a theft suspect was inside the library. He told me [redacted], [redacted] and another female that was not at the location, a lady by the name of [redacted], pointed out an individual inside the library to him as being the one that attempted to take their purses.*

*[Redacted] told me that she was exiting the library with her girlfriend [redacted] [redacted] and while she was standing next to a blue trash can depositing some trash the male Black that she pointed out to Anthony came up to her, bumped into her very violently and shoved her and she felt some tugging at her purse as if he was reaching into the opening of the purse she was carrying. She felt movement as if his hand was inside the purse and she held on to her purse and moved quickly. [Redacted] said moments earlier she had witnessed the same person attempt to take a purse from an older lady just north of them on the same street. [Redacted] said that after the incident with her girlfriend they screamed and this suspect ran into the library.*

*I questioned [redacted] as if it was her opinion that the actual bump and push was to direct her attention so that the suspect could then take items from her*

open purse and she said that that's exactly what she thought. In my opinion, at this time, since I was unable to contact victim #2 [redacted] which (sic) Anthony obtained her name and phone number only, with the information [redacted] had given me and with my training while I worked the vice squad and pickpockets and theft from persons, this action, the bumping into a person trying to distract them is an attempt to divert the person's attention while they remove items from open purses and or wallets. At this point Anthony directed us to the library and pointed out the suspect indicated to him by victim [redacted] and witness [redacted].

Officer Trisler and I walked into the library, contacted this person, later identified as HAWKINS, and placed him under arrest for attempted grand theft from person. We escorted him out of the library to the police vehicle. At this point I recontacted [redacted] and [redacted] and they informed us that that indeed was the suspect. [Redacted] indicated that she indeed saw the attempted theft of the purse from the other victim that was not at the location, however only saw the suspect bump into and shove her girlfriend [redacted] in front of the library. It was after this action that they saw the suspect run into the library and immediately informed the employees there of the theft attempt at which time security agent was advised of the situation. [Redacted] advised there was no loss as a result of the attempted theft and Officer [several words missing] HAWKINS to the jail facility.

At the police station I called the phone number the first victim had given Security Agent Anthony and spoke to her over the telephone. [Redacted] [redacted] told me that she had just left the library on 6th Street when this man, a male Black, was walking towards her. She said he looked very strange, like he was in a daze and as she passed he reached up and grabbed the strap to her purse that was over her shoulder. She said she immediately grabbed the purse strap in an attempt to to (sic) prevent this person from taking her purse and held on very tightly at which time the suspect's hold broke free and he continued walking south on 6th street. [Redacted] said she just stood there in amazement and witnessed this same suspect walk (sic) to two other girls near the front of the library and bump into and push one of them, evidently she said, to try to take their purse, too. [Redacted] said she was sorry that she was unable to stay at the location, but that she had to leave and that's why she gave her name and phone number to the library security agent. I asked [redacted] [if?] in her opinion it was his intent to actually take her purse and she said yes, however (sic) he had a very strange look on his face.

HAWKINS was booked for Attempted Grand Theft from Person and Attempted Strongarm Robbery.

REPORTING OFFICERS W. BROWN, #1780 AND K. TRISLER, #2751

[Signature][Number]  
(APPROVED)

4cc: Investigations



*1cc: Records*  
*1cc: CAS*  
*1cc: I. D. Bureau*  
*1cc: Sgt. Legerski*

*(Tape/mlm)*

Let it be noted here that the people I have been coping with for decades are, apparently, not above ANY amount of fabrication.

The likely reason for my arrest:

To build a "legend" for me, which would flesh out the (false) background of an individual of a very dubious nature and develop motives for some crime to be carried out in the future – either by me or someone making use of guns with my fingerprints on them.

## Shock, the Second: Dead Rats on My Psychotherapist's Doorstep

In early 2020, prior to publishing this book, and after having reviewed the following incidents with Victor Morton (my therapist at the time), I found that he disagreed with me regarding the number of these occurrences. According to him, there was only one such incident, whereas I remember two. Perhaps the passage of time (almost thirty years) dulls the memory.

I also wish to emphasize that Victor Morton is in no way to be connected in a negative way, directly or indirectly, to these or any other events described in this book. Dr. Morton, I wish to emphasize, is mentioned here as a victim and only a victim.

In 1991, while employed at Sound Solutions in Santa Monica, a dead rat was placed on Victor's back doorstep on two consecutive occasions over a period of two weeks, precisely on the mornings of my sessions with him. He was then forced to cancel appointments, drive home, calm his wife who had discovered the rat, and dispose of it himself. A week later, after the second such occurrence, Victor gently brought up the subject with me when I arrived for my therapy session. I denied any involvement, and expressed my shock. For several more years, I remained his client.

I later found out that he had also asked our mutual friend, Oscar Revey (the man who had introduced us; also, a therapist) if I were capable of such a thing. Soon after this incident, as I stood near him in the Sound Solutions lab, I heard my boss, Michael Dubrow, repeat in a loud voice: "Die shrink! Die shrink! Die shrink!"

Two likely reasons for these acts:

Someone may have wanted to drive a wedge between me and Dr. Morton in order to leave me to my own devices, depriving me of the benefits of his help, support and compassion at a time when I was still recovering from a previous suicide attempt and while coming under increasing psychological pressures from my peculiar environment.

These acts could also be seen as attempts to add to my "Legend" (see the glossary), just as the manufactured arrest at the Santa Monica Public Library had done – making me look like a thoroughly repugnant individual, and somewhat unhinged, to boot.

## Shock, the Third: Disappearance of Colette Walczak's Bank Account

Colette Walczak, in the last throes of her battle with cancer, had put me in me charge of her finances through a durable power of attorney executed in September 2018. As I went to establish control over her bank accounts the next day, I found that the checking account, from which she used to pay her rent, had disappeared. It had not been drawn down, neither had it been closed. It had simply never existed. Yet, I had in my hands her checkbook and a copy of the canceled check drawn on the same account, which she had used to pay the previous month's rent to her landlord, Richard Jocas. A reproduction of this canceled check is included in this book; see Figure 26.

The likely reason for this extraordinary act:

While I do not have a definitive explanation, it is reasonable to assume it was done with the intent of preventing any of Colette Walczak's monies from being transferred to me or my sister – either by Colette or possibly her father, Ted Walczak. She had, earlier in the year, as I cared for her in my bungalow, said she wanted me (and later, when I refused, my sister) to be beneficiary of her entire estate, including bank accounts and real estate. A year after her death, funds in a separate bank account, of which I was unaware, were transferred to me, per instructions recorded when she had opened the account some years earlier. This suggests a seriousness on her part regarding her wish to have me (or my sister) be the beneficiary of her estate. Yet, in spite of this, as she was within days of her death, when I asked her to sign the will that I had had drawn up according to the wishes she had expressed earlier in the year, she declined. Without giving any reasons, she signed only the durable power of attorney. Also, in a phone conversation with a representative of the bank in question, (TD Bank – Toronto Dominion Bank), she complained repeatedly that she was being "pushed," presumably by me.

I believe the reason for the disappearance of her account in so spectacular a way was to dissuade and intimidate anyone who might wish to carry out her initial wishes: designating me or my sister heirs to her entire estate.

And so, as the colonial-era Hong Kong beggars' refrain goes: "No mommy, no daddy, no whiskey soda."

## CHAPTER 2

### The “Clark Load”: Disclosure of My Negatives

#### Miscellaneous

In the summer of 1973, I helped two people steal a motorcycle in a small town I was passing through – Gold Beach, Oregon. All three of us were caught, I pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to one month in jail for a misdemeanor charge of auto theft.

In the early seventies, the draft still being in effect, I was, by law, supposed to register with my local draft board. Purposely, I never did.

The following event is an instance of my being tricked. I made an attempted entry into what I was told was a router connected to a security camera system, exact nature and location of system unknown to me, for the ostensible purpose of setting up port forwarding. I did this from a computer at my bungalow as requested by a customer (name unknown), who spoke English with a strong Israeli accent. This could be interpreted as attempted computer hacking, a charge that carries heavy penalties. (See, for example, the saga of Aaron Swartz, a programmer and internet activist who, after an indictment, committed suicide in 2013). I was unsuccessful in the attempt, and the customer left after making some cutting remark about my technical competence.

During my business relationship with Ryan Olson, someone I worked for temporarily as a PC repair technician, I sometimes made copies of Windows XP discs. I likely made several copies, over the course of the time I worked for him. At times, this was for my own use, and other times because a customer with a valid certificate of authenticity (COA) had a serial number that did not match my Windows disk. In the case of the latter, due to time constraints, I used discs that I asked Ryan Olson to provide. I think I downloaded the copies from the website he controlled, with his permission, using one copy for myself, to run under Ubuntu at home.

A few years ago, while having my teeth worked on over the course of some months by a Karen Lee, student at the USC School of Dentistry, I overstepped the bounds of propriety by handing her the gift of a croissant along with a note confessing to *un faible* for her. I was soon informed by letter from the administration that, as a result of my billet-doux, my custom would no longer be required at the dental school. A scan of the letter from USC is included in the CD.

Sometime in the early eighties, I met a young woman, Julie Branica, a student at UCLA, majoring in French. We briefly became involved but before our relations ended, I believe she began feeling she was the target of unwanted attention on my part. I did, on some occasion(s), for example, go to her apartment unannounced, etc. This was, possibly, yet another instance of a “Cute Meet.”

As a student at Caltech, I sometimes made free calls using a device to circumvent the phone company’s billing system. I may have used a similar device while visiting a friend in Arizona sometime in the summer following my freshman year.

At UCLA professor Rod Gorney’s house, where I was working on his computers, I took a hard disk ribbon cable from a disused computer without telling him. Later, when the professor questioned me about it, I said: “I could not resist.”

One afternoon in Colette Walczak’s car parked in back of the Star Market on Santa Monica Boulevard near South Bundy Drive (I had had my license lifted for a year), I spontaneously

make the following comment: “*Yo quiero matar esto Judeo de mierda.*” I was referring, of course, to either David Epstein or Michael Dubrow, or both. Neither Colette Walczak nor I have ever referred to it since. Colette asked for a translation, and smiled wanly as I told her what it meant. We then walked into the market and she repeated the translation in English in front of a Hispanic employee of the market. No number of apologies could excuse this comment on my part. It was unforgivable!

During an argument with Colette sometime in the 1980s, after she had moved to her Ashland Avenue apartment, I grabbed her, picked her up, and threw her on her bed.

During another argument with Colette, also in the 1980s, I believe she asked me to leave. When I refused, she called either the police or 911. I think, she hung up before anyone answered. Several years later, the office manager at my then employer, Sound Solutions, may have alluded to these incidents in a spirit of ridicule.

## Drugs

By 1973 while attending Caltech, I began smoking marijuana. My habit slowly increased to the point where I was smoking several times a week, almost always with fellow students. I may have occasionally purchased bags of the drug, but, usually, I smoked what others offered me. I stopped using weed when I left Caltech – with the exception of two occasions. Once, around 1979 or 1980, I smoked at the home of my landlady. Around that same time, I also smoked at the apartment of a college friend.

Several times when at Caltech I smoked hashish, which I received from a fellow student.

While still in college, I took a pill called a quaalude.

Also, while in college, I bought and consumed at least one bag of little white stimulant pills, then known as “whites.”

Still at Caltech, I received some cocaine from an acquaintance, and inhaled it with him at the beach.

While living with Colette Walczak, probably in the mid-eighties, she furnished me with a small quantity of magic mushrooms, which I consumed.

I have had minimal involvement with alcohol. I was first drunk at a New Year's Eve party in Bremerhaven, Germany, during my college freshman year.

For health benefits, I once bought a case of cheap wine from Trader Joe's to consume in a very small amount per day. I soon discontinued this discipline, and gave away my remaining bottles, having consumed less than the content of five bottles over the course of about two months.

## Money

### **Blackjack in Las Vegas with Subhash Sharma:**

Several years after I left school, a friend from Caltech mentioned he counted cards in Las Vegas. I began learning his system and invested money in the five-figure range for him to use at the tables. After some initial wins, he began losing, and could not explain to me why. Under the circumstances, I took back what was left of my investment, later realizing Subhash Sharma was probably a compulsive gambler. That would explain why, even with his six-figure salary, he needed to borrow money.

### **Stock tip from Subhash Sharma:**

During the time I worked at Xentel Corp., I received a stock tip from Subhash Sharma, who told me he had gotten it from someone in a politician's office. I discussed this with my friend Tom Ellsberg (now deceased), who cautioned me that what I was doing was insider trading, which was illegal. I went ahead anyway in spite of Tom's advice and bought some shares of stock. The stock(s) lost value and I sold, having held them/it for a couple of months or so.

### **False address given as residence:**

Sometime around 1984 my accountant, Roland Uy, began doing the taxes for me that I had not filed in several years. He told me to disclose to the IRS that I lived at the same address where I received my mail. I had been living in a garage in Santa Monica and the address I falsely gave as my residence belonged to a friend, Reuven Levy (now deceased), and his roommate.

### **Stock market investments through my accountant:**

After having plowed through my accumulated financial paperwork and filed back-tax paperwork, for which he refused compensation, he noted, "I see you are interested in the stock market," and recommended several penny stocks. Combining cash I had borrowed from Subhash with my own, I invested a total somewhere in the mid five figures in those stocks and others, as well.

### **Colette Walczak added my name to her bank account (I used money from the account without her permission):**

In 1993, Colette left for Japan with her then-boyfriend, where she stayed a month before spending almost a year in China. During her absence, I took advantage of an opportunity to buy a piece of test equipment from *Stenåke "Sten" Larssen* of Walnut, California. Having been given access to Colette's bank account, I withdrew a thousand dollars without her permission. I then began regularly dipping into the account for purchases of inventory for my business. I continued doing this even after Colette returned from China. She and I eventually agreed on an amount I would repay her. Making occasional, sporadic payments whenever I could afford to do so, I had repaid Colette only a fraction of that amount prior to her death.

### **A lie on my application for SSDI:**

When I was switched from SSI to SSDI, a curious incident occurred at the Social Security office on Robertson Boulevard in Los Angeles. The young man who was handling my case wrote down some incorrect information regarding (likely, although I am not sure) the date of my initial hospitalization or suicide attempt. He may have inadvertently stated the date as one year earlier than it actually happened. I am not sure of the exact nature of the falsehood – but falsehood there was, on my part. I was aware of the inaccuracy and pointed it out to the young man. I then listened to his counterargument, which made no sense to me, but I signed the application, anyway. I had until then been dealing with an older white man for many years who happened to walk by while I was being interviewed by the younger Black man. He was not handling this case. I did try to correct the lie sometime later but, by then, the period for

correcting statements made on the application had expired. Since then, I have felt there is a defect in my "title" to this disability income, a defect that has hung over my head ever since.

#### **Unpaid college loans:**

Upon leaving college, I did not provide a forwarding address to the school. As a result, dunning notices were sent to my father who, at that time, lived in the Bronx. He paid off the balance in full – several thousand dollars of outstanding loans. Much later, while I was living in Echo Park, he asked me to reimburse him. Though I could have done so easily, I refused.

#### **Destruction of records:**

Using a shredder, I systematically destroyed my income records. This action was witnessed/heard by the daughter (?) of "*Baba Outrom*," a neighbor in the bungalow across from mine with whom I was to have many years of peculiar interactions. (These incidents are described in other chapters.)

#### **Unfiled income taxes:**

There were years in which I did not file income tax returns.

#### **Unpaid bill(s):**

When, some decades ago, I was seen at a mental health facility, Gateway Hospital in Echo Park, a bill was eventually sent to me, which I never paid. The amount was in the low hundred-dollar range.

## Sex

### **Pedophilia**

#### **Foot rubbing with a seventeen-year-old student:**

In 1972 at Caltech, while class was in session, I rubbed my foot against the foot of a seventeen-year-old high school student under the table.

#### **Sexual contact with a thirteen-year-old girl:**

In 1979 or so, while living in Pasadena at the house of my landlady, I became close to an I.U.R., thirteen-year-old daughter of the gardener and cleaning lady. The sexual activity I initiated consisted of rubbing her foot under the table for a few minutes. On another occasion, I kissed her on the face and neck, but not the mouth. I placed my hand on her stomach and moved my finger(s) at the opening of the vagina. On yet another occasion, I.U.R. kissed me lightly on the mouth. There may have been another instance of intimate contact I initiated similar to those described above, but that was all. I left Pasadena in about 1981, and made a last visit to the home of I.U.R., when I asked for her address. I never saw her again.

#### **Blanca Gutierrez on bus (a likely sting):**

Around 1981, riding a westbound RTD bus on Wilshire or Santa Monica Boulevard, I met Blanca Gutierrez, who gave her age as sixteen, and mentioned a boyfriend attending USC. We engaged in conversation over several encounters on the same morning bus as I was commuting to Teledyne Controls in West Los Angeles. On one occasion, for a minute or less, I rubbed my knee against her upper arm as she sat and I stood above her. When I saw her again on following days, I refused to renew verbal contact with her despite eye contact on both our parts. I never saw her again.

#### **Pressing myself against an underage girl:**

Sometime around 1985, when riding an RTD bus in Echo Park on either Glendale Boulevard or Alvarado Boulevard, I pressed myself against a short young female passenger – Hispanic, about fourteen years old. I am not sure who initiated the contact, which continued for a few seconds and was not repeated. When both of us got off the bus at the same stop, we stood near each other in silence for a moment before separating. A Black post office employee working nearby may have seen us standing together. I had no other encounters with the young girl, nor were words ever exchanged. I may have seen her nearby on another occasion, but I am uncertain.

#### **Child Pornography**

##### **Underage girl picture viewing in New Mexico:**

In 1998, while working on a project at Santa Monica Studios, I traveled to Santa Fe, New Mexico, to deliver a desktop computer running Windows to a friend, Teddy Walczak. While there, I connected the computer to the internet, likely via a phone dial-up connection. It was at that time that I chanced upon a newsgroup called "*Pilipinas*" and viewed several images of child pornography. These were pictures of underage girls from the Philippines posing undressed. I viewed more than a dozen of these pictures, knowing I was engaging in a felony. Nevertheless, I continued doing this for some time. I and only I am responsible for whatever pictures were to be found on my friend's computer when I returned it in nonworking condition to Ivanka Fernandez, my next-door neighbor, for repair. Ivanka told me the source of the problem was "overuse" of the machine so soon after initial installation. I did not repeat these illegal actions upon returning the computer to the customer.

##### **I throw out hard disk with a picture of underage girl:**

Sometime around early 2000-something, likely using a dial-up connection, I viewed a picture of a nude child, likely Asian, on a newsgroup for nude photos of over-eighteen women. My reaction to this unexpected picture was to remove the hard disk from the PC, eradicate my fingerprints from it with rubbing alcohol or some such substance, and drive it in my car, alone, to the Albertson's supermarket on Venice Boulevard at Culver Boulevard, where I disposed of it in the trash. Eventually I replaced my hard disk with one furnished by Ivanka. She and I never discussed the reason for the disk replacement. I do not know what happened to the hard disk I discarded that night.

##### **Kinbaku video with underage girl (momentary viewing):**

Around the middle of 2014 while living at my current location, I was looking at videos of an activity called *Kinbaku* or *Shibari*, a Japanese sexual practice. The videos featured a performance by a Japanese man, likely named Akira Naka, and a Japanese woman – both over eighteen years of age. I had already viewed two such videos when, starting the third, I thought I was watching a performance involving the tying up of a woman. Instead, before the video stopped (not of my doing), I caught a glimpse of a small woman, possibly a fully dressed child in a traditional Japanese costume. I restarted the video and, seeing the possibility that it might be showcasing an underage girl, I immediately turned it off. The site, called something like vk.com, was likely, a Russian video storage site.

In the eighth grade, on one occasion, I briefly engaged in unwanted sexual contact with a fellow student – a girl about my age.

### **An incautious remark about a certain "Soul Brother Number One" sets off a train of events**

The trap is set and baited

Sometime during a visit to a friend, Dennis Allard, a man I had known for several years, and whose sympathies, I must emphasize, clearly lay to the Left, made a statement about then-President Obama: "He is a house nigger." I made little or no comment at the time and, after some desultory conversation, eventually left.

The trap is sprung; I fall headlong

Days or weeks later, I got a call from a former customer, Emmanuel Okolo. Speaking over the phone, a noticeable nervousness in his voice, he asked that I fix his computer. During my visit, after an uneventful hour or two during which we exchanged few words as I worked, he opened a conversation with: "Do you like politics? I like politics. Let's talk about politics."

During the following minutes, he proceeded to steer the conversation to the subject of the president, asking, "Do you like Obama? I like Obama." Eventually I said, "I think he is a regular house nigger." At that, coming from another part of the house, I heard two distinct sounds of coughing. Continuing, I added, "Are you familiar with the idea of affinity scams?" He was not, so I explained. For the rest of my visit, about another half hour, he remained completely silent.

Sometime later, I was visiting Jeannine Frank, someone who ran ads for me in exchange for computer help. A neighbor dropped by and, during the conversation, said, "What are you going to do about the house painter?" She replied, "Oh, we'll just say he's young." The exchange made no sense to me.

Exploiting the breach

In the following weeks, I had several encounters with Black people. Encounters, I believe, engineered to elicit a response similar to what had transpired with Emmanuel Okolo – perhaps to demonstrate a pattern of racist responses on my part.

The various incidents had the following commonalities:

- All involved Black people
- All had witnesses present
- All involved provocation, however slight, by the person in question

In one instance at a Vons market in Santa Monica as I approached the dairy section, a Black man dressed as an employee took a quick, unnecessary step in my direction before asking if I



needed anything. I replied in the negative, picked up the item I was looking for, and left. As this interaction happened, within a few feet of us stood another man, seemingly disinterested, but certainly in a position to witness what might have conceivably transpired. Innocent enough? Perhaps.

Around this time, another Black man, also in a supermarket, with a visible prosthetic (false leg exposed; he was wearing shorts), motioned as if to back into me. I had to move to avoid him. I made no comment and did not react before leaving the store. No further interactions took place.

A customer of Nigerian descent called me one day requesting a refund for work I had done on several of his computers some weeks previous. I immediately offered him all of his money back – about \$300, without probing for a reason. (I am seldom asked for refunds, never without a logical reason, and rarely of this size.) The next day, he came to my bungalow along with another person, and I immediately handed him a check for the full amount. His only comment: "The work was not to my liking." I said nothing.

There may have been other events of this type. (Details are available in one of the emails I sent out at irregular intervals around that time.)

#### Damage control: Adventures in "Black-washing"

It was around this time that the other shoe dropped. Though I had been living in my bungalow for several years, I had had few interactions with neighbors including the ones, mostly Black, living in the complex adjacent to mine. Then, things changed. A pleasant young man from that set of apartments came over, introduced himself, and, in short order, became my intermediary, bringing me business from several people in his complex. This was the beginning of a lively trade in which I sold them computers and internet bandwidth. For several years, I was a regular visitor to that complex, helping several of the residents resolve their computer problems. I also began getting a more or less steady stream of Black customers, American as well as African, from other locations. In the past, these had been few.

Years later, I made another incautious remark, this time about Jewish people.

Along the same lines, in October 2020, I was having a phone conversation with a customer while visiting a friend. When she heard me complain about the time I was spending on the job and the little amount of money I was getting in return, my friend confirmed the customer in question was Jewish and suggested her ethnicity might be the problem. I agreed.

#### Conclusions

Gentle Reader, it should be obvious by now that I have been and am being played – by both sides. As, by extension and implication, are you.

In this desperate and sordid farce in which I am a central, though rather hapless, participant ("pawn" might be a better word), I see the players as consisting of the "Black Hats," elements of the security services of this government (i.e., my would-be Masters: those who, but for the involvement of the other side, would have turned me into a monster and assassin), and the "White Hats" (I hesitate to call them the good guys, though they did rescue me from an awful fate), consisting of those I call my Masters (i.e., the LAPD, the Zionist interest, the State of Israel-Palestine, et al). Of course, neither side is exactly known for running charitable organizations.

At the very least I feel I am being marketed like a brand of toothpaste by both the "White Hats" and the "Black Hats," to radically different ends and with no moral equivalence in this case.

Gentle Reader, would that I could keep my mouth shut; it might make the work of my “marketing team” and handlers so much easier.

Relevant to what I have revealed in this unfortunate chapter: *"'Tis true 'tis pity, and pity 'tis, 'tis true."*

- William Shakespeare

## CHAPTER 3

### An "Ersatz" Frenchman: The Discreet Charms of the (Petite) Bourgeoisie

#### In France (1955-1967) or *Les Neiges d'Antan* (The Snows of Yesteryear)

My name is Lawson Bergendahl Hawkins. I was born on May 25, 1955, at the American Hospital in *Neuilly*, a suburb of Paris – although we mostly lived in Orléans, a mid-sized town to the south. Because of my American father, I was born with United States citizenship and have had no other. We lived first on the *Faubourg Bannier*, then later at the nearby 13, *Rue Ladureau*. Family consisted of my father, Lawson Winfred Hawkins, my mother, Marie-France (née Maria Francesca Llorca) Hawkins, and my sister, Irene Sophie Hawkins, born one year after me. I believe both my sister and I were born out of wedlock, although my parents subsequently married. Mother was born in the village of *Finestrat*, in the province of Valencia, Spain. Her parents were peasants and emigrated to France when she was two.

Father was born in Fincastle, Virginia. He once mentioned that the Breckenridges, a family long established there, had owned our ancestors. One of my uncles, in fact, had the given name Breckenridge.

We lived in Orléans for a dozen years, until France left NATO in 1967. From there the family moved to Germany for another several years.

My sister and I were never baptized, to the chagrin of our mother, although, like many French people, she was lukewarm in her faith and later gave up religion, entirely. In my teenage years, Father once asked me in a bantering tone, "So, you don't believe in the seven celestial judges?" I replied in the negative. He merely smiled, shook his head, and went back to his sports page. I was born a heathen, raised a heathen, am still a heathen, and will die a heathen (God willing). Such is the force of one's formative years.

Father was always excessively proud of his children, praising us to the skies, to the point where people, according to my sister, wanted to do away with the both of us. Even though I was a difficult child, I eventually outgrew it, becoming studious – if never quite in the manner of everyone else. I believe Irene and I were considered near "perfect," especially in our teenage years. I remember, though, an incident in France when my cousin Vincent and I were upstairs in my bedroom examining my collection of firecrackers when I lit one, thinking the fuse could be extinguished before it reached the firecracker. Unfortunately, the flame slipped through my fingers, setting off the explosive. Subsequently, Vincent and I were called downstairs to give an account of ourselves. Afraid of the punishment likely to come, I blamed Vincent. To my eternal shame, it worked. The adults accepted my explanation and, in spite of my poor cousin's protestations of innocence, his father led him away for a spanking.

While living in Orléans, at about age five, I was scalded by a pot of boiling water on the stove which, hungry and curious to see what it contained, I tipped over onto myself. This resulted in second- and third-degree burns over much of my body. My parents rushed me to the small hospital on our street, where I stayed overnight. That evening, while agonizing in bed, and before being taken to the American military hospital the next morning, I could hear my parents arguing in French. "They are my children," one said in a low voice. "No, they are my children," replied the other. I tried to speak, but could only groan and manage to gesture

feebly in their direction with my arm – perhaps in an attempt at mediation. They noticed and, for a while, at least, fell silent.

One other incident briefly marred our generally uneventful life. I don't remember much about it. One morning my father, on his way to work, found a rotting fish on our front steps. He and mother disposed of it but the powerful, characteristic, smell lingered on the stone steps for days. They never discussed it with us children.

In our backyard, which was surrounded by a wall extending up for several meters, we had a large cherry tree. In season, all of us, including our grandmother, would climb into the tree and, after having filled a large wicker basket with cherries, lowered it by rope to the ground to be delivered to Mother, so she could bake a delicious kind of cherry pie called *clafoutis*. She made those remarkable pies all summer long, until the tree was bare.

### **Our French relatives**

We would occasionally visit relatives in the Paris area, where most of them lived in lower-middle class suburbs such as *Pierrefitte* and *Sarcelles* before later moving into the city. Those were enjoyable times we spent with cousins, their parents, and our grandparents. In such families, it is often the case that the wife has more education than the husband. I believe this was so with us; my grandfather, Camille, who, since emigrating to France with his family, had risen to supervision of road construction crews, was almost certainly illiterate.

My favorite uncle was Tony Llorca who lived in *Sarcelles*, to the north of Paris, with his wife and son. In the sixties, he bought and began fixing up a rundown country house in Normandie, where we were to spend some excellent vacations fed by his wife, Aunt Renée – in my opinion, one of the world's great cooks. Their son, my cousin Vincent, whom I saw frequently, would die young – likely of a drug overdose.

On one occasion, while visiting our grandparents, Father woke us late one night and, without explanation, made us all dress in silence and pack our many suitcases. Then he led us out of the house and took us to the train station, maybe a kilometer away. We asked no questions and, to this day, I have no idea what prompted this action. He had not, of course, told our relatives of our leaving, a fact that must have come as a surprise when they woke up the next day and found us missing. Perhaps, anticipating their reaction was Father's entire motivation.

Uncle Tony, late in life, told me about how another uncle of mine, Vincent, deciding to oppose the Franco regime in Spain, once crossed the border in the Pyrénées with a group of like-minded Frenchmen of Spanish origin. They brought with them food, weapons, and one or more mules. Wandering through the Spanish countryside for some time, they looked for action until, exhausted, out of food, and having eaten their mule(s), they were caught by or surrendered to members of *La Guardia Civil*. About to be executed, my uncle was saved by an officer who recognized him as coming from his own village. He was then allowed to return to France.

### **Note on a bit of class warfare**

There was one exception to most of my relatives. Maria, my aunt, was a rather glamorous beauty, who had married well and lived with her husband and three children in Paris. Her husband, Georges Stein, a man of peculiar antecedents, was said to have been a founding, and had fought in World War II as a tank commander. As was often the case with the firetrap called the Sherman (a tank from which he, no doubt, saw action), he was eventually wounded and, years later, still had the scars to show for it. His last name may have later prompted a question by one of my inquisitive coworkers at Sound Solutions – about whether or not I was Jewish.

His firm, *Stein et Roubaix*, employed Aunt Renée (Llorca), as a bookkeeper or accountant. She would relate how, when government bureaucrats came by the office, he, Georges, would always use the more intimate “*tu*” form of the word “you” with her – presumably to show his sympathies with the lower classes. However, when introducing my aunt to other, more exalted, persons, he repeatedly omitted the bit about being related to her by marriage – preferring to introduce her as his accountant.

### **Our American relatives**

We traveled every two years to the United States, visiting Father’s brother-in-law and sister, William and Irene Bergendahl, in Jamaica, Queens, New York. Bill, originally from Sweden, was a sailor who eventually made his way to the United States. By the time I met him, he no longer spoke his native language. We once visited one of Father’s brothers, a World War I veteran, missing one leg, who lived in Virginia. In the early years of our visits, when another of his brothers dropped by, Breckenridge and my father would engage in interminable, loud arguments. Having no comprehension of English, I could not make out any of it. Father had another sister, Mary, living nearby, but the two of them never got along. Irene and I never became as close to them as we were to Mother’s family.

### **I am "menaced with education" – Winston Churchill**

I had lousy grades in school. The class clown, I was a turbulent dunce and a discipline problem, both there and at home. Mother would fret about my grades, though Father, to my surprise, usually took them less seriously. One exception arose one day after he had ordered me to study my textbooks. Finding another book that I was reading more interesting, I hid it inside the schoolbook I was supposed to be studying. Later, when checking up on me, Father discovered my deception. You can guess the rest.

Initially I went to a nearby Catholic school, the *Cour Dupanloup*, somewhat provocatively named. Though an orderly place, it was staffed by neurotic and somewhat sadistic women – though not on the level of British public schools, thank God. An example: my sister was left-handed, which we discovered when she started school a year after me. In the France of those days, left-handedness was considered practically a crime against nature – and not to be tolerated. These brutal ninnies then proceeded to break her of her natural preference. I saw many tears, both at school and at home, before she finally switched to right-handed dominance. My parents, perhaps a bit too conventional themselves, tolerated this treatment of the poor girl, which may have marked her for life.

I did badly in class, although I sometimes scored near (but never *at*) the top. Looking back on those years, if there had been some way to avoid the stultifying experience of conventional schooling, I would have considered it a godsend. The year before I began school with those harridans, I asked my mother to teach me to read and write. It must not have been the right moment to ask, as she replied something like, "You'll learn soon enough when you start school."

Concerned about my lack of performance, my parents eventually tried to help me along by bringing in tutors. Their attempts failed.

Since the school had no sixth grade, I was transferred to a public school much further away, which required bus fare and public transportation. However, I quickly got into the habit of saving my week's bus allowance and spending it on delicious little licorice mice, which I stored in my desk at school. When class became sufficiently boring, which was often the case for me, I would raise the top of the desk slightly and take inventory of row after row of my

mice. Surprisingly, no one ever stole even one of them. However, the class bully, a kid named Delamare, once pressured me into "allocating" to him some of my precious inventory.

As I often took the bus to school during rush hour, there were times when it became difficult for me to reach the driver and pay my fare. On one occasion, having boarded through the wrong entrance, I was unable to reach him and shouted to him through the crowd. "Driver, how can I pay? I can't reach you." He shouted back. "*T'en fais pas, achète-toi des carambars avec!*" ("Don't worry, buy some candy instead!") He referred to the delicious, stick-like caramel candies in the distinctive yellow-and-red wrapping, which were doing so much damage to my teeth.) The passengers roared with laughter.

On one occasion, the sixth-grade teacher, a nice younger man named M. Hernandez, perhaps wishing to gauge my qualifications as a Frenchman, asked me in front of the class to name a good soccer team. Caught unprepared (I knew nothing of sports and cared even less), and after a moment's reflection, I ventured what I considered a safe guess. "Paris," I said. As one, the entire class exploded with laughter! I had failed the test.

On another occasion, M. Hernandez, after having read aloud a division problem, began making the rounds of the classroom, checking on students' progress. He would pause behind a student, look over his shoulder and check his work, before moving on to the next one. Eventually he made his way to me, and paused to watch me work. The pause lengthened. I, who have never been much at arithmetic, began to panic and started scribbling nonsense. M. Hernandez, betraying his puzzlement and perhaps displeasure, slapped me, once, hard, from behind. Without commentary, he simply moved on to the next student.

I was probably the only student ever admitted to the California Institute of Technology found incapable of calculating long division. Ah, Gentle Reader, the wonders of affirmative action.

Predictably enough, the school year did not end well for me. The school required a passing grade on the year-end exam as prerequisite to moving a student on to the next level. And I did not pass. Rather than having to suffer the ignominy of having their kid repeat a grade, my parents opted to transfer me to an American school. I thus began the following year in the American sixth grade not knowing a word of English.

My grades did not start to improve until my first year of high school or so, when they went from dunce-level to well above average – although, unlike my sister's, they never became excellent. (I attribute my academic mediocrity to laziness.) I also began reading a lot around the last years of our stay in Orléans. I remember being transfixed by some short stories of Edgar Allan Poe's translated into French, and I read them over and over. When I was about ten, a neighbor, friend of my mother's, gave me a World War II fighter pilot's memoir, *Le Grand Cirque (The Big Show)* by Pierre Clostermann, which I read many times over. (William Faulkner cited this memoir as perhaps the best book to come out of World War II.) My reading began to increase, both indiscriminately and most specifically: science fiction and war books. The first book I read in English was *The Bridges at Toko-Ri* by James Michener, set during the Korean war. I read it on holiday during my first year in the American school while learning to ski in the Alps. Because of my poor English, I had to read it twice before I could make sense of it. Neither of my parents much monitored or guided my readings except once, in a negative way. I remember a French hardback science fiction comic book, nicely illustrated, called, *L'Énigme de l'Atlantide (The Enigma of Atlantis)*. Fascinated, I read and re-read it so often that my parents took notice and, concerned about my possibly not turning out "normal," took it away one day without telling me. Although I asked Mother about it, I never saw it again. Through the magic of the internet, however, I have since located and bought another copy; see Figure 32.

Finally, so you, Gentle Reader, have no illusions left about my academic abilities, I relate the following calamity. When I transferred from French schools to American ones, we kids, being in France, were required to take French. I started the class thinking, *At last! Something I can do blindfolded*. Imagine my surprise, not to say shock, when the teacher, a Frenchwoman, gave me a “C” or less on the first essay I turned in. Apparently, my spelling and grammar were not what she had expected. The next day, my father took time off from work to go down to the school and, with some fanfare, I imagine, extricated me from that class. I was never forced to study that stupid language again. Yay! Though I did choose to take it again once in high school and, briefly, in college.

## An Apolitical Family

Compared to today’s internet society, we were information-poor as a family. We were simple people. We had no TV (there were no televised baseball games to interest Father), no car (Father never learned to drive and neither did Mother), no telephone (we did not get one until Bremerhaven) and only an old radio/record player Father had bought second-hand. My parents took no paper except for the *Stars and Stripes*, the army newspaper (which Father read mostly for the sports scores). Mother read the women’s fashion magazines – *Elle*, mostly, and sometimes the French version of *Look* called *Paris Match*.

Once, curious about an intriguing newspaper printed on green stock at a nearby tobacco shop, I asked my mother if I could get a copy. Her reply was an uncharacteristically curt and emphatic no. She apparently did not want her son reading the likes of *Le Canard enchaîné* (*The Chained Newspaper*), a satirical but respectable political paper still published today.

Neither could we have been called a politically aware family. The Algerian war came and went (my mother lost her brother, Guy, early twenties, in the conflict), the OAS came and went, de Gaulle came and went. In the United States, the assassinations of the Sixties came and went, as did the Tet offensive, the race riots, and the hippie movement. Other than in a cursory fashion, we never discussed any of these topics at home. One rare exception was the Cuban missile crisis. Father came home from work one night in Orléans, worried we might soon be at war. Another shattering event was the assassination of JFK. For the only time I can remember, Father went to church. Then, around 1970 (we had by then moved to Germany), he and I were in a train station walking to our compartment when we passed some German students taking up a whole wagon and leaning out of the windows. Knowing we were Americans they began shouting antiwar slogans as soon as they saw us. I turned to Father, who was ignoring them, and said, “They’re wrong, aren’t they?” He surprised me with his quiet reply. “I’m not so sure.”

## My Father and His Peculiarities

### **Discipline (or something more?) or "That Hideous Strength"**

Father disciplined mostly me – my sister, very little. The discipline was not generally physically abusive (with exceptions, mentioned below). Neither was it brutal, painful, or insensate. It was measured, with an almost calculated “dose.” He was, after all, a self-disciplined man before he was a disciplinarian. It was just not always evenly applied or

consistent. With him, there was almost never discussion or give-and-take. Almost every interaction was a lecture, and there was seldom, if ever, free-flowing conversation between us.

From early on, Father often showed a pronounced lack of respect for my boundaries. In Orléans, I once stopped by his office on base to say hello. I had just approached his desk when he, without a word that I can remember, began feeling my pockets to see what was in them. Well, he found the toy pistol I had just stolen from a nearby store. After meting out my punishment, he took me to the store where I had stolen the toy, and made me apologize at length and in tears before proceeding to buy me the toy pistol in question. I think the clerk I apologized to was even more embarrassed than I.

Years later, when, as a teenager, I began to feel the need for some privacy, I started closing my bedroom door during the day. Father, without explanation, opened it, telling me he wanted it to stay open from then on. Coming back to Bremerhaven for Christmas after my first term in college, I had brought a textbook I wanted to surprise my sister with and so tried to keep it hidden as I unpacked my bags in view of my parents. Father, noticing something furtive in me, immediately began looking through the suitcase, and found the mathematics text I had tried to hide. After my first leave of absence, back in Germany, I began some much-needed soul-searching, and started a journal. Mother told me privately that, still unable to leave me the slightest shred of privacy, Father was looking through the journal, as well. Once, after his retirement, while I visited the family in New York, he asked for my wallet. Rifling through it, he found an innocuous card with the words: "Kindly go F\*\*\* Yourself." Somewhat appropriate, no?

In France, during a discipline session when I was about ten, I indicated my willingness to undergo the ordeal by saying, in French (I did not speak English at the time), "*Vas-y, Jazy.*" ("Go ahead, then, *Jazy.*") Father misunderstood this phrase, then in common usage by kids and referring to champion runner, *Michel Jazy* of the 1960s, and he interpreted it as an ethnic slur. In his paranoia, he may have made some connection between the word *Jazy* and jazz. This was utterly false, as I had no comprehension of English at the time. He then became enraged, which heightened the confrontation. Later, I overheard my mother try to disabuse him of the notion that "*Vas-y, Jazy*" was anything but children's rhyming slang.

On another occasion around that time, he lay me across his upper thighs and gave me a spanking. But when he noticed I had developed an erection, he stopped and told me to leave. No other words were exchanged.

On yet another occasion, we were visiting Father's sister in New York. By then, I might just have learned to speak English. We were at dinner in the kitchen – Mother, my sister, Aunt Irene, Uncle Bill, Father, and I. Sometime during the meal, I copied Uncle Bill and put ketchup on my fish sticks. For some unfathomable reason, Father became enraged at this and, pulling me from the table, grabbed me by the feet and turned me upside down, so I was hanging with my head skimming the floor. He then proceeded to shake me up and down, lecturing all the while. The ordeal over, he slowly lowered me to the ground, regaining his composure. We sat down again, and the meal resumed as though nothing had happened.

He was my hero...

Father had attended college in the United States, graduating with a degree in French from a college in Massachusetts before eventually leaving to enroll in the University of Grenoble in France, where he majored in history. During his studies there, he supported himself by working on a nearby farm as a laborer. Later he would sometimes entertain us with the cry he used for calling the cows home from the fields. He once mentioned that, on leaving America, he had had some difficulties obtaining a passport as the authorities suspected him of being a "troublemaker." This was the immediate post-war period, after all, a time when many Blacks left the United States for "warmer climes."



Without giving an explanation, he once confessed he had spent only three months in the United States Army. He did have a brand in the shape of the Greek letter Omega on his left breast, the result, he said, of a fraternity initiation rite where he was taken by surprise, manhandled, and branded against his consent. Years later, an acquaintance of the family remarked that in the army, when evaluating personnel came across a recruit with a brand, they would send them immediately for psychiatric evaluation. Father did not reply.

Late in his life he once told us that doctors had, after a routine X-ray exam, told him that he must have broken his neck while very young. He thought it must have been during a fight while in college when someone broke a chair over his head.

About himself, he was secretive, speaking very little about his earlier life. When he did allow himself to reminisce, he usually limited himself to vague generalities. Once, while in a restaurant in Paris, Mother asked him, tentatively, to confirm his middle name. He grudgingly said, "Winfred." She may have mispronounced it, because he, seemingly reluctantly, corrected her. She then encouraged him to fill in some blanks about his earlier life, asking if he was brought up by a British family, as he spoke with a slight British accent. He became evasive and did not, then or ever, reveal much about his personal life. He was not a particularly happy person, having never had, as he frequently said, without elaborating – a childhood. He always used the formal pronoun, "vous" – never "tu" – with anyone, friend or stranger. Mother also used the formal form when speaking with him.

One incident Father told us about was of working in the fields from an early age, bringing water to the workmen. Another incident at the age of fourteen brings home the atmosphere of paternalism prevalent in Virginia during that period. One day, he tried to leave his employers, the Breckenridge family, and made it to the train station, only to have the elder male of the family come after him, and, without a word, take him by the hand and lead him off the train. My father's comment to me, decades later in Los Angeles, was that he felt "owned." He did later manage to make good his escape.

I believe Father met my mother through her sister who, stranded in Bordeaux, France, received his help in getting back to Paris where her family resided.

My parents were complete opposites. She was kind, gentle, something of a prude, passive-aggressive, submissive, and rarely angry. He was domineering, a stern disciplinarian, and prone to explosive fits of anger. I have never met anyone remotely like him. As conventional as he appeared, he was quite peculiar. With outsized faults and qualities, he possessed an iron will; to defy him was futile. We always deferred to him, and I, at least, was always afraid of him, which caused a certain distance between us. He must have eventually noticed because he once complained to Mother that Irene and I did not love him. Mother protested that, of course, we did. This germ of an idea later grew into an obsession that Mother had encouraged the alienation of our feelings for him. It was to become a dominant theme in his thinking and interactions with the rest of the family for the remainder of his life.

While in Orléans, France, I used to rummage through a pile of paperback books Father had stored in the closet. One title, *The Terrible Swift Sword*, had a lurid cover showing a group of men about to administer a beating to another man. Since I could read no English, I took the book to my father to ask for an explanation. He took the book away and, though I looked for it again in the book pile, I never found it.

Father could also be generous and warm. I remember once when I was very young holding his large hand and examining the crags his days as a manual laborer had left on it.

An intelligent man, my father had no apparent intellectual interests. I never knew him to have read a book from cover to cover. His main passion was for baseball.

While we lived in Orléans, Father and I sometimes played checkers. He usually won although, on one occasion, when I was the winner, he excitedly called over my mother to show how I had beaten him.

For a Christmas present, he once played a trick on me, handing me a small box with something rattling inside. I opened it to find one measly gumball. Dejected, I made to throw the box away – taking care to keep the gumball. Meanwhile he, laughing, encouraged me to look further into the box. Tearing it apart, I found a false bottom in which he had hidden a nice Omega watch.

Father's French nickname for me was *Gigot* which, according to him, translates to "Muttonhead." Not very flattering, perhaps, but as the years ahead were to prove, not entirely inaccurate, either.

Sometime in the mid-sixties, while on vacation in Switzerland, Father and I were sitting on a bench by Lake Lugano when two young Swiss-Italian women walked by. They looked at us, and one said to the other, "*Due belle neri*" (Two attractive Blacks). My father immediately replied in Spanish, "*Muchas gracias*," accompanying the words with an elaborate bow. The two young women laughed, and went on their way.

Around that time in the town of Bordeaux, when Irene and I were still under ten, we were visiting some acquaintances of Father's. One afternoon, the three of us were walking together, holding hands. We began laughing about something, with Father in the lead. After some time, he began saying, partly to himself, "No, I must stop laughing now." To regain his composure, he began counting to ten. It took several attempts before he could master his momentary and uncharacteristic hilarity.

One day, some French friends of my parents came by for a drink. During the conversation, my father began speculating aloud about what would become of us, his family, were something to happen to him. "Who will take care of them?" he asked, rhetorically. I went to him, hugged him, and said, "I will, Papa. I will." I then burst out crying.

A favorite toy of mine was a small rocket. One day Father felt the impulse to take me outside to play and to bring along the rocket. We went to my usual place, a nearby combination construction site, soccer field, and track. This was the beginning of my Calvary. Angry and impatient, he insisted on my quickly preparing the rocket for launching. I became so nervous that, in launching the toy, it nearly struck me in the face. Some part of it fell off and it was left to Father to try to find the tiny plastic piece. By this time my nervousness must have visibly betrayed my discomfort, for he broke off our play session and ordered me home.

Father always took care to be well dressed, and would go to some trouble to do so, sometimes traveling to Britain to order his suits. On one occasion, he and my mother were either in Heidelberg or Frankfurt, attending some speech by Senator Edward Brooks of Massachusetts. Since Brooks was Black and had a white wife, the security detail mistook my parents for the couple. An embarrassing moment. However, at home, on weekends, when Father recovered from his weekly work binge (this is not an exaggeration; he was a confirmed workaholic), he dressed down – *really* down, looking like a vagrant. The contrast between his public and private dress could not have been greater. He never used vulgarity and was never informal, but there was always a pronounced contrast between his home life and his public persona. Often, relaxing at home, he wore a bandage around his head for his frequent severe headaches. He was prone to nightmares and talking in his sleep.

Sometimes, he had choking fits, certainly psychosomatic in origin, which terrified all of us. These happened at random, maybe once a year, mostly at home. He would be sitting or doing something quite normal when, suddenly, he would gasp loudly for breath, his face contorted. Standing up, he would stamp his foot repeatedly in an effort to clear his air passageways. The attacks lasted perhaps a minute or so. He never fell, never lost consciousness, though he once

remarked he had seen spots before his eyes during an attack – an indication that he was suffering from a serious lack of oxygen. These were moments of great stress for all of us – beginning with himself, of course. He probably consulted doctors about these attacks, but I do not think ANY of them suggested that the root cause might have been psychological. In fact, he once came home from work boasting that a psychiatrist he had seen at the base hospital had pronounced him "the sanest man he had ever met." Imagine!

This disturbing picture of my father would not be complete without additional bits, such as this one: For as long as we knew him, he always spoke with a slight British accent, which he did not drop until his dotage when he, by then living near me in Los Angeles, would often revert to a southern Black accent I had never heard him use previously.

As I was having difficulties dealing with him during the months he spent in my single unit in Los Angeles, I called in a social worker for help. During her visit, Father revealed something about himself. Using his "other" accent, he said, "When I worked for the government, I never paid attention to my boss-man; I did what I wanted."

Perhaps a fitting epitaph for a deeply flawed and tormented but intelligent, charming, generous, and gallant man.

## Germany (1967-1972)

### Neu-Ulm

In 1967 my family and I moved from Orléans to Neu-Ulm, Germany, on the Danube, a short distance across the river from Ulm, a pleasant little border town between Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria. We lived there for three years until we later moved north to Bremerhaven, where we would live for another three years and I would spend the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades. One teacher who stands out, even today, was the fearsome Mr. Barber, originally from Walla-Walla, Washington. A bald man and stern, he struck me as a thoughtful, kind man who, perhaps concerned about my lack of social life, even introduced me to a nice, tall, somewhat ungainly German girl in my class – presumably for a date.

I was thirteen and in the seventh grade in Neu-Ulm when a voluptuous girl around my age showed interest in me. But before the next school year began, her family was rotated and I never saw her again. However, one afternoon in recent years, here in Los Angeles, I heard echoes faintly reminding me of her emanating from a child's voice outside my bungalow. Could there have been a connection?

One day, I was talking on the steps of our apartment building with a girl from our stairwell. At that moment, my father, coming home from work early, began glaring at me as he silently walked up to us and past us into the building. I quickly got the cue, abruptly ended my conversation with the girl, and went inside. Another time, a kid about my own age, in the same building in the furthest stairwell, accused me of having done something nasty. I do not recall the details. Father resolved the issue by going to the stairwell where the boy lived and bellowed the name of the boy's father. "Cousins, Cousins, come down here!" The poor man meekly emerged from his apartment and my father vehemently expressed his displeasure before returning to our apartment. Erratic behavior, yes, but wholly characteristic of him.

There soon developed a tradition among the little kids in our stairwell: the well-known "candy visit." A procession of children would, when the mood struck them, make a beeline for our apartment where the smallest or the most eager one, deputized by the older kids, would ask in a plaintive voice, "Can we have some candy?"

Though we now lived, for the first time in our lives, in housing provided by the military, we often went downtown for lunches, shopping, fairs, and sometimes entertainment. I also explored remnants of fortifications surrounding the old parts of town. Some of the best pizzas I've ever had were made by a couple of transplanted Italians. We frequented their restaurant often. In winter, there was lots of snow. One cold evening, coming back from shopping, Mother pulled my sister and me on our wooden sled for as long as her strength held out.

At that time, I was seriously into kites. I made a breakthrough of sorts when I figured out how to say "kite paper" in German. The new stuff I got downtown was vastly superior to the sheets of newspaper I had been using to make my various kite contraptions.

In the seventh grade, I went into business for myself. I found, to my delight, that there was a market for snails at school. (Don't ask what the other kids used them for.) I would collect them on my way to class while walking through a field, and then sell them to my classmates. After a few days, I began to think big – figuring that if I stored them overnight, I would have more to sell the next day. So, collecting a few dozen, I put them in a tin can outside my window, forgetting to cover the top with a lid. It was of course inevitable that the inevitable should happen. The next morning, I opened the window and found it empty. Overnight, the snails had all escaped. Disappointed, I forgot about it until, once outside and on my way to school, I happened to look at the exterior wall of our building. There, starting at my window sill was a curious, star-like pattern radiating outward in all directions – created by the trails of my escapees, those miscreants. Overnight their slimy, shiny trails covering much of the side of our three-story building had converted it into a kind of natural artwork that probably lasted until the next rainfall.

## **Bremerhaven**

After three years in the south, Father was transferred to Bremerhaven, where he was often interviewed on the radio and quickly became a favorite. No wonder, since he was the most talkative and gregarious of men and had friends and acquaintances everywhere on base and even among the Germans. Leaving work late every night and not having a car, he would usually get a ride home from one of his teachers – usually after nine. Through our upstairs window, we could hear the telltale idling car engine and the distinctive sound of his voice. Typically, before coming upstairs, Father would chat with the driver for half an hour or more.

I stopped loving my father during my teenage years, but have always respected and admired him. I preferred to worship him from afar, however, since I feared him until late in my life. I think my sister did, too.

Father would often judge people harshly. In my senior year, I heard him unemotionally dismiss a Black army officer of his acquaintance as "a regular house nigger." Conversely, he once related to us, during the heyday of the Black power movement, that some young Black soldiers had approached him, asking if they could use some of his office space on base for their political meetings. He refused.

An incident on base in Bremerhaven illustrated his peculiar sense of humor. He decided to play a trick on the JAG folks (Judge Advocate General, the military lawyers), whose staff he had somehow come to know. He called them from his office, and, in a falsetto voice, pretended to be a physically abused wife asking for help. He laid it on thick, more and more so as the conversation progressed, until, at the other end of the line, the poor fellow being hoodwinked finally caught on. That night, at home, Father roared with laughter as he related the story.

One day when I was about sixteen, Irene and I were walking in downtown Bremerhaven when an army truck carrying a bunch of Black soldiers drove by. Upon seeing me, they raised

their fist in the Black power salute. Staring back at them, I too raised my fist in solidarity until the truck was out of sight. I thought Black people were cool.

When Father retired, a small parade was organized in his honor. On the outs with his wife at the time, Mother did not attend.

### **Our neighbors, the Schaeffers**

A fifty-something married couple named Schaeffer lived just below us on the second floor of Blumenstrasse 3/6, Im Engenmoor, Bremerhaven. The husband worked in military intelligence. Downtown one day, Mother saw him sitting in a VW camper, taking pictures of the comings and goings of soldiers in an area full of bars. According to her, he also tried to coax a disturbed young soldier who had somehow found his way to the fourth floor of our building into giving himself up, perhaps to the military police. While a senior in high school, did I once see Schaeffer's wife at one of my wrestling matches on base? And did she later congratulate me on my performance? This may have occurred before I met Robert Seidenstein.

### **A peculiar guest speaker in my sophomore year of high school**

When I was still a sophomore, Ewald Marwede, member of the NPD (*Nationalistisches Partei Deutschland*), gave a talk at my high school about the political platform of his party. For the reader's information, the NPD is considered to be an anti-constitutional, neo-Nazi party. Was Colonel Wendt the base commander in Bremerhaven at that time?

### **"Meet Cute" with Robert Seidenstein**

It was during the last year of high school that, through one of my teachers, I met Robert Seidenstein and his wife, a couple about thirty years old. I was, for a while, a wrestler and had trouble finding adversaries of my approximate weight on that small military base. I remember one opponent, a marine, who mopped the mat with me. Another opponent, Black and muscular, was much closer to me in ability, since he smoked cigarettes. Afterward, although I lost, he agreed the match had been close. A third soldier – young, from Oklahoma – taught me a lesson: Never wrestle with someone from Oklahoma if you don't REALLY know what you are doing.

Robert Seidenstein, a former wrestler, was in the Navy, working as a Morse code technician, or so he told me. We quickly became friends and he and his wife began inviting me to his apartment in the housing area for military personnel. Living nearby, I would often walk to their place for tea. (See the attached entry for details on Robert. Also, see the entry for the Schaeffers, which may hint at a connection to Seidenstein.)

I was sixteen years old and still naïve when I met Robert, but I have since come to know, without a doubt, that he was not only hooked up with me deliberately but that at least some of our conversations were monitored and recorded.

Father's reaction to this budding "friendship" was none too friendly. He felt Robert to be a bohemian and disapproved of him, although he never forbade me from seeing him. They met on a couple of occasions – at our house, I think. Though I doubt Father ever suspected Seidenstein's connection to military intelligence, he was once (privately to me) vituperative and made the only racist remark I ever heard from him; he referred to Robert as a "Jew Boy."

### **Some Iranian friends of Father's**

Sometime during the years we spent in Germany, I am not sure exactly when, Father, accompanied by the rest of us, met some Iranian acquaintances in a café located in a large German town, not one of the ones we lived in. There were several of them, probably in their thirties. This must have been around 1970, they seemed middle-class, though a bit down-at-the-heel, judging from their selection of cafés. We met them at one location only for them to soon suggest a move to another café. This seemed, all around, to be a social occasion. Curious. Mother may afterwards have asked Father how he had come to know them, I don't remember a clear, definite answer forthcoming. We never saw them again. Decades later, Eric Rice, a customer of uncertain provenance, once commented sharply and for an unknown reason: "I know all about your father!"

## I Leave Home for the United States

I graduated from Bremerhaven American High School in 1972. Following the suggestion of one of my teachers, I applied to college at the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena and Harvey Mudd College in Claremont, California. I had also meant to apply to MIT but somehow missed the deadline for applications. I was accepted at Caltech and Harvey Mudd and chose to attend Caltech with some scholarship money from the school. Unknown to me, I had not been accepted as a regular student, but under the relaxed rules applied to minorities. I left Bremerhaven in the summer of 1972, and flew into New York to visit my aunt, Irene Bergendahl. After a brief visit, I continued on to Los Angeles.

I was a kid from "a small town in Germany," knew little of the world and even less of California. What I had heard of, years before, was something called a cyclotron (a particle accelerator used to probe the structure of the atom) developed by Ernest Lawrence, who would co-found a scientific laboratory near San Francisco bearing his name: the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory (informally called the Rad Lab). I had also heard that in a place in Southern California called Topanga Canyon there existed intriguing structures designed by Buckminster Fuller and known as geodesic domes. In my last year in Germany, I had come across a delightful, oversized volume called *Domebook 2*, containing much information in scattered form about these structures. The book was formatted in the style of the *Whole Earth Catalog*, and it absorbed me for hours on end.

This, the land of the "almighty proximity fuse," is what I came for. In short, I came for the creativity, the infrastructure and the concern for the worth of a human life those three words evidence.

### **Augsburg**

Except for those times I was on a leave of absence from school, I spent little time in Augsburg, where my father had been transferred toward the end of his career. I did attend freshman year there while I lived in Neu-Ulm, as our base was too small to have its own high school. Also, Irene graduated high school there.

## Vacations in America

Our trips to the United States were always by ship, as my father detested flying. At first, we went on military ships, which were so small that Mother was seasick. Later, as the Vietnam War heated up and the ships were no longer available, we began traveling on "proper" boats – real ocean liners like the S.S. *France* and the S.S. *United States*.

Father enjoyed being on the ocean, as did I. I loved looking down at the patterns made by the waves breaking against the side of the ship, and I watched endlessly as the translucent green water turned into a milky foam. Father was to make the last of his cruises around the world in 1998 on just such a ship. Sometime later, at 94, he died in Los Angeles of pneumonia.

Every two years, while Father was still working for the army, we were entitled to about two months' vacation in the United States and every time Father requested transportation by ship and not plane, it precipitated a titanic struggle between him and the military bureaucracy. He usually won. Although for one trip he had to pay our fares himself, I believe he was eventually reimbursed.

A curious note: On my last trip with our family, after we boarded our liner, S.S. *United States* in Bremerhaven, I went back ashore to explore the port and I ran into a classmate of mine, the son of a naval officer traveling on the same boat. His curt, petulant greeting to me was, "What are you doing here?" Of course, back on board, the first thing I did was report his snub to Father, who did not appear surprised. RHIP (Rank Has its Privileges), indeed.

On ship, Father came into his own, especially when there was a bridge tournament going on. He would inevitably clobber every other participant, triumphantly coming back to our cabin with the top prize. Knowing him, the rest of us took it in stride.

Much later, Irene told me that Father never paid for our two-months' stay at his sister, Irene's, in Queens, New York. His reasoning was that if she were to visit us, she would not have to pay either. The likelihood of Aunt Irene visiting us in Europe was remote, of course, and she never did. For the two months we were at her house, Father would catch up on baseball and old movies. We seldom went anywhere except, occasionally, to Manhattan. I once found him in the basement, which served, during our stays, as one of our family's two rooms. He would watch one ball game on the TV and listen to another on a radio glued to his ear – all the while reading the scores from the previous day's games in the paper. For him, this scenario spelled sheer heaven.

Once in a great while, Father took us by train to some of his earlier haunts. I vaguely remember, once, his asking his sister's advice about whether it would be advisable for us to travel together as a family to Virginia to see one of his surviving brothers who had lost a leg in WWI. We went. On another trip – to Columbus, Ohio – I was puzzled to hear him repeatedly ask some local Black acquaintances for the name of a "good" hotel in town. Apparently, they were just as puzzled as I was, for it took several repeated, insistent requests on his part for them to get it. He was looking for a hotel which, while not exclusively for Blacks, would allow us to stay. Gentle Reader, for those of you intending to visit Columbus and finding yourself in a similar situation, I can confidently recommend the Chittenden Hotel (by now, likely demolished).





# CHAPTER 4

## The Cataclysm: Moving to America (1972-1988)

### My Years at Caltech (1972-1976) or "Patzer's Progress"

When I began a preparatory program ahead of the regular school year is when I found out I had been accepted under the relaxed rules that applied to non-whites. Why the surprise on my part? Had I not been recognized back in Bremerhaven with a "National Merit Scholarship for Outstanding Negro Student"? There were, in all, about fifteen of us, mostly Blacks, with some Hispanics. An older professor taught our English class. There was also another class, a math refresher.

Yes, I was part of the flotsam and jetsam of affirmative action that washed up on the shores of poor, old Caltech.

#### **An exception**

The only regular "admit" student among us that summer was Bob Tajima; Taj was a Japanese-American from Pasadena. I would see him in English class in Baxter Hall – but nowhere else. Later that year, I heard he was run over by a car while bicycling in Pasadena.

#### **My first year**

When regular classes began in the fall, I chose to live in Blacker House, where I roomed with a Black student I had met during the summer session. I may have been a bit of a puzzle to him because early in the term he suggested my father had to be an Uncle Tom. Incredulous, I chose not to comment. In retrospect, though, I wish I had shared that gem with Father.

I planned to major in physics at Caltech, and took a normal load of courses that first year. Because everything was graded as pass-fail, I managed to pass all but two or three of my classes. During the Christmas holiday season that followed, I flew home to Bremerhaven. Overall, I felt quite satisfied with Caltech, the field of science, and with my performance. I was, however, woefully unprepared for the coursework of the second year, which was graded on a different structure.

Sometime in that second year, I became dissatisfied with the general atmosphere, and made my first of several moves to other student houses. Finally, I rented an apartment in Pasadena, and severed ties to the campus almost completely. At times, I also shared apartments with other students.

From 1972 to about 1976, I transformed from a personable young man to an unhappy loner. Partly due to immaturity, I had not been able to cope with the new environment. The problem was not so much my level of intelligence as my lack of preparedness for the math; I had never realized how essential it was to do well in science. My high school in Germany, which I enjoyed attending (though more than adequate and offering a better environment than most in the United States today) did not, due to its small size, offer advanced placement classes. In my sophomore year at Caltech, I was once visited in my off-campus apartment by *Evangelos Coutsias*, a friend, a junior majoring in physics, who happened to look over my shoulder and saw a few equations I had written down. He said, "I see you are interested in windmills." Surprised, I asked how he knew; he replied he had studied the aerodynamics of windmills in

high school. Later, he went on, I expect, to accomplish more in a year than I have in my entire life – so bright was he. This was some of the competition I was facing at Caltech.

### **Failure to measure up**

My lack of preparation and qualifications were brought home to me during that first year in a brief interview at the office of a math professor. I was put to the blackboard to work out a problem. When I failed to solve it, one of the professors asked me about my math SAT score. My reply evoked looks of consternation from both of them, and I was quickly dismissed. This incident, unpleasant and embarrassing for me, of course, and not the fault of the two professors, became increasingly emblematic of my stay at Caltech. After floundering academically, socially, and emotionally for four years, I finally left Caltech without a degree and went to work at the nearby Jet Propulsion Lab (JPL).

### **Things Black**

During my time there, I slowly realized that the Black students were generally held in low esteem, and several incidents reinforced this conclusion.

In one instance, an administrator, perhaps purposely, commented within earshot of me to a white student, "John, you're a good actor." He said this as he left a party of mostly Black students.

Another time, early in my freshman year, at a garden party held at the house of this same administrator, a Black student leaned back in his chair and accidentally bumped into a sculpture behind him, knocking it to the ground, where it shattered. After a few minutes, the student and others walked away from the scene. The administrator's wife, a woman of French ancestry, whom I had previously met and conversed with in French, insistently motioned to me from a distance. She wanted me to apologize to her husband for the damages caused by the other student. I did not do so. Some days later, we had an exchange wherein she pointedly said to me, "Do you still speak French?"

On yet another occasion, a professor I knew, while walking near the school, changed his stride when he saw me approach, and began to imitate what seemed like a strut – gesticulating and apparently talking with a Black accent as he walked past me. I said nothing.

Once, a good friend referred disgustedly to "*your* people." I asked him to elaborate, but he declined.

During my sophomore year, I was visiting Irene at her school. We were sitting on the grass in the quad near her dorm when we were approached by a Black student who didn't bother to introduce himself. Speaking in a tone that brooked no disagreement, he said, "Tell your sister to hang!" In other words, he wanted me to persuade Irene to show solidarity with the other Blacks. I later heard from Irene that this young man was to eventually distinguish himself by beating up his roommate (as I was also to do myself, after a fashion, sometime later).

This kind of situation should not come as a surprise. After all, what sort of social peace can there be when, at ANY given institution of higher education in this country, there is virtually no overlap between the histograms of SAT scores among recognizably different ethnic groups? Gentle Reader, I ask you.

### **My Slide: "The Apotheosis of a Male Negro Suspect" or *L'Assommoir***

An *assommoir* is an establishment where cheap alcohol is made available for those in search of oblivion; it is also the title of a famous novel.

Starting late in my first year, I began a moral and mental descent from which I know I can never recover.

I began spending time with a group of mostly Black students living in Dabney House (where most of them lived). A half dozen or so of us, instead of studying, often gathered after dinner to listen to music and smoke marijuana into the night. This became part of my regular routine, even though I was not yet a member of the house. The very loud conversations and laughter emanating from that room had, some time back, forced the couple on the other side of the wall to have our side of it covered in cork – in an attempt to mask the noise.

Over the next few years, I continued using drugs, I stole and cheated and, as I mentioned above, I went to jail. Later, further into my descent, I even went "ghetto" on some poor fellow student in Dabney after he made a dumb joke I could not handle. Around that time, an older researcher acquaintance, somewhat familiar with me, discouraged me from committing suicide – so forlorn must I have seemed. I even remember, during a visit to my parents in the Bronx, asking my mother if she could find me a wife. On hearing of this, Father later chided me gently (making it all the more difficult to bear) for hurting her feelings.

I began college a personable, inexperienced, naïve young man, genuinely interested in physics – if academically unprepared. I left an academic failure and a broken individual with a criminal record and severe personal (if not yet mental) problems. I had not measured up.

### **The theft and arrest**

During the summer following my first year of college, I was on my way to New York where I was to meet my family coming back from Europe. Hitchhiking from LA up the coast, I was arrested in Gold Beach, Oregon, for stealing a motorcycle. My two accomplices, a man and his girlfriend, had picked me up while I was thumbing a ride. After pleading guilty, I spent a month in jail, then continued east to Chicago. From there I traveled to Saranac Lake in upstate New York, where I spent some time with the Seidensteins, who had settled in that small town. After a few days, I went south to New York to meet my parents – who were returning from Europe following my father's retirement.

### **Conclusion**

I was, one might say, a "half-baked" immigrant, sharing qualities of both the native-born and the immigrant. And, as such, I came here to succeed. But, to my dismay and that of my father, I would never be a success in America. I was also a "half-baked" Black, again sharing qualities of both. I failed in that role, as well.

### **Father retires and parents move back to the United States; my sister starts school**

It was in Augsburg, Germany, where my family had moved, that my father retired after over thirty-five years as an employee of the civil service. He, our mother, and my sister then returned to the United States permanently – or so they thought. I met them in New York as they disembarked before they settled into an apartment in the Bronx. We accompanied Irene to her nearby college, where she was to start her freshman year.

During these trying times, with my life in tatters, I began to realize I would likely never finish college, let alone become a physicist. I recall one painful incident with Father. We were – my sister, Father, and I – headed for the subway when, on the steps leading down, he

inexplicably commented to me, "You look like a gigolo." Cruel of him, and unusual; he had never before insulted me. Perhaps this was his way of expressing disappointment in his son – a disappointment he was occasionally to express from then on with a look, but never again verbally.

### **My mother leaves the United States to return to Europe. Forever.**

Cooped up in their Bronx apartment with a worsening marital situation that became unendurable, in a country whose language she could hardly speak, a year or two after Father's retirement, Mother followed my suggestion, left Father, and returned to France. A relative had to send her a plane ticket, as she did not have the fare. Father's vindictiveness was such that he would not even let me call a taxi to take her to the airport. His feuds with her (and later with my sister) had spun out of control. The last thing I remember before Mother left America was the two of us playing an old board game that she had played with us kids in Orléans.

### **My one accomplishment and a memory**

During those troubled years, I measured myself against some of the best, and was found wanting – as is the fate of most of us. Along the way, there were many hours of delightful, absorbing conversations with other students, usually much smarter and far better educated than I. That set the bar for me for years to come. During one such rambling exchange with a friend lasting far into the night, we designed a simple solar device which, years later, I found had already been patented – something called a Winston collector.

I still recall the sight of Richard Feynman, a Nobel Prize winner in physics, walking through campus accompanied by Werner Erhard, founder of EST (Erhard Seminar Training), an out-and-out charlatan and pop icon of decades past. The sight of the two men, deep in conversation, was unexpected and a puzzle to me. It was not until years later, after reading a comment by Feynman's widow (and also Feynman's memoirs) that I finally understood. Feynman actually enjoyed hanging out with this type of individual, and even made a habit of it.

On my departure from Caltech, after getting the first of a string of jobs I could never manage to hold for long, I resolved never to take money from my father. I kept to this resolution for decades, only contacting him in the late nineties when I became increasingly short of funds.

At times, however, I felt acutely embarrassed by my academic and personal performance, and the fact that I was not a regular admit. I kept going back and being molycoddled by the administration that repeatedly reinstated me for additional years in which I learned NOTHING. I now think I should have bitten the bullet and left after my first, not completely unsuccessful, year. I consider my inherent rigidity (as well as my previously stated laziness) to be partly responsible for this outcome.

## **My Years in Northern Pasadena (1976-1980)**

After leaving school for the last time, I moved to a house in the north of Pasadena, lodgings I had found through the Caltech housing office. I lived in that large house for four years until, for no apparent reason, I was asked to leave. During this period, I worked as a contractor for two years at JPL, while, again, accomplishing virtually nothing. I left of my own accord.

My landlady and her family did their best to welcome me, make me feel at ease and, indeed, I came to feel almost like a part of them. No small task, given my level of alienation at the time.

### **Incident with a coworker**

One day at JPL, I got into a fight with an employee in my section, who attacked me after a verbal altercation of no great importance. He rushed across a lab where the two of us were working alone and yanked a chain around my neck, causing a minor abrasion. I fought back and was pinning him to the ground when another employee came into the room, saw me on top of him, and separated us – or else I voluntarily stood up after having sat on him. (I can't recall which was the actual scenario.)

In either case, I immediately called the police and tried to have the employee arrested. The officer and I met on Oak Grove Drive (more on this later) at the gate to JPL, where I explained the situation to him, and showed him my neck scratches, which he examined. A representative of JPL's personnel department heard of the incident, met with us, and took the officer aside. After they spoke for some time, the officer told me he could do nothing about the incident as JPL was not in his jurisdiction, and suggested I call another police station. The man from the personnel department assured me that nothing would be placed in either my file or that of my coworker, and that it was the best for everyone concerned to forget the incident ever took place. Soon thereafter, the coworker left JPL's employ.

Many months later, after I, too, had left JPL, I got a call at home from someone claiming to be an employee in my old section. He said that the secretary had told him to watch out for this man – my former coworker, who was apparently back at his old job. I discussed him and the incident freely for some time without even knowing whom I was talking to.

Decades later, around the year 2010, an incident would lead me to think that, in spite of assurances of confidentiality by the officer and the JPL representative, detailed notes had been filed about my incident with the coworker. The notion those notes existed would have a momentarily destabilizing effect on me.

### **Consulting in software/hardware**

The seventies marked the beginning of the microprocessor era and, as I had written code at school and JPL, I was qualified to dabble in this burgeoning field. One of my customers was a company in Hollywood and another was Clifford Electronics, located in the Valley and owned by Tom Ellsberg, who subsequently became a close friend.

### **I.U.R.**

It was during my stay in Pasadena that I met I.U.R., the thirteen-year-old daughter of the residence's cleaning lady and gardener, and had intimate relations with her. (I describe this interlude in the section listing my "negatives.") On the day I moved out, I said goodbye to the girl, and never saw her or anyone from my host family again.

### **Father's unexpected visit**

From the time I left school until his death, I saw Father no more than a total of three or four times. Except for the last one, each visit was unannounced. He simply showed up without warning. After a few days, with the pleasantries over, he would address the reason for his visit.

Father liked to argue, mostly about family matters. And argue we did until, at times, giving up, I would flee through one of the several exits of that large house, and somehow managed to elude him. What a family.

## My Years in West LA and Woodland Hills – 1980-1985 (?)

### **Work in West LA – Teledyne Controls**

Sometime around 1981 I finally left Pasadena to take a job at Teledyne Controls in West Los Angeles, where I worked on code to download data from aircraft engines. The assignment did not require security clearance. After commuting by bus for a while, I eventually rented a garage near Teledyne, where I would live for some years, long after I was fired for incompetence a year later. When I left, I took with me all the documentation I had generated for the project I was working on, leaving the company only the software I had written. I continued living in the garage on Stewart Street until I was evicted for nonpayment of rent a few years later.

### **Work in Woodland Hills**

Upon leaving Teledyne I went to work writing code in Woodland Hills, California. It was on that job that I met Reuven Levy, an engineer, with whom I became friends. I was fired after about three months, ostensibly for not showing up at work on time during my boss's absence. I still lived in my garage and would sometimes visit Reuven Levy's apartment, where I would get my mail and take an occasional shower. After firing me, my boss had a security guard escort me out of the building. The one person who supported me that day was Reuven, who helped carry my personal belongings to my car.

## "Meet Cutes"

### **Subhash Sharma**

Years after college, I had a visit from Subhash Sharma, a good friend from school. One evening, he appeared unannounced at my house in north Pasadena with a friend of his. I asked him how he had found my address. I don't recall his reply. I was not to see him again until he again showed up unexpectedly several years later near my workplace.

### **The paramedic**

He was about thirty, said he was a former army man, stationed in Thailand during the war in Vietnam. We met at Caltech, in the main library. I was listening to audiotapes, lectures by Alan Watts, when he, sitting nearby, struck up a conversation with me. He was familiar with names like "*Udorn*" and "*Utapao*," places unknown to most Americans. His knowledge tallied with what he had said about his military service. Curiously, I was to run into him again some years later in the parking lot of the Eaton Canyon branch of the Pasadena Public Library on Sierra Madre Villa Boulevard. We may have exchanged a few words but, being surprised and suspicious of the coincidence, I gave him the cold shoulder and left. I never saw him again. Decades later, after I had moved to Los Angeles, Colette made a destabilizing reference to

Alan Watts, the author whose tapes I was listening to when I first met this man in the mid-seventies.

### **Encore: Subhash Sharma**

One lunchtime before I was fired from my Woodland Hills job and a couple of years after our previous meeting, I ran into Subhash again. He happened to be out for a walk when I bumped into him on my way to a restaurant. Not long after renewing relations, he told me he was winning at blackjack in Las Vegas with a system that involved memorizing a decision matrix and counting cards. Initially fascinated, I invested some thousands of dollars in his scheme and began learning the system at home, in my garage. Although I went to Las Vegas with Subhash and gambled away a trivial amount, I never made use of the system. When I questioned him about his own losses, I noticed he had not been following the rules of the system, and I was at a loss to explain his behavior at the blackjack table.

Subhash Sharma had been a mathematics major at Caltech, graduating, I believe, with a Master's degree. For reasons unknown to me, he never completed his PhD before he began working as a consultant, a software developer. He may have once told me he was earning somewhere in the low six figures, a considerable amount at that time. And yet, making just over a tenth of that figure, I was the one he came to when looking for an investment.

### **Oscar Revey**

It was also during my stay in the Santa Monica garage that I met Oscar Revey, a psychotherapist. Oscar was not fully licensed and so practiced under the supervision of another therapist, Victor Morton, who, subsequently, was to treat me. Our initial meeting was in a coffee shop I used to frequent. He was at the counter reading a computer book when I came in and, noticing the title on the cover, commented on it. Oscar and I became friends and, after asking for my resume and interviewing Tom Ellsberg extensively, among others, he began inviting me to his apartment in Santa Monica. Tom later confided to me that Oscar had asked him a systematic series of questions about me. He seemed intrigued by the method.

I once asked Oscar for an opinion on my psychological state. He commented that my emotional responses were too "real," and, perhaps, I was faking them. I assumed he thought I might be displaying traits of a psychopath. He never acknowledged that depiction of me, one way or the other. We mostly met at his apartment, after which we often visited one nearby coffee shop or another. There we talked, argued, discussed. Sometimes the discussions became so heated that waitresses would come over to quiet us down. In the nearly thirty years I knew him, I saw but one other person with him in his apartment: Michelle Shelley Hurt, whom I did not meet until several years later, during the first Gulf War.

### **Sherry Grogan**

Around this time, I also met Sherry Grogan. I was riding my bicycle on Ocean Avenue, near the Santa Monica Bluffs, when, pedaling furiously, she managed to catch up with me. We exchanged some words and began a relationship that lasted several months. Sherry told me she was also seeing someone else, a man involved with the Republican Party. She worked as a nanny for a man in finance, a graduate of Harvard, married to his secretary, who lived in the Santa Monica Glen area. I once visited Sherry there in her detached maid's quarters.

Sherry showed me photos of a homeless young man, perhaps bisexual or homosexual, whom she had befriended. She would bring him meals in the stairwell he called home, somewhere in

LA. Perhaps days later, I ran into him while walking on Wilshire Boulevard, near where she and I had our initial meeting. He seemed to be in his twenties, white, fairly handsome. As we passed each other, he looked at me and smiled. I never brought up the incident to Sherry. She and I soon stopped getting together and, although I contacted her again later on, she would not see me.

### **(A reference made in this case with some reluctance): Colette Walczak**

I met Colette Walczak in the periodical room of the Santa Monica Public Library – the same library where, years later, I would be arrested. Facing me, sitting two tables away, Colette made eye contact with me and came over to chat. And to cry. We started seeing each other immediately, although at the time, I think, she was still involved with a not-quite-former boyfriend. Also, Colette was pregnant and would shortly thereafter have an abortion.

### **A brush with Las Vegas security**

Although Subhash normally traveled to Vegas by himself, on one occasion I accompanied him. Before boarding the flight, and because Subhash had not yet arrived, I had a verbal exchange with someone (not an airline employee) regarding departure time. The man, who was managing a group of passengers (gamblers, en route to the casinos), seemed to be making notes as we spoke. Subhash arrived soon after, and the plane took off on schedule. In Vegas, I tried to cash a money order or cashier's check at two different casinos and was refused both times. I could not understand why, in either case, and was not given a valid explanation. Subhash seemed to be equally mystified. At the second casino, a security person came over asking questions and I am not sure the check was ever cashed. In all, that day, I probably gambled away some fifty dollars playing something other than blackjack.

Sometime later, back in Los Angeles, I was contacted by an employee of Tom Ellsberg's – someone I knew well and had previously worked with, asking if I would meet an acquaintance of his to discuss my blackjack system. I agreed to meet the man at a coffee shop in West Los Angeles, where he questioned me closely for a half hour or more about my card-counting activities. I revealed everything I knew and showed him the decision matrix I was memorizing. He also asked about hardware aids. I warned him that they were illegal and that I did not make use of them. After we parted company that day, I never saw him again. When I next saw Tom and his employee, I related what had happened. Ellsberg may have seemed dubious about my interpretation of these events, though never explicitly so. The only others aware of my efforts in this direction were Subhash and my friend from work, Reuven Levy.

### **Life in Echo Park**

From Santa Monica, I moved to Echo Park, where I lived in a trailer parked in the driveway of an acquaintance. For part of that four-year period, I worked at Xentel Corp., a small startup in Burbank, the best job I have ever had. I also worked for a defense contractor on contract for three months, a job for which I needed an industrial-confidential clearance. I was fired from both jobs.

During those years, besides seeing Colette on occasion, I saw a woman I met while working in Burbank, but I broke it off after several weeks. I also met and occasionally spent time with a relative of my landlord in Echo Park.

It was during this time I learned from Colette that her boyfriend, Spencer Marx, had gone to prison on federal charges. In the past, I had run into him occasionally and knew him slightly.



Colette, whom I had seldom seen since leaving Santa Monica, began visiting me more frequently in my trailer. It was also around then that she got a part-time job minding kids at Gateway Hospital, a nearby Jewish mental health center, close to where I lived.

The Echo Park neighborhood was not as safe then as it has become in recent years. I was once mugged by two young men while out for a walk late one night. Luckily, it was nothing serious. During these years I was seeing Tom Ellsberg, who had also moved to Echo Park, but later transferred his new company to Bend, Oregon. As he was making preparations for his new startup, he offered me a job, which I turned down. Sometimes I saw a friend I had met at JPL, who occasionally advised me on getting business through the Commerce Business Daily.

### **At a laundromat in Echo Park: A young Black bisexual man**

One afternoon, doing my laundry at a nearby laundromat, I struck up a conversation with a young Black man in his late twenties. Later that day, we met at his apartment nearby. He revealed that he was bisexual and questioned me repeatedly about my sexual orientation, refusing to believe I was straight. I then invited him for dinner at a coffee shop in Westwood where we discussed sex, among other topics. He continued to press me about my sexual orientation. I drove him home and I never saw him again.

### **An attempted sting at Café Beverly Hills**

Another event of interest took place at Café Beverly Hills on Wilshire Boulevard, where I was a regular. One night, probably after nine, I was at my usual counter seat when a man, perhaps sixty years old, sat down next to me. He introduced himself as a contracting officer for the government/military somewhere in the Midwest. I told him I was looking for this kind of business and that I subscribed to the Commerce Business Daily. At some point in the conversation, I asked if he could send some work my way. He replied that what I was asking him was illegal. I persisted, and, before leaving, he gave me what he said was his phone number. I never saw him again and never called the number he gave me, which I threw away. This incident occurred sometime during the mid-1980s.

### **At Santa Monica Public Library: An intern (?) at the Rand Corporation**

I was still living in Echo Park when I met another young woman, about thirty, across a table near the periodical section of the Santa Monica Public Library. As you know, this is where I had also met Colette Walczak and would one day be arrested on charges of attempted robbery. The woman, whose name I don't recall, said she was working as some sort of intern, perhaps as an analyst at the nearby Rand Corporation. She also mentioned she was seeing someone, but that they were on the verge of splitting up. I think she may have said she was from the Pacific Northwest, perhaps Oregon. Before I left, I gave her my phone number. She did call sometime later, introduced herself, I said a few words, and hung up the phone. There was no further contact between us.

### **Working in Burbank**

In 1986, I was hired to write code as a contract programmer at another small company in Burbank, but I was fired after some months.

### **Glendale**

After putting my trailer into storage, I moved from Echo Park into a one-bedroom apartment in Eagle Rock or Glendale, in a complex I later left because of problems with another tenant. During those times, I seldom saw Colette, I did not work, and I lived off my savings. I frequently went to coffee shops during the late evening – sometimes in Eagle Rock/Glendale, but mostly at Café Beverly Hills and Café Santa Monica.

### **Santa Monica**

I moved back in with Colette – into her studio, commuting daily to a job at a defense contractor in Orange County where I worked through a job shop, designing hardware. It was also around this time that I met Colette's parents from Idaho: her father, Ted Walczak, and stepmother, Carole Lewis. Later I met her mother, Andrée, who lived near Chicago.

I was surprised at her luck when Colette moved into a rent-controlled one-bedroom apartment on Ashland Avenue, since such places were hard to find in those days.

Still living with Colette, I often slept in my car. My habit was to park in Santa Monica, on Michigan Avenue, next to the cemetery. One night, while I was in my usual spot, a policeman came over and persisted in asking me whether I lived in my car. After evading his question for a while, I admitted that, yes, I did live in my car. The policeman left without troubling me further. The main reason I stayed in my car so often was that I didn't get along with Colette's landlord, Werner Driesslein, and I didn't want to jeopardize her rental agreement with him. At least once he threatened to call the police about me, but his threats never materialized. Colette seemed to know intimate details of his sexual preferences, but when, decades later, he shot himself in his apartment, she blamed his suicide on poor health.

## CHAPTER 5

### *Konserven nach Gleiwitz (Canned Goods to Gleiwitz)*

I was hired through an ad in the paper to work at Rigel Instrumentation, a small company in Oxnard. The commute was long, but I needed the work. My boss, Rob Strmiska, co-owned the business with an older man, and a Taiwanese investor financed the effort. After I had been there for a short time, Rob left for a few days, giving me a code assignment to carry out in his absence. While he was gone, the other owner gave me different orders, which I carried out instead. When Rob returned and found I was taking a different approach to the code, he left the office without a word. When he returned soon after, he fired me on the spot. Up until then, I had not had any problems with him, nor had I had complaints about my work.

### *My Arrest in Santa Monica or vor dem Gesetz (Before the Law)*

After losing the job, I continued living at Colette's apartment and got into the habit of going to the local library several times a week to read magazines and take notes. One afternoon, I was arrested in the library while sitting and reading. I had just parked my car in the lot when, walking toward the building, I distinctly saw a man standing in the middle of the sidewalk, turn south, and quite obviously nod toward two women walking together in my direction. I paid no attention and, turning onto the sidewalk, I continued on. As I began moving diagonally toward the steps leading to the entrance, I approached the two women, who began laughing loudly, and I squeezed between them before going through the front door. Entering the periodical section, I grabbed some magazines and sat down to read and take notes – as was my habit. Some minutes later, still sitting and reading, I found myself lifted out of my chair and, without explanation, frog-marched out of the library by two police officers.

It was not until I was in the back seat of a police car that I asked why I was being arrested. The officer in the front seat, the other being outside interviewing witnesses, turned and said, "Remember those two women you bumped into?" I was being arrested on charges of attempted grand theft and attempted robbery, and taken to the Santa Monica jail. Later, the City Attorney would reduce my two felony charges to three misdemeanors.

The two arresting officers, one of whom was particularly angry, did not at any time interrogate me. It is important to note here that when this happened, I was not drunk, nor had I been taking drugs. I called Colette from the jail to tell her what had happened. When I explained on what grounds I had been arrested, she burst out laughing and called my accountant, who raised my bail money – money I still owe him. At the time of my arrest, I did not ask for or receive a copy of the police report.

In the following days, unable to make sense of what had happened, I slid into psychosis and a florid paranoia. Prior to that, I do not remember having felt that way in my entire life.

#### **My autocritique**

Here I will play the Devil's Advocate.

Question #1:

Why, if I noticed the odd behavior of the man who flagged me to these two women, and he was so obvious, did I not change plans or become suspicious?

Question #2:

Why did I walk between the two women when there was plenty of room to walk around them?

Question #3:

Why did I not immediately request a copy of the arrest report to forestall a possible eventual substitution?

In the days after the arrest, I went back to my usual coffee shop on Santa Monica Boulevard, Café Santa Monica (now closed). The waitresses and managers all knew about the incident; some even commented about it in front of me. One waitress passed me on the street as she was leaving, then turned back, perhaps to have another look at me. Another waitress, speaking to no one in particular but within earshot of me, said that there was no physical evidence but that this was my second strike. Bad news travels fast.

As I had been a regular at this café, the various waitresses and others there must have, at some point, come to some conclusions about me. One, a Black waitress, memorably said once within earshot of me and speaking to no one in particular, "He doesn't know who he is, where he is, or what he is." Truer words were seldom spoken. Would that I could have taken them to heart.

## Colette Walczak Goes Home to Indiana and Leaves me Homeless

About two weeks following my arrest, Colette surprised me by leaving her apartment for a visit to her family in Indiana. She did not leave me a set of keys. From then on, I became increasingly anxious and fearful. My thought processes became more confused. This behavior on her part was odd, considering that my accountant later told me: "she really cares for you."

Having nowhere to go, I began living in my car. For about two days I parked mostly in Westwood, near UCLA. I did not call Oscar Revey, my psychotherapist friend in Santa Monica, nor did I try to contact Colette at home near Chicago. Not long before my departure to my sister's home in New York, I spent part of an afternoon on the UCLA campus.

## I Fly to my Sister's in Manhattan and Make a Suicide Attempt

That evening I was surprised to find my sister's phone number in my address book. She and I had not spoken in some time. With the time difference on the East Coast, I assumed she was asleep, but I called anyway. She seemed to take my call in her stride as I explained what had happened and that I was homeless. She suggested I take a plane to New York.

Leaving my car in the airport parking lot and paying for a round-trip ticket with my business checkbook, I began the next phase of my ordeal. As I mentioned, in the previous weeks I had become increasingly paranoid and my thought processes were confused. I often felt that I was, in various ways, the object of attention. Ideas of reference abounded – voices over PA systems and the like. This continued and even intensified during the hours before I reached Irene's apartment.

The plane was nearly empty and, as I was in “full delusional flight,” one might say, I began thinking, *If I'm going to be arrested, I should have phone numbers of family members at hand.* So, I began copying numbers out of my address book onto various parts of my hand until I heard someone nearby say something like: “They fingerprint you.” That made me think that the numbers on my hand would be erased in the process, so I began writing copies of them on parts of my arm.

At another point during the flight, I was walking down the aisle when, passing a steward talking to someone, I overheard him say words to this effect: “They really come down hard on those Cancuns,” which made no sense. When I realized the plane was not making a direct flight to New York, I asked a stewardess if there were a phone I could use to call and alert my sister. En route to Dallas. I became suicidal and actually considered opening one of the emergency doors.

During the layover, I called Irene a number of times. She feared I would be arrested, and so did I. I had become confused in the extreme. While waiting to board my connecting flight, I noticed behind me two, possibly three, people talking; one was young, the other(s) much older. One of them, who spoke fairly good French, possibly even a native speaker, said, “... *extrême droite, extrême gauche...*” (extreme right, extreme left). Another may have said something strange in a peculiarly accented English, and exaggeratedly rolled his Rs.

On the final leg of my trip, I was able to relax and get some sleep. My thinking became calmer and more coherent. There was only one interaction, with a passenger in the seat next to mine. I bummed a cigarette from him and we exchanged a few words before he moved to another seat nearby. When the plane finally landed at La Guardia Airport, I again called Irene from a pay phone and, too afraid to pick up my bag, I got into a cab and was driven to her apartment.

I had seen Irene but once in about fifteen years, and we seldom spoke. She was living in a studio on the Upper West Side, which our father had bought for her. There had been some trouble with him over the apartment as he expected to share it, and had moved in sometime after the purchase. Irene later told me that, unable to put up with him any longer and at her wits' end, she had packed his things while he was out of the apartment one day, moved his suitcases to the lobby, and changed the locks. He promptly sued her. Although when he found out the hospital where she worked would foot her legal bill, he dropped the suit. At this point in her life, she was finishing her residency in oncology/hematology and was within a year of passing her boards.

As we discussed my employment history, I mentioned having been fired from Teledyne Controls and taking all my documentation for the project. She said, “That's not good.” Then she asked a specific question, which I found unusual. “What about the available intake?” “Available intake” seemed like a peculiar technical term, perhaps pertaining to intelligence work. In my confused state, I did not press further.

I was with Irene for no more than a couple of days, during which time my mood varied. Until the very last, when I tried to kill myself, I had been composed and, with the exception of a dirty shirt (I had not washed in days), I presented myself in a normal fashion. She and I talked about my arrest, and I filled her in on other details of my life. By then, I had become persuaded the Government was doing something to me; I was just not sure what, but I felt that espionage might be involved. The level of details and my calm demeanor may have convinced her that there was something to my story. She said, much later, that I had been frighteningly convincing. I never left the apartment except on the second day when she took me to a psychiatrist. She also called our father in France to discuss my situation. As she explained that I would need a great deal of expensive psychiatric help, an argument ensued between them. When he told her to sell her apartment to finance my care, she began crying. Noticing her

tears, I got a Kleenex and gently wiped them away. She responded that I was “nice.” Before she hung up on our father, I spoke with him, briefly explaining the events – saying that I felt I had been extremely unjustly treated. He replied that, if this were the case, I would “be a rich man.” Presumably a reference by him to the outcome of a possible lawsuit should the city of Santa Monica be found at fault.

### **Irene checks with her Masters (?), then takes me to a psychiatrist**

At some point during my stay, Irene assembled a basket of clothes and, incongruously, given the gravity of the situation, headed to the laundry room. In a clear voice, to no one in particular, she said, “I’m taking this down to laundry.” The phrase seemed (and still does) to have an odd ring to me. But then, I had been sinking into deepening paranoia. Another curious thing about those words is that I believe I heard them quoted to me in 2013 by a young woman walking past me at the beach in Santa Monica.

At some point during my brief stay at Irene’s, I began suspecting her of working for the Government. I remember standing next to a bookshelf, holding up her passport, and asking, “Do you work for them?” She gave no response. Her lack of surprise at my “parachuting” back into her life, the odd technical jargon she made use of, the incongruity I referred to earlier, her silence in response to my near-accusation: these were all clear indications that something was very much amiss. Would that I had heeded my intuitions.

After doing her “laundry,” Irene took me to a psychiatrist. He was rude to me, and, at one point, said something dismissive in a scornful tone. Something like, “So, he went to Caltech.” When I later recounted this odd moment to Oscar Revey, he explained it away. “The psychiatrist wanted to put you in your place. For a psychiatrist, that’s standard behavior.”

## The Suicide Attempt

I began taking the Haldol that the psychiatrist had prescribed but, by then, it was too late. One afternoon, Irene stepped out to do some grocery shopping, and when she returned, she found me straddling the windowsill, threatening to jump. She tried to talk me down from the door, but to no avail. Leaving again, she came back with *Nilüfer Çagatai*, an old college friend. I would not talk to either of them, so Irene summoned the police and fire departments. By then, it was dark. What ensued was a period of negotiation involving me, Irene, and one or more members of the police and fire departments. Irene did her negotiating with me over her answering machine until the tape ran out. Her words to one of the rescuers were, “I don’t want to lose him.” One of the officers began a conversation with, “I understand you had some problems in Santa Monica, Mr. Hawkins.” Other attempts at communication were made, but unsuccessfully. At one point, someone said, “He’s bullshitting!”

A man appeared, peering down from the window on the floor above – a police officer, licking his lips. I could see him from time to time when I looked up. I yelled at him, “Get away from me.” I think he did.

At some point, to prevent the police/firemen from gaining entry too easily, I spilled a container of decorative marbles across the floor. Sometime after that a net dropped from above, fastened below, and the front door of the apartment burst open. I was rushed, tackled, brought away from the window, and strapped to a gurney. On the way to the elevator, one of the officers put his nightstick between my legs as I lay immobile. Another officer said something like, “Give him your nightstick.”

These are the people who had saved my life.

In my confusion and fear I was now speaking only to my sister, and in French. An ambulance crew member asked me a question in front of the others present. I told her I did not wish to speak to them, which she translated and got the reply, "This animal doesn't want to speak to us." At some point after my rescue, I asked Irene to thank them for saving my life.

In the days prior to my hospitalization, Irene and her friend, whom I knew from their college days, had a phone conversation in which I think Irene referred to me as "a big baby." "Cute" was her word. Though I am not entirely sure of this, it seemed to me that she was perhaps making a "sales pitch" of some kind.

I was taken to St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital in Manhattan. My next memories were of being alone in a room, strapped to a bed, with a nurse hovering from time to time. Later, I was transferred to Clark 8, a closed psychiatric ward with other patients, but did not get out of bed for a couple of days. Occasionally a nurse brought me food. My sister visited me frequently; she would bring reading material and, occasionally, a sandwich. After some days, I began mingling with the other patients as I became more comfortable with my environment. My medication consisted mostly of Haldol (20mg). I saw a therapist daily and got involved with group therapy sessions.

Over the six weeks that I was held as an involuntary admit, my sister began noticing a deterioration of my personality. On finding myself hospitalized, I had quickly regained my senses, but Irene became concerned enough with the change to ask that the dosage of my medications be diminished or stopped. I spent the last week or so without Haldol or on a reduced dosage. In those last few days of my stay, I went for a passport and applied for a visa at the French Consulate. Before I left for Europe, I was diagnosed, after a great deal of hesitation, as suffering from a schizoaffective disorder.

My deepest gratitude goes out to my sister Irene (upon whose enemies, confusion – this bears repeating) who, in the darkest times I have ever encountered, took care of me without the slightest hesitation, giving of herself fully. It had been an especially trying time for her, having to deal with my psychological problems, my insistence (to the point of maniacal rigidity) on my innocence of the charges in Santa Monica, the ongoing negotiations with the City Attorney (a man named Myers) and her own heavy workload; likely other things, as well.

### **"Meet Cute" on Clark 8**

After a few days on the ward, the first person I met and engaged in conversation was a young white man, probably under twenty. I also briefly met a forty-something woman (likely his mother) walking around on the (supposedly closed) ward, who, unsolicited, offered me some coins. Not knowing who she was, I declined. She was neither staff, nor a patient. Unlike most of us there, she appeared normal and middle class. Her son was assigned to my room, and seemed as normal as his mother. For a day, there were just the two of us sharing my room. We sat on the floor and talked and I learned that he lived in the apartment directly below my sister. He mentioned having looked up out of a window and seeing my dangling feet. Those details remain clear in my mind. Having established a link, I told him what had brought me to this place – the arrest in Santa Monica. I do not remember his going into detail about the reasons for his own hospitalization, nor did he explain his mother's presence in that facility. I do not remember his name or his saying goodbye the next morning. I never saw him again.

My legal problems were resolved by my sister's discussions with the Santa Monica City Attorney while I was hospitalized. The charges of two felonies – attempted grand theft and attempted robbery – had been reduced to three misdemeanors: assault and battery, I believe.

She said that as part of the deal, my therapist, a former radiologist, had been required to provide a statement to the effect that I was being treated in a mental hospital. I remember a comment by the City Attorney who personally felt there was a thirty percent chance that I had committed the crimes I was charged with. He emphasized there had been three witnesses.

Throughout this ordeal, Irene maintained a mostly calm, unruffled appearance. The only two exceptions I can think of are when she spoke with our father and when, after my hospitalization, I became insistent about something during a call to her at work. During that call, she broke down in tears and a colleague at the hospital took the phone and explained she could not continue the conversation.

It was during that six-week period that our relationship changed. Irene was now the dominant partner and I came to rely and depend on her. Since then, I have continued to do so to an even greater extent. Over a decade later, her second companion, Alberto Zucconi, commented to me that Irene was more of a mother to me than a sister. Sometime after these events and before she left New York permanently, Irene generously offered to sell her apartment to finance my return to college – an offer I declined.

## To France for Three Months

Before Christmas, on my release from hospital, Irene accompanied me to the airport for a flight to Paris. I was met at the Paris airport by my mother, a cousin, and my favorite uncle, Tony, who drove us to Normandie, near the village of *Bonnebosq*, where he and his wife had retired. I knew their house, deep in the countryside, having spent many wonderful vacations there, decades earlier. On this visit, I would spend the holidays and the following three months living with them and my mother (who, having left Father, was now residing in Paris). There were occasional guests, as well.

I often spoke by phone with Irene, who had remained in New York. Occasionally, I also spoke with Colette. During one of those conversations, her mother asked me to stay away from her daughter. While in Normandie, I received a letter postmarked India, from Subhash Sharma, asking me for the money I owed him, which I informed him by return mail I would not pay. I do not know how he had managed to get my address. From my dim recollection of related events, I also seem to remember a phone call from him later, while I lived in Westwood, complaining about his legal situation. (I believe he was being prosecuted for income tax evasion.) At that time, he may have been calling from Texas where, I think, he lived with his wife and children. Other than the fact of the exchange of letters, I am unclear about this series of events.

I was seeing a psychiatrist in a nearby town, who adjusted my medications; I had no further crises. The severe side effects of my course of treatment in Manhattan soon faded. I spent my time helping my uncle around the property (mostly chopping down trees for firewood), continually reading books I found lying around, watching TV, and conversing with relatives I had not seen in many years. A very restful time in contrast to the previous months.

### Paris

After almost three months, my mother and I returned to her tiny studio in Montmartre, Paris, where I spent a few more days. I also visited an aunt who lived in the same building and a cousin I had not seen since childhood.

### Visit(s) to Father in Orléans



I had not seen Father more than twice since college, so I made one or two excursions to visit him in Orléans, our hometown of long ago. He had been living there alone for some months in a two-bedroom apartment with furniture scattered about in a disorderly fashion. Occasionally he would be visited by a couple of young Americans, likely Mormons, who would come over for a piece of his homemade pie and conversation in English.

During my stay, I spoke to him of my recent arrest and subsequent hospitalization. I hoped for some discussion of recent events, understanding, concern – even, perhaps, a reconciliation. On hearing of my diagnosed personality disorder, he replied brusquely, "I have one, too!" My arrest, subsequent psychotic episode, and suicide attempt did not come up again in our conversations. But he and I began clashing as he became increasingly overbearing. I finally cut short my visit, and he refused to shake my hand as I said goodbye.

## I Return to Los Angeles

Upon my return, Colette informed me that there had been no charges for retrieval of the car I had left in the airport parking structure. She had left it there for several weeks prior to moving it to my accountant's house. Still later, when I called the airline to see about obtaining a partial refund of the plane ticket, the clerk could find no traces of it, even though I had the ticket in my hands.

I had the intention of continuing work as a coder/engineer and of seeing a therapist. My previous doctor, in France, had discontinued my medications. Emotionally, I felt quite well, with no thoughts of suicide or depression. However, I was consumed by the events of the previous year in Santa Monica and I would not stop discussing the matter with family, friends, therapists/psychiatrists. I simply could not understand what had happened and, although I could not put my finger on it and no one would agree with me, I felt something was wrong – something no one had addressed. Everyone I buttonholed had some alternate plausible and innocuous explanation. But it occurs to me, I never once raised the question of the abrupt disappearance of Colette following my arrest – not with her or anyone else. I lived with her for some time until I found an apartment in Westwood, near UCLA – the area where I had spent those last few days prior to my suicide attempt.

I also renewed my acquaintance with Oscar Revey, explaining in detail what had happened. I remember endless, heated discussions with him regarding these events, which he saw as innocent, and I insisted were inexplicably strange. In the end, he referred me to his friend and colleague, Victor Morton, for therapy.

### **"Meet Cute" with Rob Strmiska**

Many months after my return, walking on the Santa Monica Bluffs, I unexpectedly ran into Rob Strmiska, my former boss from Rigel Instrumentation in Oxnard, and related what had happened since my firing the previous year. I have to wonder whether this meeting was mere coincidence and, if not, what purpose it might have served.

After he moved to Texas, I saw Subhash Sharma much less often. With long-standing tax problems, he speculated that the Government would use the anti-American statements he had made over the years against him in court. As his situation worsened, he began telling me that lawyers were proving reluctant to defend him.

Things came to a head for him when the IRS summoned him to a meeting in a hotel restaurant. Beforehand, he had asked me to accompany him as a witness. Although my

accountant advised strongly against it, I went anyway. I believe he was eventually indicted on federal charges. But because the presiding judge had not required him to surrender his passport, he was free to fly back to India to visit his gravely ill father. In hearing his case, the judge told him, as a “Caltech man,” he trusted him to appear for further hearings.

I was hired to do hardware at Signum Systems in Santa Monica. At the same time, I began seeing Victor Morton twice a week in Westwood. I was on no medication during this period. Over the course of therapy, my diagnosis, which had never been firmly settled on in New York, was changed to obsessive-compulsive disorder, perhaps at the recommendation of another specialist. Later, another doctor again changed my diagnosis to manic depressive disorder, a condition for which I began to take lithium – and then stopped when I saw no improvement in my condition.

After about a year, I was either fired or refused another project proposed by Signum Systems. (I had failed with the previous one.) I could not get along with my coworkers and was generally incompetent. It was here at Signum Systems, however, that I met Janusz Hetman and Seweryn Skrybinski, who would become friends.

I continued working, sporadically, unable to hold a job, in need of money to pay my high rent and therapy bills. I took whatever work I could find, never having much in the way of savings. I was then hired in Simi Valley to work on a smart-house controller, but I was fired within three months, either for incompetence or inability to get along with coworkers – or both.

## Irene Leaves New York in a Hurry

“Irene was a good sister, as sisters go; and as sisters go, she went.”

— Saki (Quote adapted)

Irene and I spoke by phone infrequently. Even less frequently, I talked with Mother in Paris. I dimly remember hearing from her that Irene was seeing someone she had met at her hospital, an Italian, and that they were living together. I don't remember hearing much about the relationship from Irene – until she surprised me with the news that she was leaving her medical internship BEFORE passing her boards – selling her studio apartment for a mediocre price into a depressed market – and that she would not receive payment until after she arrived in Italy. Furthermore, she was in such a hurry to fly off with this man, a researcher from Florence on sabbatical, that she took her driver's test at the DMV, but left town before picking up her license.

After my sister's quick departure from New York, I felt vaguely uneasy about the whole thing. I sometimes wondered if there were a connection between my arrival at her apartment in my shocking mental state back in 1988 and her going off to Europe permanently without so much as a by-your-leave. Sometimes I felt responsible for sidetracking her life. But, as the two of us are not in the habit of discussing much of substance, I was left completely in the dark. From that time on, I was to know even less about her life. For example, when she and this researcher, Persio Dello Sbarba, married, I only found out about it after the fact. There seemed to be nothing unusual about her new life in Italy – except for having burned her financial bridges regarding her school loans (which I learned about later) and cutting short a promising career. A possible reason for this drastic change in her life may be concluded from her later hint to me – during the tumultuous first days of my 1995 visit to Florence – that she had had (legal?) problems with credit cards.

Early on in medical school, she told me of having delivered five babies in one day and of giving a talk at the NIH (National Institutes of Health) when, after her presentation, she answered questions for almost an hour. I remember feeling very proud of her then. This pride slowly turned to puzzlement, followed by a gnawing concern, and eventually turning to outright fear as, on occasion, her behavior became problematic and florid.

In 1989-1990, while I worked at Signum Systems, Irene came for a visit with this man, Persio Dello Sbarba. I met them at the airport where they rented a car. Over the next two days, she, Persio, and I spent several hours together before the two of them left for a quick trip to the desert. I remember asking if I would be seeing them afterwards and was somewhat surprised when, without further explanation, she replied no. For some reason, they chose instead to fly directly to Italy. At that time she was just months short of passing her boards in oncology/hematology. She has never completed them in all these intervening years.

### **Irene's likely financial situation after she left New York**

Following Irene's hasty departure from New York, I felt frustrated, angry, and jealous. When I discussed this with Victor Morton, he said, "She got her man." Indeed, she did.

Later, after I had been driven out of business and Irene suggested I go to Italy for a while, she no longer had any money of her own. Having gone, in the space of several years, from an MD completing her internship and living in a paid-up apartment in Manhattan to someone with no job, no assets – in an unfamiliar country with a language she had yet to learn. At times, I would hear her speak breezily of getting a job testing drugs with a pharmaceutical company. After her move, she mentioned some friends she had made in Florence – Egyptian Copts. There was apparently some talk of their finding her a job with a UN agency as an MD. But that apparently fell through.

At her request, in the late nineties, I looked up several medical job openings using my internet connection and mailed her pages containing contacts and job opportunities. But it was all for nothing. Irene has never worked as a doctor again. Much later, from her companion, Alberto Zucconi, whom she met following her divorce from Persio, I was to find out why she had left a medical career behind her. She had neglected to make arrangements to pay off any of her college and medical school loans. As a result, none of the schools she attended would issue transcripts. In all, she owes maybe several hundred thousand dollars to her various schools — with no resume to show for it. After my return to LA, there was never a family discussion regarding Irene's stunted career ambitions.

Fired again! I lasted three months on a job at Encore Video in Hollywood, working on electronics, where I met technician Richard Alcalá. (More about him later.) Their reason for firing me: I missed deadlines and was never able to complete a project. Also, I took with me the code for the project I was working on, only returning it after the general manager threatened me with legal action.

## **Reader, She Married Him**

For the next few years, Irene and I spoke occasionally by phone. I knew very little about her, except that she was not working and seemed to be settling into her new life. Mother thought Irene was secretive. Neither Mother nor I found out about her marriage to Persio until after the fact. All we knew was that they had been living together for about two years.

Eventually, unable to pay the rent for my Westwood apartment, I moved back in with Colette around the time I began my employment at Sound Solutions.

## Odd Encounters and Events after My Return to LA

### **A memorable attempted hookup at Norm's (foiled by a kind soul?)**

My social life while living in Westwood consisted of occasional coffee shop visits in the evening. A couple of related events around that time happened in one coffee shop and later in another.

One evening at a Norm's restaurant on Pico Boulevard in West LA (now torn down), I was sitting at my usual place at the counter, reading, when I began noticing a man and woman, both in their forties and well-dressed – overdressed for Norm's (the man wore a suit) – and seated at a booth behind me in conversation. Their speech was odd, distinctive, and loud enough for me and a nearby waiter and waitress to hear what they were saying. Somehow, I began feeling uncomfortable. I thought I must be having what are called "ideas of reference," except that, after they left, I asked the waitress who had witnessed the scene if she noticed something odd about them. She shook her head in the affirmative and answered no.

To me, the conversation between the two amounted to an attempt (real or not) to pick me up for the purpose of sex. I noticed a homosexual overtone as well as a monetary angle and their insulting, insinuating manner. A waiter within earshot took notice of them, as well, and seemed uncomfortable. Dismissing him somewhat contemptuously, and to clear up any potential misunderstanding on his part, they said, "Not you, him."

The two continued in this vein for quite some time. I remember the following fragments and phrases: "T-shirt," "We left and he disappeared," "There, I've said it," and "... have an apartment nearby." To me, the import of this was unmistakable. At some point, I went to the bathroom, and, when I returned, I found the waitress had strategically placed a newspaper face up and folded for me to see the headline of an article about AIDS. The couple eventually left, alone. I never saw them again.

### **A second event with the same waitress, although at another coffee shop (the "kind soul" pays for her kindness?)**

Some days later, another peculiar event happened with the same waitress at the same Norm's location – except it took place during the day. I was seated at the counter when I noticed her and a young girl, about thirteen to fifteen years old. The girl was sitting at the head of the counter, near the cash register, several yards to my left. She was rather pretty, possibly part-Hispanic. I looked at her several times. At some point, her mother (I am guessing) said to me directly, "You can have her after you've had me." I left some time later, without engaging anyone in conversation. I never saw the young girl again, nor do I remember seeing the mother (?) there again. Sometime later, I did, however, run into her at another Norm's in Santa Monica, on Lincoln Boulevard (now closed). When she saw me come in, she said quickly, in a loud voice, "No, no! Out! You can't come in!" Not understanding what was going on, I ignored her and sat down at the counter for coffee. That was my last interaction with her.

Soon after this, I mentioned the incident to Victor – sharing my suspicions with him. Skeptical, he suggested that if the two had really been trying to pick me up, they would not have behaved in a contemptuous fashion. Precisely, possibly an instance of "Sabotaging the Mission" (see the glossary).

I thought no more of these incidents except to perhaps conclude that my interpretation of many events surrounding me seemed to diverge significantly from that of everyone I talked to – and that there has been virtual unanimity among everyone in my circle.

One lunchtime while working at Signum Systems, I went to see a lawyer (whose name I can't recall) at a law firm in the San Fernando Valley to get advice on a possible suit against the City of Santa Monica. I handed him a statement summarizing my view of the events surrounding the arrest, which I had prepared the year before while my memory was still fresh. (I have since lost the document.) The lawyer and I discussed the arrest and I broached the subject of a lawsuit, which he discouraged me from filing. He then led me out of his office hastily, and, while within earshot of office workers in the cubicles nearby, said he was glad things had worked out well for me.

One night on Veteran Avenue, I was walking on the sidewalk away from my apartment building when I heard the loud laughter of two young people. Inexplicably, I became angry and began running directly toward them – either moving close by as they passed, or even between them. There was no further interaction between us, and I never saw them again. I distinctly remember being, for a brief moment in a blind fury.



## CHAPTER 6

### Sound Solutions: *Eine Symphonie des Grauens* (A Symphony of Horrors)

#### I find a Seemingly Innocuous Job

It was just before my move to Colette's apartment in early 1991 that I found a technician job advertised in the paper with Sound Solutions on 11<sup>th</sup> Street in Santa Monica. After an interview with both David Epstein, the owner of Solution Enterprises (dba Sound Solutions), and Michael Dubrow, the young head of engineering, I started work.

Quickly enough, though, after an initial attempt to use me to troubleshoot some audiovisual equipment for a customer, I began doing most of the system design, hardware, and code for a smart-house controller they were developing. I was involved with other projects, as well, but eventually all my efforts were devoted to this controller. I first attempted to write a specification and, on the title page, perhaps trying to show off, I added the famous phrase by a well-known architect, Le Corbusier: "A house is a machine for living." The response I got from David Epstein was less than effusive.

For the entire time I worked at Sound Systems, and because Colette's landlord objected to my living in her apartment, I began staying away every other night – mostly on Pacific Coast Highway, past Malibu.

#### I Begin Noticing Unusual Things

Within the first few weeks of working at Sound Solutions, I noticed something wrong. Every night as I drove up the coast to sleep, a long black limousine followed me ostentatiously – an instance of demonstrative surveillance (see the glossary). If I slowed, it slowed; if I sped up, it, too, would speed up. Once I got to my destination, it would invariably park across the highway. In the morning, when I awoke, it would be gone. Otherwise, things at the company went smoothly enough. But then, odd, disquieting, troubling things started to happen there, too.

One day some mail came in from a company from which I had been fired after working there for three months about a year or so earlier. They had been developing a smart-house product of their own. Since I had not mentioned working for them on my resume, I told my boss, Michael Dubrow, who immediately went to speak with David Epstein. As far as I know, nothing came of any of this. It was around this time that Michael, David, and, increasingly, others among the staff members began saying things around me that gave the impression they did not like me, and that they knew things about me that I had never told them.

Beginning some months after the start of my work there, I got into the habit of going to David's office and chatting with him, mostly about technical things. This went on for several weeks until, one evening, David told me that our meetings had to end because my boss would no longer allow it. For some time, things had been difficult between Michael Dubrow and me, and I asked him to discuss the tension privately. He looked uncomfortable and refused, saying

that there was nothing to discuss. We also sometimes smoked cigarettes outside together, and that, too, came to an end.

Michael would often come to work late and, after a few hours, announce that he was going home to finish his work. David once asked him to make a spreadsheet and, for several hours, I saw him pick desultorily at the keyboard. When I went over to his desk at the end of the day to see what he had accomplished, I saw three lines on the screen.

One day David sent me to a half-day class on some electronic unit and asked that I find someone specific in the class and tell him, "David Epstein says hello." He also wanted me to pretend to know less than I did while there. During a pause in the class, I delivered David's message. To my surprise, the individual reacted angrily, and said, "I don't know any David Epstein."

Early on, a salesman for a semiconductor company dropped by. As he was leaving, he invited Michael and me for a drink. Michael declined, but I went. At the bar, the salesman kept asking peculiar questions, in particular about why I was not getting along with Michael. He also asked how many jobs I had previously. I replied, among other things, "Are we on camera?" The next day or so at the office, other employees were joking and commenting on my remark.

Between the atmosphere at the company and what was going on in my private life, it became difficult for me to concentrate on my work. At a later date while I was having a psychotic episode, my therapist, Victor Morton, said, "I kept you there too long." There seemed to develop a distinct pattern, both within Sound Solutions and later elsewhere, of people making vague threatening remarks, either directly to me or within earshot.

I was seeing a fair amount of Janusz, who was living nearby with his girlfriend. We talked about technology, some possible projects, and he introduced me to a kind of computer monitor, which when modified for PC use was to be my main source of income for the coming decades.

As these events began happening at work and elsewhere, I would often speak of them to Colette. She repeatedly expressed disbelief and put my concern down to my mental illness. There was a blanket denial of the reality I was experiencing – in retrospect, something she did to a curious, almost comical, extent. On one occasion, she and I were walking at the beach in Santa Monica, and I was heatedly trying to make her understand that what was going on was not a figment of my imagination. Just then a young man walked toward us, looked at Colette and raised a finger to his lips in the universal gesture of silence. She made no comment.

## Dead Rats Placed on the Doorstep of My Therapist's Home

Sometime during my employment at Sound Solutions, a dead rat appeared on the back doorstep of Victor Morton's house for two consecutive weeks – coinciding with the day of our therapy meetings. While preparing to finish this book, I spoke with him, and he kindly approved my mentioning his name in connection with these shocking incidents. However, Victor disagrees as to the number of times these events happened. I distinctly remember two such occurrences, each timed for the morning of my therapy sessions with Victor. He only remembers one such instance.

According to my recollection, the first time this happened, his wife, on waking up, called him at the office in a panic. Canceling appointments, he left work to go home and dispose of the thing himself. The next week, when this happened again, he was able to talk his wife through its disposal without having to leave work. After the second occurrence, when I came in for my appointment that day, Victor quietly explained what had happened and asked



whether I knew anything about it. I replied no. I was to find out much later that Victor had also asked our mutual friend, Oscar Revey, whether I was capable of such a thing. I believe Oscar told me he had replied in the negative.

I wish to state here categorically that I had nothing to do with these depraved and sinister acts; that at the time, I did not know where Victor Morton lived and that I am willing to take a lie detector test to demonstrate my innocence. There is more to this shameful and mad event, which I relate later in this chapter.

## Several “Meet Cutes”

### **At Sound Solutions: Richard Alcala**

Richard Alcala, employee of Encore Video, showed up one day at Sound Solutions. David Epstein told me Richard was a consultant for his company.

### **Another “Meet Cute,” a guy in two places**

An individual I had previously seen at Café 50s on Santa Monica Boulevard visited Sound Solutions a few days later, where David seemed to be giving him a tour of the lab.

### **On Broadway near 11<sup>th</sup> Street in Santa Monica: Alexander Lidow**

One day, as I walked from the office to the liquor store nearby, I saw Alexander Lidow, an old classmate from Caltech, in a convertible VW Rabbit with the top down, going eastbound on Broadway, just west of 11<sup>th</sup> Street. A passenger, he neither noticed nor looked in my direction as the car drove by. Previously, while sitting in the front office at Sound Solutions chatting with the office manager, I had casually mentioned that I knew him after seeing a picture in a trade magazine. Alexander had just been promoted to VP of Research and Development at International Rectifier in El Segundo, a publicly traded semiconductor company founded by, I believe, his father.

### **On 11<sup>th</sup> Street in Santa Monica: a secretary from my former employer, Signum Systems**

Another time walking near the office, I recognized a secretary from the time I had worked at Signum Systems a couple of years earlier. She did not see me as she drove by on 11<sup>th</sup> Street with a male passenger.

Sound Solutions began having monthly company-wide meetings first thing in the morning. On one of those meeting days, I left Colette's apartment, headed for my car parked outside, and found two of my tires slashed. I made a police report and replaced the tires, but I was unable to make it to the meeting. On the morning of the next month's meeting, parked near the same spot again, I found two more slashed tires. I replaced those, made another police report, and continued on to Sound Solutions. This time, as I reported to David what had happened for the second month running, he said, “It could have been worse – like sugar in the gas tank.” I said nothing.

At our weekly sessions, I told Victor about everything that was going on. In fact, Sound Solutions-related events came to monopolize our conversation, to the exclusion of most anything else. I am not sure if he initially believed or understood all of the implications and ramifications of these events. He seemed to feel, among other things, that, there being a

recession, I ought not to quit my job – though I wanted to on several occasions. It was not until much later, a couple of years, perhaps, that Victor concluded I had stayed there too long. By then, he might have reached other conclusions, as well.

## I Leave Sound Solutions

After a year there and after I had delivered the first part of the smart-house controller, I had a heated argument with my boss over the physical arrangement of the lab. I told him that if things did not change within two weeks I would be gone. David soon began asking me, repeatedly, to write a report on the technical state of the whole project. I refused, leaving for good around April 24, 1992. By then, they most likely both wanted me gone. Their various subterfuges had finally paid off. As I said goodbye to David and the office manager, who were standing together, the manager said, “You'll come back again?” Or words to that effect. I replied, “I certainly will.” I never did.

While at Sound Solutions, I often had much difficulty concentrating on my work, and my efficiency suffered as a result. Although I came to positively loathe most of the people there, especially Michael Dubrow and, to a lesser extent, David Epstein, I felt a considerable pride in my work and did it diligently and to the best of my ability. I also note here that Sound Solutions, perhaps for certain reasons, did not always pay my salary on time – although, when I called to remind them after I had left, full payment was made.

I list here the three contacts with this company that I initiated or witnessed, and a firm resolution.

- Some weeks after my departure, I called the company to get paid for the month and a half wages they owed me. They paid.
- One night many months later, coming from Colette's apartment, I drove by the office, stopped my car in front, got out, and looked at a sign on the door that said the company had moved.
- Decades later, in the 2010s, I gave their name to a lawyer whose counsel I was seeking about the peculiar events in my life and of the possibility of a lawsuit against the Government. I told him I had rigorously avoided contact with Sound Solutions and any of the people there. He went online, with me looking over his shoulder, and checked out their website, something I had NEVER done on my own.

Over the decades I have made it my firm policy to:

- Have nothing to do with Epstein/Dubrow and company
- Talk to anyone who would listen about what I thought they were doing to me
- Avoid taking an interest in them or their backgrounds

I have never tried to contact any of these people, neither did I "go back to finish the work I had started," as was suggested to me more than once. The leading question of a friend, James Lazell, whom I met some years later (witnessed by a third person), only firmed up my resolve once I had figured out the implications of what had been said.

As much as I avoided any contact with anyone associated with that company in the immediate post-Sound Solutions period, I did run into Michael at a taco stand near there. I was in my car, pulling into a parking spot, when we noticed each other. He was on foot, alone,

I think, and he glared at me. I averted my gaze, and moved on. I am prepared to believe this incident was a coincidence.

During the riots of 1992, I ran into one of their employees, an installer, near Santa Monica College. I was on foot, he was driving. We exchanged smiles as he drove by and may have waved to each other. I am prepared to think this was also an innocent coincidence.

#### **Four "Meet Cutes" with David Epstein over a period of twenty-plus years**

1. The following occurrences are, likely, NOT coincidences. The first such instance happened several years after I left the company and involved Matt Moran, who worked with me. We met at a coffee shop in Santa Monica, where we chatted, and he asked me to take him to a food co-op nearby. On the way, we drove by 11<sup>th</sup> Street, where Sound Solutions was located at the time. As we approached, I saw David and several others in front of the building, milling around.
2. I once saw him at Café 50s on Lincoln Boulevard (now closed). I was seated at the counter and he was sitting at a table behind me with another man. At one point I turned around and looked at him. He looked me in the eye and said, "Not you."
3. One day before the turn of the century, I was sitting inside a coffee or donut shop in a West Los Angeles strip mall – likely on Santa Monica Boulevard – I looked out the window and saw David Epstein walk by carrying clothes from a dry cleaner. We exchanged glances.
4. Sometime after 2008, I saw him one last time. I was coming out of the office of a customer – a lawyer by the name of Codell – with penthouse offices on Sunset Boulevard in West Hollywood. I was in my car, pulling out of the parking lot when I noticed him in an old, large, light-colored United States-made four-door convertible pull into the same parking lot at slow speed. We exchanged glances.

#### **"Meet Cute" in Santa Monica at Denny's coffee shop on Lincoln Boulevard: Johannes (janitor at Sound Solutions)**

Sometime before my first visit to Italy, I was at the counter in a Denny's coffee shop on Lincoln Boulevard, when a part-time employee of Sound Solutions, Johannes, walked in, sat next to me, and started a conversation. He said he was getting his car fixed next door. Over the course of the next few minutes, he attempted to tell me what was going on there. I replied that I was not interested, so we changed the subject. I went outside for a cigarette, and he followed me, saying distinctly, and in a low voice, "You should go back and finish the work you started." My reply could not have been positive. After my cigarette, I went back inside, leaving him standing there. I never saw him again.

On various occasions, I ran into other employees of Sound Solutions. In one instance, the office manager and an employee, USC graduate in music – I do not remember his name – were leaving Café 50s when they noticed me at the counter. Greetings were exchanged and, as the two of them were leaving, the music major says to me, "You are finished." He may conceivably have been referring to my meal.

## **A Sample of Quotes During My Term of Employment**

After work at Sound Solutions, I would often go to Café 50s. One day, I was sitting at the counter when I noticed an older, tall, white man sitting at one of the booths not far from me.

At work, a day or so later, I was in the lab working when David, the owner, came in with what I immediately recognized as the person I had previously noticed staring intently at me in Café 50s. David spoke to him briefly before leading him out of the lab. Neither David nor anyone else ever referred to this incident again.

An odd event/interaction. While still working at Sound Solutions, I kept, taped to the wall near my desk, a picture of Biarritz, a town in France where my mother had an apartment. One day, apropos nothing, one of the employees, a surfer no more than thirty, accosted me and, during our brief conversation, pointed to the picture. "That's not yours," he said, to which I did not respond. As I understood it, he was referring to the apartment, which did not belong to me. This was merely one of many curious, cryptic pronouncements to emanate from Sound Solutions employees during my stay. On another occasion as I was carrying my address book around the office, the same employee came up to me and said, "You should get rid of that." I said nothing.

I was once in the front office, chatting with the office manager, and I referred to my friend, Reuven Levy. In an accusatory tone, the office manager said something to the effect that I knew of Reuven's drug dealing. Here, again, I said nothing. Perhaps a decade before this conversation, Reuven and I had been talking in his townhouse, when, during the conversation, he mentioned in passing that it would be easy to transport drugs. I either replied that I did not agree or else ignored the comment.

In another telling comment, the office manager, on another occasion, referred to me as "Job," perhaps alluding to the travails of that character from the bible.

### **A (possible) misunderstanding**

Another day during working hours, I was in David Epstein's office and said, "Did you do so and so..." But I used the contraction, "Dju" instead of "Did you." The office manager, standing at the door, interjected. "You did not really mean that, did you?" As I usually do in sensitive situations, I said nothing.

Once, the office manager alluded to Sherry Grogan, a young woman I had dated years back as some equivalent of "white trash." He specifically spoke of someone living in the Santa Monica Glen area, which was where Sherry lived when I met her.

I vaguely remember the time the office manager, while I was nearby in the front office, smirking while he alluded to loud fights and arguments between Colette and me at her apartment.

One afternoon, I was sitting in the projection room/showroom next to the tall, balding, Italian-American music major from USC, whose job was making wiring diagrams for the multimedia systems the company worked on. Out of the blue, he turned to me and said, "Your father was a troublemaker, wasn't he?" I said nothing.

A coworker, the programmer who once told me his father had lived in "Hell's Kitchen" in New York, and who had been hired to help me and perhaps also act as buffer between Michael and me, once said to me, "You've only had one of those; you don't make a habit of it?" Somehow I knew instantly that he was referring to an underage girl I had been sexually involved with over a decade earlier. I said nothing.

One day in David Epstein's office, a man, tall, with a hippie look and long hair, likely in his thirties, said, "He has an interest in parallel processors." Understand that this person was not at all technical. I had, sometime back, contacted a former schoolmate and asked him questions regarding parallel-processing computers. I have had a long-standing interest in this technology. I said nothing.

## **David Epstein**

### **Attempted blackmail**

David came into the lab where I was working – a small room with three or so desks. Speaking literally to the wall, he said, "I know some other embarrassing things about you and I want you working here for five years." He then walked out. I said nothing.

### **"Working for a scummy company"**

Even more odd and frightening, and still having a deep emotional impact on me, was an event that occurred a few months after I started work there. I was home in bed, in Colette's apartment, when I got a call from my mother. We spoke in French and, at some point, she asked me how things were where I worked. I said, *Oh, c'est vraiment scabreux* (It is really an indecent place). Some days later, I was in the lab at work when David came in and, after a moment, again seeming to speak to the wall, said in an indignant tone, "So, he thinks he's working for a scummy little company." I left destabilized, disturbed, and puzzled by what had just happened, I said nothing.

## **Michael Dubrow**

### **Leave-taking (of a sort)**

One day as I was working, David and Michael had a loud argument, the nature of which I was unaware. Michael, face flushed, kept repeating, "If I leave, I'm taking him with me."

### **Some (unsolicited) advice on the rights of a renter**

One night as I was in my car by Malibu, a highway patrolman came over and asked why I was staying there. I replied that I spent alternate nights in my car for fear of jeopardizing Colette's lease since I was not listed on it. Soon after this Michael said to me at work, "They are not allowed to kick you out of your apartment." Or words to that effect. I said nothing.

### **On the possible meanings of the words: "Die shrink"**

Within days of the sad events surrounding the placement of dead rats on my therapist's back door, Michael approached me in the lab at work and talked about a semiconductor manufacturing technique called a "die shrink." He uses the words "die shrink," and then, even louder, repeated them while furiously glaring at me. "Die shrink, die shrink, die shrink!" I realize this sentence allows for more than one interpretation. I said nothing.

At my next session with Victor, I naturally repeated Michael's remarks. I don't believe Victor responded. He did continue to see me as a patient for some years. Indeed, on more than one occasion, Victor was to invite me to his house, and at least once, during a difficult moment for me psychologically, he prepared a small meal for me. Thank you, Victor.

### **Cryptic pronouncement #1**

"A deeply, deeply unhappy old man." This was spoken by Michael Dubrow at a moment when he and I were alone in the lab. I said nothing.

## **Cryptic pronouncement #2**

In the lab one day Michael picked up my address book and said to me something like, "What would you say are the dimensions of this address book?" Sometime after that, the address book in question went missing for several weeks. Then one day I got a call at work from Colette, who told me she had just found it underneath a sofa.

## **Miscellaneous comments**

"Why don't you marry her?" Michael once asked me this question, apparently regarding Colette. I had never discussed my private life with him in any way. I said nothing.

Once, in the lab, Michael said to me, "Berg, con man." I said nothing.

We were standing in a parking lot with David in a cluster of three, when Michael stepped on my toes and kept his foot there for seconds while looking at me in silence. At least this behavior could be distinguished from the madhouse atmosphere prevalent at Sound Solutions. It made sense. I could safely assume that, by this time, Michael (and likely David, as well) wanted to get rid of me. Given Michael's imagination and the things it tended to run to, this may have been the best he could think of. I said nothing.

Michael looked at me in the lab one day and said, "Bugsy." I looked him in the eye and replied, "Siegel." (As in Bugsy Siegel, the Las Vegas gangster.)

Michael and I were in David's office discussing something routine when he leaned toward me and, in a low tone, said, "Stay away from our women." I said nothing.

At lunchtime, I would sometimes drive to the Santa Monica Bluffs and park my car. One day as I was sitting, relaxing, a van pulled up beside me. My window was open and so was the van's passenger-side window. The driver turned on the stereo and might have left the van, after which I heard a voice that I immediately recognized as that of Reuven Levy. Since, at the time, I lived in a garage in Santa Monica, I sometimes had mail sent to his address. An accountant I used to do my taxes used that address as my own and claimed a renter's deduction for me. When I returned to work, I saw many of the employees gathered around David and Michael. I heard Michael laughing as he said something like, "And then I filed an amended tax return, and then amended the amended return." David looked at me and shrugged his shoulders. I said nothing.

Working in the lab one day, Michael and I were alone. Michael said, "You are a rabble-racer, race-rouser, a rabble-rouser!" I said nothing.

In the lab one day, Michael used the word "nigger." Another employee likely overheard. I said nothing. On the next day or so, David wandered by and Michael, who was standing next to me, said to no one in particular, "Sorry, sorry, sorry." I was puzzled, and later mentioned the incident to Victor. He said, "David Epstein does not want to be sued."

During a conversation with Michael Dubrow in the office, I happened to mention that I once had a brown belt in karate. Michael replied, "That goes into the file." I said nothing.

One day, as Michael walked in through the front door and began repeating loudly – in a voice I could clearly hear in the lab, "The battery's not hurting, the battery's not hurting." The behavior and speech pattern were characteristically ambiguous, potentially threatening, nonsensical, lame, possibly aggressive, and decidedly odd. As an aside, I had, when arrested in the Santa Monica library in 1988, been ultimately charged with at least one count of battery. Had Michael been talking about his car?

During this unusual period of my life, when harassed verbally in public places by people whose provenance I knew not – assuming vaguely they were associated with the

Epstein/Dubrow crew – I was in the habit of making a rude hand gesture simulating masturbation, while looking directly at the person in question. One day, in the office, for reasons I do not remember, Michael, alluding somehow to this common habit of mine, said, "You don't know who these people are." I said nothing.





# CHAPTER 7

## Between Sound Solutions and Florence (1992-1995)

### I Take a Break from Computers

After leaving Sound Solutions, relieved to finally be gone, I remained unemployed for a year and lived off my limited savings. During that time, I stayed with Colette and took a class at Santa Monica City College.

At that time, Colette's boyfriend was a young Japanese man named Katsumasa Kozono, whom she had met while taking classes. He and I became friends and sometimes frequented the Sawtelle Kitchen, a Japanese-owned restaurant in West Los Angeles. During a lunchtime visit, he, I, and an attractive young Japanese woman in her twenties with a large mole on her forehead sat at a table in an alcove. When the waitress came to take our order, without my having said anything to her, I heard her use the word "nigger." After delivering this remark, she took our orders as though nothing had happened, and our lunch proceeded without further incident. Sharing our table was another woman, American, with a companion. At one point she said to her friend, "Such a pretty girl!" (I was not sure if the remark had been meant for our party, or not.)

After that first year, during which I was recovering from my stint at Sound Solutions, Colette left for Japan with Katsumasa, where they spent one month together before she flew to Shanghai where she moved into a dormitory and spent about ten months studying acupuncture at a hospital. Before her departure from LA, she had become somewhat proficient in Mandarin. She later told me she had made multiple visits to Hong Kong – so many, in fact, that she came to the attention of immigration officers who questioned her about the reasons for her frequent visits. After her death, I was to learn from looking in her passport that she had once traveled to Macau, something she never revealed to me. Macau is known for gambling and prostitution, and would be an unusual destination for her.

After Colette's departure for Asia, early in 1993, I moved to a townhouse in Monterey Park that I shared with four ethnic Chinese. To support myself, I sold monitors and other computer equipment. After a year, the landlords decided to empty the condo, so I moved on. A friend, John Zhou, helped me find an apartment in San Gabriel through an ad in a Chinese-language paper. From there I continued running my small business. While still living in the townhouse, Janusz introduced me to swap meets, which we began visiting frequently. It was at one of those meets I had met John and Sten Larssen. (More about both of them later.)

With the continuation of disturbing events, I was often emotionally unstable and, when I could afford him, I relied on Victor for help. There was once talk of hospitalizing me overnight, something I could not afford. Occasionally, Oscar Revey and I would meet and have long conversations over coffee. He was concerned and helpful, but he rarely, if ever, saw my perspectives or experiences as anything other than delusions and hallucinations.

Around that time, Sten, who worked at a surplus electronics company, offered to sell me a piece of test equipment when it became available. This was soon after Colette put my name on her bank account. Not having the money of my own, and without her permission, I tapped her account for the necessary funds – a thousand dollars. Afterwards, I began using this account to buy laptops at auction as well as from Sten.

Every strange encounter, every strange conversation that I reported to friends and acquaintances, was universally met with denial, disbelief, and ridicule. I often came to doubt

my experiences – thinking all of it was symptomatic of my mental illness. This environment was extremely destabilizing in that there was no relief from the stress, no intelligible explanation for events, and no one willing to (openly) consider that what I told them might be valid. I finally had another psychotic break while living in San Gabriel. I had been seeing Victor occasionally and he referred me to a couple of other psychiatrists in an attempt to get to the root of my mental problems.

After this psychotic break and suicide attempt (I tried using gas), I spent the next six months sleeping about twenty hours a day. Matt Moran resold my monitors and handled sales in return for a share of the profits. During that time, I stayed home, except for going to a local coffee shop every evening.

Since my initial psychotic break in 1988, I have been variously diagnosed as:

- Schizotypal
- Obsessive-compulsive
- Manic depressive (I tried lithium unsuccessfully)
- Schizoaffective personality disorder, diagnosed in 1998 (Risperdal and Abilify prescribed)
- My sister, who has seen me at my worst over the last thirty years or more, diagnosed me with paranoid schizophrenia sometime after 2000

## Quotes

I was in a coffee shop in Santa Monica where I heard people speaking, as follows: “He has a sister; her name is Irene; she’s a doctor, and she lives in Italy.”

While I lived in San Gabriel, I would occasionally hear a refrain: "He should be shot," or "They should shoot him." I interpreted this as a physical threat, which served to heighten my already great tension – although I recognize alternative interpretations with less drastic implications.

In another coffee shop in Santa Monica, I noticed frequent harassment from other customers sitting nearby, though always in a plausibly deniable way. One day I heard a waitress, responding to some unfriendly comments by customers. She said, “At least, this time it’s not your Jews.”

I was sitting on the couch at Colette’s apartment, making notes on my laptop about the peculiar events occurring around me when Colette called to me from the bedroom. "What are you doing?" she asked. I said, "Writing (or taking notes)." She said something like, "Oh no, don't," or "Uh – uh." I stopped writing.

In my apartment in San Gabriel one day, I had just made a sale to a regular customer. As he was leaving, I closed the door and heard him say from outside, "The Jews," or "It's the Jews." I never saw him again. In that moment, I felt afraid.

On another occasion I was alone, sitting at a table on the boardwalk in Venice, when two guys at a nearby table started talking about what sounded like "banker’s chocolate." It made little sense to me at the time, but I found the comment disturbing. Later, when I reported it to Colette, she laughed it off, saying I had obviously misunderstood the correct term, “baker’s chocolate." I should maybe explain here that Colette’s father was a retired banker. Gaslighting.

Almost every night I would go to a Denny’s just east of where I lived in San Gabriel. While there, the verbal harassment I witnessed was nearly continuous. Once, from a booth near me, I

heard a young Asian woman say, in a perfect French accent, "*Va en France; tu verra.*" (Go to France; you'll see.)

Another time in the same Denny's, I heard someone say, "They are doing the same thing to his sister." The coffee shop manager, someone I knew only by sight, said, "I feel sorry for you."

At about that time, in another coffee shop, I heard, "They're going to send someone to seduce his sister... No, actually that already happened."

Someone, likely Middle Eastern, at a booth near where I was seated at the counter, said (possibly repeatedly), "Do you think you are not a nigger?"

I believe there was once a subtle, ominous, indirect, warning to me – and to my therapist, Victor, as well – a message warning him against communicating anything of substance to me. At the time I had only a pager. One day, I got a particularly cryptic and ominous warning. The exact pager output: 42242425210 took me some time to make sense of and had one possible meaning, which I informed Victor about sometime later – calling him in a near-panic very late one night. To wit: communication between two people will lead to five to ten years in prison for them. The key to this puzzle lies in the job I had had some years earlier, in Hollywood, where I made use of a video communication protocol called "422." From there to deciphering the rest of the message is a trivial task, though it took me some time to "get" it.

A waitress at Denny's whom I saw regularly once handed me a cryptic note without explanation as I sat at the counter. It said, "Do you like to "P." a lot? Do you?" I became upset and contacted Colette, thinking, in my disordered way, that she might know about this or be responsible. Then, it snowballed and Victor became involved when Colette and I called him from a pay phone in Santa Monica later that night. As we did so, I noticed someone drive up and wait by the pay phone, doing nothing. Colette and I drove to Victor's house, and we sat on his front porch until he could calm me down.

After a visit to a swap meet where I originally met him, James Lazell and I drove to a café on Lincoln Boulevard. We were about to sit when he referred to David Epstein. "You want him to die. You just want him dead, don't you?" Or words to that effect. I said something like, "No, not at all. I just want him to stay away from me. People I don't like – I just avoid them." He abruptly changed the subject – never bringing it up again. During this exchange a young man, who had earlier approached us without joining the conversation, was standing maybe three feet away, motionless and alone. He looked at no one in particular and, as soon as the exchange was over, he walked away without saying a word. Though I probably talked a great deal more to James about Sound Solutions, as I was often in the habit of doing, nothing of the sort happened again.

I recall one incident in a Norm's coffee shop (now closed) on Valley Boulevard when a man, sitting with others at a booth not far from where I was sitting at the counter started saying, "Berg, Berg..." until I turned to him in puzzlement. I said nothing, neither did he, and he stopped saying my name. Victor later commented that hearing one's name was a common form of hallucination.

While living in San Gabriel, I drove to see Oscar in the aftermath of the 1994 Northridge earthquake. It became obvious that he was going downhill. As a result of the quake, one room in his apartment became permanently unreachable due to books that had fallen from collapsed shelves. The apartment was strewn with random items, curtains were torn, and, to move from room to room, I had to follow restricted pathways. I saw this as a classic sign of hoarding behavior. Although he did not say so, Oscar was ill mentally as well as physically and, by the mid-nineties, became increasingly isolated. He also suffered from a severe physical ailment, a form of degenerative arthritis.

## LAPD Officer Dennis Ballas

I met LAPD police officer Dennis Ballas when I lived in Monterey Park. He came to the townhouse I lived in, looking for a laptop. Two other customers were present during this first of his several visits. They were Asian, a man and a woman in their twenties and they were loud and a bit obnoxious until Dennis turned to them and, in a loud and firm voice, said, "I don't need that." He eventually bought a laptop from me, and I learned he was of Jewish descent with an Iraqi or Syrian Sephardic father and Hispanic mother. He was cordial throughout – at least for the first few weeks. After his purchase, he brought me to the police station south of downtown where he worked. I made several sales there and among the customers I met was his partner, Officer Davis. Both men behaved properly toward me until one day in the small office where he worked, Dennis became angry – to the point where his boss, an older man, told him to calm down in front of everyone there. I am still puzzled over the change in his behavior.

On one occasion, I needed to put money in my car's parking meter, and Dennis offered to do it for me. But then, Davis actually did it. Another time Dennis was escorting me to another part of the building, when Davis quickly joined us. As we were going down the stairs, Dennis asked me computer-related questions. Oddly, the answers seem to require me to use the word "pin" several times in rapid succession. I did so repeatedly until Davis nudged me with his elbow. Around that same time, Davis informed me that he and Dennis would no longer be partners. Having no idea what had transpired, I became concerned – enough so to mention the incident to Oscar. Although, perhaps, I should have, I never brought it up with Dennis – too unsure of the situation. At my last meeting with him, around the latter half of 1994 – and which happened outside my apartment in San Gabriel – he was friendly again, and gave me an avocado as a present. I never saw or heard from him again or from any of the others in that group, except for one officer who, over the years, occasionally called requesting computer help.

As I mentioned earlier, I met Davis at the same time as Dennis. I sold him two laptops, one of which he soon returned, and for which I gave him a full refund. The laptop had a missing key, which he claimed had popped off. Sometime after that sale, his father, Commander Davis, asked me to his office in, I think, Parker Center, The LAPD headquarters, for some computer-related problems. I was there on two occasions.

Officer Davis and I once met at a coffee shop in Los Angeles – I forget why, but likely for something to do with computers. After a brief discussion there, he suggested we go to his house, where, at one point, we went upstairs to his room. I looked at some album covers by Black artists, which he had lying around, and he said something like: "Oh, those are yours now – huh?" (It sounded like a taunt or reproach to me.) Back downstairs in the kitchen, a middle-aged woman offered me some food. As I was eating, I heard her say in a soft but persistent voice, "Tell him, tell him, it's the Jews." Commander Davis, Davis's father, arrived soon thereafter and immediately went outside a sliding glass door and had a brief phone conversation in which he said something like, "If he leaves during the investigation, there will be hell to pay." I left their house soon after that, never returned, and was never contacted again by anyone there. I don't think I need to comment on my state of mind during the time I spent there.

## Guns are Made Available

Stenåke (Sten) Larssen lived in a residential area east of Los Angeles where, on one of my visits to his home, he showed me his gun collection, which he kept in a large upright safe in his garage. The purpose of my visit was routine, having nothing to do with guns. But now Sten was returning to Sweden, his home, for medical treatment, and he had to dispose of his guns before he left, as they were not legal in his country. After opening the safe, he took out two or three guns – large and heavy – and handed them to me, one after the other. While passing them to me, and later taking them back, he held them by the barrel. I did not buy any, neither did I shoot them. Though I often saw Sten after that, he never mentioned his guns again.

On another day, when I was to visit him, Colette decided to accompany me. Although Sten was expecting me, he was not home when we arrived. After waiting for some time for his return, we finally gave up, and left. The next time I saw him, neither of us mentioned the incident. Colette later, without explaining why, remarked to me that she did not like him.

Around 1994 or 1995 I had a call from a customer needing a monitor. I went to his location in South Los Angeles, where, after a demonstration of the monitor, he bought it. The customer was Black, in his forties, and an ex-con, according to him. While I was there, he went out for cigarettes and, handing me a pistol to hold, said the neighborhood was dangerous. He told me he had gotten my number from one of my long-term suppliers from the TRW swap meet, someone I knew well. He also mentioned he would soon be leaving permanently for the Midwest. He did not offer to sell me any guns. I never saw him again.

These two incidents, and the knowledge that there are guns floating around somewhere with my fingerprints on them, puts me in a tense situation at times. For example, during an incident at the Staples on La Cienega Boulevard, a man on his cell phone shouted out in the middle of the store, "Your 'Wife' is dead." Given the right atmosphere, this information could be a cause of concern for me.

In those days, in my state of innocence, I would talk to anyone who would listen about these strange doings, never realizing that, once my fingerprints were on those guns, a potential ploy became more feasible with each person I explained my story to.

## My Hole-in-the-Wall Business is Ruined

I will now relate how I came to lose the apartment and my business, and was constrained and manipulated into leaving the United States. While I lived on Newmark Avenue, I began advertising my computer monitors in the *Recycler*, a Los Angeles-based publication. For about two years, I had a small but fairly steady stream of customers and, while my financial situation was precarious, I had some stability.

During my stay in San Gabriel, some days before September 6, 1994, I had a car accident, which I strongly believe was facilitated by my friend, John Zhou. It happened at his house, somewhere east of where I lived at the time. I remember driving up and parking behind a van stationed in front of the house. After a conversation with John in his garage – not in his house – a conversation in which he seemed at times angry, I eventually left. I noticed the van was still parked and that John was nearby, on the lawn or sidewalk in front of his house, and clearly nodding to someone I could not see. (Just as I had seen done years before at the Santa Monica Public Library.) As I was pulling out, making a U-turn, a car I could not see, as my vision was blocked by the van, drove by in the opposite direction. I hit it at low speed, damaging the driver-side door, which belonged to Maria Z. Rojas of Norwalk, California. The car was a Honda Prelude, 1984, license plate 2XZJ694. (I have a signed statement by Ms. Rojas, asserting that I paid her for the replacement of the car door and \$350 in cash.) At the

time, I did not have insurance. Additionally, she, a Hispanic in her forties, told me at the time of signing the papers that, due to the shock of the accident, she had had a miscarriage.

At the time of the accident, I had less than a thousand dollars in savings. In the aftermath, I began having problems with my monitor business. My ads in the *Recycler* still ran, people still called, usually more than one a day, and maybe half of them made appointments for demonstrations. All very normal in terms of volume. The problem was, none of them ever showed up. Not one. For all of two months. I had no income, depleted savings, and no other source of available funds. I had to leave my apartment, put my belongings into storage, and move back in with Colette.

For some weeks, I stayed with Colette who had, by then, returned from China. At this point my sister, suggesting I visit her in Italy to, in her words, "veg out," sent me a one-way plane ticket (paid for by her then-husband, Persio). Those were the circumstances under which I lost practically everything, including my independence, and had been invited to Europe under false pretenses – conceivably never to return to the United States

Around that time, I noticed that if I went to use a public phone – I still had only a pager – someone would quickly appear and hover nearby. Just prior to my move to Italy, while living with Colette, I was at a pay phone on Lincoln Boulevard, near her apartment, when, just as I began using the phone, someone drove up in a car, waited, and did nothing.

Throughout this period, I experienced a constant backdrop of peculiar events, which I would now call "intoxication" – repeated psychological manipulation with different themes:

- I should leave town
- I should apologize to David Epstein for my comments to him
- I should go back to work at Sound Solutions
- The above frequently accompanied by put-downs of various kinds

A man named Darryl, somehow related to Colette, and I were with Colette's family in the kitchen of her father's house in Idaho one summer between 1992 and 1994, when I made a comment about a piece of stock market trading software called a "tickerplant." Darryl immediately reacted with "nigger plant?" Ted Walczak, Carole Lewis and, I believe, Colette were all present at the time, but none of them commented. I said nothing.

On another visit to Idaho, during dinner with Ted and Carole, a local man, his wife and two, possibly Nepalese, guests of the local man, I heard Ted ask the man what was going on. The man's casual reply was, "Oh, the usual turn and burn." Ted turned sharply to look at me full-face, as though watching for a reaction. He made no comment. Though I knew by then that something untoward was going on in my life, I did not understand the implications of what had just been said. During my visit, Carole seemed to suggest that I have a talk with Ted in private – an offer I did not take her up on. I have never discussed any of what was going on with either of them. Neither he nor she ever brought it up again, although for years I had been talking incessantly about these things to his daughter, Colette. Also in the nineties, during a visit by Carole and part of her family to Southern California, her daughter told me openly during dinner that my phone was tapped. Bravo, Carole!

## At the Prompting of My Sister, I Leave for Italy

In the spring of 1995, after enduring peculiar treatment daily from prior to the start of my employment at Sound Solutions in 1991, I left for Florence, Italy, expecting to be gone for a brief period. Colette accompanied me to the airport, and while waiting for the plane, I noticed

a man talking loudly into a nearby public phone and then laughing repeatedly. I glanced at him several times, saying nothing. Colette and I may also have exchanged glances. She said nothing, either. As I hugged her prior to boarding the plane, she was crying. The flight to Rome was uneventful.





## CHAPTER 8

### In Florence: A Room Without a View

#### A Welcoming Committee

I landed suspecting nothing, thinking that, at last, I was safe. Irene and Persio met me at the airport. But, at the curb, on our way to his car, I had a hint of things to come when an Italian in his thirties walked up to us, stopped, spoke briefly, and added the only word in Italian I understood: "Nigger." Neither my sister nor her husband acknowledged the man's presence or his words. I said nothing.

In the car, driving up to Florence, Persio made two comments I can still remember. "You can do nothing for him," which he said to Irene, and "Governments have a lot of power as well as private groups," or "Governments have more power than private groups." (This in response to my comment about small groups of people being increasingly powerful. An allusion to what I thought was the work of the Epstein/Dubrow/Sound Solutions crew.) My sister remained silent throughout, observing me.

I had expected some respite when I reached my sister's. Reluctant to leave Los Angeles in the first place, I would have opted to go to France, where many of my relatives, including my parents, lived. I would have wanted a family gathering of sorts so I could present my desperate situation to a sympathetic and supportive audience. However, when she and I spoke by phone, Irene was adamant: I was to go to Italy, ostensibly, as she said, to "veg out" for a while. From my brief, occasional phone conversations with her, I had no idea that similar things were happening to her and that, indeed, her situation was, if anything, more dire than mine. While in the United States, I had never brought up my predicament and neither did she speak of hers. I had expected to find a haven, but was quickly disabused of that notion by the "welcoming committee" on my arrival at Fiumicino Airport. As I struggled to grasp the enormity of my (and my sister's) predicament and attempted to grapple with the increasingly obtrusive interference from parties unknown, trying, without much success, to decipher the "tea leaves" spread about by Irene and, at times, Persio, I settled into a routine involving much sleeping (till very late), much TV (Italian and French channels), reading, and coding on my laptop.

At times, there were no untoward events, no reminders of my predicament, and, of course, no validation of my theories from either Irene or Persio. So, once again, for some time I thought this was all my imagination. There were periods, both in Italy and in the United States when I felt these occurrences were merely symptoms of my mental illness, nothing more. I was aided in this delusion about a delusion by everyone around me. I avoided contact with as many people as possible, making sure I was out whenever Irene and her husband had a party. I was not interested in making friends and refused any social contact, even when my sister attempted to hook me up with her upstairs neighbor – a middle-aged schoolteacher who, Irene broadly hinted, was a lesbian... I sometimes went for long walks alone. I would sometimes call Colette, but I did not think of contacting Father who, at the time, may have been living in our old home town of Orléans.

Irene had begun studying Arabic and, during my stay, mentioned her wish to visit Syria, alone. I was aghast and told her I strongly disapproved. She eventually relented and either said she would forgo the trip or that, if she went, she would not go by herself. A curious wish on her part.

## Gaslit by My Sister

Once we reached their apartment, the arguing began. Strictly between me and Irene. Persio, apart from one or two sarcasms, stayed out of the fray, merely observing. As I tried to get across to her something of the atmosphere of the open-air madhouse I had been living in, my tale was met with a blanket of seeming incredulity by Irene. In retrospect it is evident she was desperately pulling the wool over my eyes. At the time, though, it was quite frustrating for me to have the validity of my experiences denied systematically by someone so close to me. She had a retort, no matter how implausible, for everything I said. Mixed in with this, and to my growing confusion and puzzlement, she would occasionally, in an aside, attempt to let me know of her identical predicament.

Until then, I had no idea that my sister had been working for the American security services, likely for quite some time, though I had had my suspicions during my visit to Manhattan in 1988. Add to that her occasional hints then and since, and the two comments I had overheard in coffee shops. She and I had never, up to this point, discussed what was happening to me. To this day, I'm completely in the dark as to the extent of the (successful) operation by the United States Government's *Securitate* (see the glossary) against her.

Every event, fact, or argument I would mention was met by her complete refusal to accept anything I was saying. For example:

- The fact that the bottom had dropped out of my business and all my appointments were no-shows. She put it down to such things as seasonal factors.
- The attempt to make it look as though I were responsible for the dead rats left on my therapist's doorstep. Irene's literal response: "But you were very sick at the time."
- Comments made in public places, some quite detailed, regarding her: "My paranoia was responsible."
- Conversely (and most confusing for me), at one point, though, Irene said to me in a low voice: "Plastic." I took this comment to imply that someone had damaging information about her involving credit card fraud. Throughout my seven-month stay, this was one of the rare remarks from her alluding to or acknowledging part of the true nature of her situation.
- Me: "Why don't you have a job?" Irene: "But I don't want to work."

At one point, I tried to get Irene to go for walk with me for a private discussion; she angrily refused without giving a reason.

"Oh, what a tangled web we weave/When first we practice to deceive."

- Sir Walter Scott

I once said to her, in the presence of Persio, I think, that I wanted to sue somebody – almost literal words – but that I just did not know who. This is the earliest occasion I can remember when I publicly stated this – not knowing at the time who was to be the target of the lawsuit. There were no comments from either of them. None.

After a few months, Mother flew from Paris to spend several weeks with us. Irene and Persio left for a conference in Austria, among other places. During her visit, I gingerly tried communicating to my mother the depth of my anguish and what I felt was the seriousness and

utter strangeness of my situation. Her response was complete incomprehension, bafflement, and incredulity.

During Mother's visit, I did attend one party at the country house of a childhood friend of Persio's, Maria-Grazia, who worked with him in his lab. There were perhaps ten people present, from mid-afternoon to the evening. It quickly became obvious that this woman, for some reason, had a low opinion of me and no reluctance in letting me know. Going so far as to not reply to my one attempt to speak to her directly. I also thought that in this remote setting, away from the city, in the countryside, miles outside Florence, my sister and I could finally have a heart-to-heart talk, about what was bothering me – and her, as well. In Florence, she oscillated between stonewalling and dropping curious and for the most part undecipherable (at the time) hints about our predicament. I felt the whole situation there was quite as strange and confusing as what I had left behind in Los Angeles. Not at all the haven I had longed for.

At one point during the garden party, Irene said out loud, "*Israël est un désert*" (Israel is a desert). Well, this was quite a hint. Unfortunately, Gentle Reader, I, your Friend and Humble Narrator, could not rise to the occasion (and would not for decades to come).

Partly because of the distinctly unfriendly reception from Persio's friend, whose behavior I could not fathom (we had never previously met), my mind became somewhat affected. I withdrew from the dinner table, pulled out a book I had brought and read for a while, later returning. Then, as the party wound down, I took it upon myself to suggest to Irene and Mother that we leave. Persio agreed. Quite confused and deeply upset emotionally, I left the party on pretty bad terms with the hostess, who refused to say goodbye to me.

Back in Florence, when getting out of the car just a few yards from the apartment, Persio seemed upset, I walked next to my sister and said to her in English, "Let's go home" – meaning the United States. As we walked on the narrow sidewalk past an old man sitting, doing nothing, oddly enough, on a motorbike at the curb, Irene made me repeat myself. After the unpleasantness, I made sure to avoid any social gatherings for the rest of my stay. What could have been the source of the hostess's immediate, unrelenting hostility and contempt for me that day?

## A Nervous Breakdown

I was out for a walk, late one evening. Coming home along a side street very near the via Romana, I noticed two people – clean-looking but otherwise nondescript – leaning against a building, speaking American-accented English. As I walked by, paying no attention to me, one said to the other, "If he comes back to the States, they'll have his balls." At that very moment, as I walked past them, an Italian, in his thirties perhaps, walked briskly past me. None of the three of them ever looked at me or spoke in my direction. The impact of this "skit" (see the glossary) on me was immediate and significant. I rushed back to the apartment, went to the bedroom where Irene and her husband were sleeping, and related what has happened. As usual, their reaction was bland; they, especially Irene, were blasé about the whole thing. I got the impression that this was yet another tiresome interruption by me, no more. Days later, I spoke with Victor Morton in Los Angeles by phone several times as I slid into another nervous breakdown. It was then that I realized that not only was Italy not the haven I had hoped for, but that I was not wanted back in America, either. They took me to a mental health clinic where I was seen as an outpatient regularly for several weeks. Receiving medication and therapy, I was not hospitalized.

As my stay in Italy grew longer, one of my concerns became to not overstay my visa. I became worried about this and tried to find out what the regulations were. The head of the

clinic tried to reassure me on that score. I was not quite satisfied with the answers I was getting. I managed to spend seven months in Italy without ever understanding what the rules were – although I was (repeatedly) given to understand that Italy was very understanding about these things and that it was inconceivable that there would be any problems for me. While at the clinic, I was seen once, briefly, by an American psychiatrist (possibly an academic at a university on the West Coast) who, I think, confirmed the diagnosis of manic depressive illness and gave me the name of a psychiatrist in Los Angeles.

Sometime after my breakdown, my sister informed me that she had prevailed upon her husband to sponsor me for residency; she was not yet an Italian citizen. I agreed to leave the United States permanently; at the time, I was still very fragile emotionally and had never before considered such an option. Irene questioned me as to how long it would take for me to return to Los Angeles, pack my belongings, ship them to Persio's father's house, and return to Florence permanently. She seemed anxious. Since she and I did not communicate much about anything and given the peculiar situation, I really did not know what precipitated her offer. I called Colette, then in Idaho on vacation, to tell her that I was leaving the United States permanently.

It took some time for me to recover my mind. When I finally did, I clearly remember standing in front of a mirror in the bathroom one day, looking at myself, and saying: "I've done nothing wrong, I will not be driven out. I'm going back." It was also then that, living an intense moment in that bathroom, I vowed to never permanently leave the United States unless: in handcuffs, in a straitjacket, or feet first.

I soon began wondering if it might not prove more difficult for me to return to the United States than it had been to leave. For a moment, I actually tried to hide my passport from Irene. There was, though, some delay in obtaining a return ticket; in fact, it took several months – the ostensible reason being a lack of funds on Persio's part, my sister having none of her own. Regrettably, it never occurred to me to try to contact Father.

A question regarding this episode has nagged at me for several years: with so much effort expended in driving me out of this country (and with so many reasons to have me leave permanently, given what I knew and given the failure of the program of intoxication I had been subjected to): why was my return to the United States countenanced? Was some kind of deal reached between the interested parties? And if so, what was the nature of this deal?

In the fall of 1995, I returned to the United States. I remember Persio as an intellectual, quiet, nice man and decent, except that, at times, he seemed perhaps a bit contemptuous of me. During my stay, I never had dealings of any kind with the Italian authorities, including the police. The same was true of any subsequent visits I have made to either Italy, Britain (transit only), or France.

Soon after my arrival, after things had settled into a more or less consistent pattern of gaslighting on Irene's part, she, Persio, and I were at a roadside café, where all the seats were occupied. The three of us were having an espresso at the counter when a woman, also standing, said, "Ring." Then, in English, she said, "Thank you." My sister turned, looked at me, and said nothing. Persio, the same.

After a few moments, another incident. The three of us were standing in a cluster in the middle of the café, talking. Suddenly, a man heading straight for us walked between us without deviating or saying anything, and continued on his way as if nothing had happened. No words were exchanged. My sister looked at me, again, and said nothing – which I interpreted as an appeal to do nothing as the man brushed past us. I have just now had the thought as I am writing this that this was a reenactment of the scene in 1988 in front of the Santa Monica Public Library, where I was arrested.

Third incident, still in the café: As we left, a woman, possibly from the first incident, followed Irene as she walked out, walking very close behind her, and rather ostentatious about it. Demonstrative surveillance of a very obvious kind. My sister affected not to notice.

These three incidents occurred within a space of ten minutes. Aside from exchanging silent glances, none of us commented. For Irene, perhaps, a sample of the bitter bread of exile. For me, just another instance of gaslighting, courtesy of my own sister (and Government).

In the early days of my stay, as I feverishly attempted to recount my catastrophic life in Los Angeles, Irene stonewalled me completely. To my dismay and confusion, other odd things began happening in seeming synchronization with events in the apartment. She and I would argue, then the phone would ring – once. A bit later, or perhaps the following day, it would ring again, once. When I questioned her about this, she passed them off as "crank calls."

## A Break-in (Hot Prowl Burglary) While We are Home

I got into the habit of watching TV till late at night. One night, I went to my bathroom, leaving lights and TV on, and lay down on the floor with no light on, I don't know why. The layout of the apartment was such that one would enter through a door near the middle, unseen by anyone in the front, where the TV is, or the rear, where Irene and Persio's bedroom was located. My bathroom was close to the front door and I was lying there on the floor, my head resting on a pillow. The pillow, on the bare wood floor was almost blocking the door which was ajar – six inches or more. As I lay there resting, I sensed the bathroom door move a bit and then stop as it reached the resistance of the pillow. I clearly remember this. I thought that the door movement might be the result of a wind gust, but I also realized that someone, not expecting to find me there, might have met the resistance of the pillow and quickly withdrawn. I was too afraid to move, let alone investigate. As I wrote this in 2013-2014, it was the first time I had divulged it anywhere, to anyone.

## Quotes

### Irene

I walked by her as she sat on the sofa next to her husband and, as I leaned close to her, she quietly said one word: "Plastic." Even in my confused and distraught state, I immediately understood the meaning. Someone, whoever it was, had some negative information about her, likely regarding her use of credit cards.

As briefly mentioned earlier, in the first days following my arrival in Italy, I was still keyed up and, one evening, I attempted to explain to both of them that I felt I had been railroaded. In some detail, I explained the events with the dead rats to Irene. Presumably, this was the first time she and Persio had heard the story. Her immediate, reflexive comment with no attempt to probe or clarify what would be, in any normal situation, a shocking revelation, was, "But you were very sick at the time." Not quite the response I had hoped for. I was frustrated. I felt stonewalled. Gaslit again.

I once heard a comment, shouted in English, from the courtyard of the building, "What do I have to do to get rid of these people?" Irene blandly commented, "Oh, there are some American neighbors here." Gaslighting.

Before my return to Los Angeles, after I had decided to come back, Irene, one day: (suddenly, apropos nothing) says: "if they hurt him" or "do anything to him" (I am not sure which), "I'll write a letter." To which Persio, in another room, replies: "But will you sign it?"

Toward the end of my stay, I began keeping notes, scribbled on paper, on floppy disks, etc. My sister, one evening, as I was writing away, upstairs in the loft, says, loudly, apropos nothing: "Your precious notes may get you killed!" A statement never elaborated on. Perhaps no elaboration whatever is necessary.

### **Persio Dello Sbarba**

About Persio's comment on the way to Florence from the airport: in my then state, the obvious meaning of his words do not penetrate. My immediate thought is that he is suggesting that whatever Epstein and Dubrow can do, the Government can do more. Conclusion being that I should go to them to lodge a complaint. The obvious meaning of his words escape me. I managed to misunderstand it, twisting a plain statement so, and thus thinking that he meant I should turn to the American Government for help. A clear illustration of my characteristic protective stupidity. By the way, Persio's brief comment is the closest anyone has come, ever, to explaining to me my true predicament – with the possible exception of my former therapist, Victor Morton.

At one point, during the first days of my stay, her husband in an ironic aside, said, as he was positioning some track lighting in the living room, "We have to get the other light out." Irene replies with an Italian vulgarity.

The three of us are visiting *Volterra*, Persio's hometown. In front of a large fortification dating back to the middle-ages, currently used as a maximum-security prison, Persio takes a picture of the two of us and makes a joke about the both of us belonging there ourselves. Irene, crossly, replies something in Italian.

Before their departure for Austria, Irene had cautioned me not to speak to Mother about what she called my "personal life." When I persisted in doing so, she suggested that I communicate via my laptop, by typing (in my opinion, not much of an improvement). Which I did, telling mother, briefly, what had been happening: that I thought that two Jewish owners of the business I last worked at were behind these serious, continuing events. I also went into some details about the information they were using against me – including details of some of my sexual practices. In this, I was quite explicit. In her seventies at the time, Mother had never been terribly sophisticated or knowing. Hoping to demonstrate to her the seriousness and depth of my predicament, the precision of the information being spread about me, I mentioned quite a lot of detail including mention of a sexual practice known as fisting. Mother, of course, could not make heads or tails of what I was attempting to convey. She remained incredulous throughout. I believe Irene, on her return from a trip to Austria with Persio, may also have proceeded to undermine my credibility for good measure. I also think Persio took some interest in what had transpired between Mother and me in their absence, going so far as to test Mother during one dinner to see if I had broached this particular subject. When he did, predictably enough, she gave an involuntary reaction when tested, thus telegraphing to him that I had confided in her to a great extent. Irene was present during this exchange but made no comment.



## CHAPTER 9

### After Florence: Part 1 – Father’s Move to LA, His Subsequent Death

#### I Resume Contact with Father

Though it took until the fall of 1995, I eventually returned to Los Angeles and was met at the airport by Colette. Once again, and for some time after, I would share her apartment with her. I also resumed my monitor business. I seem to remember much of this period as a quiet time, so quiet that I occasionally felt there was nothing in particular going on. I remember, though, that Colette would sometimes probe – to determine if I noticed any unusual activity. I would occasionally see my friends, Oscar Revey and Janusz Hetman.

Sometime after my return, I was introduced to a friend of Colette’s, Beth Wolfson, someone she had been to college with. They met again, by chance, apparently, on the beach in Santa Monica and renewed their friendship.

Eventually, I settled into a studio I could afford near West Los Angeles. From the realtor who had rented me a garage to store my belongings in before leaving for Italy, I also rented a small work area nearby, to which I transferred my equipment and inventory.

Being perpetually short of funds, uncomfortable with my dependence on Irene, and hoping for a reconciliation, I eventually decided to contact Father. I finally managed to do so through his sister, though she, on several occasions, had told me that she did not know how to contact him – the two of them being estranged. Somehow, one day, she managed to get me his number. I quickly called, finding him on the verge of moving out of his apartment in Pennsylvania. At the time, I thought it a curious coincidence.

After a brief conversation, he immediately arranged to have his personal belongings trucked to Los Angeles, and took a train out to be with me. Three days later, Colette picked him up at Union Station downtown and, after a few hours at her apartment, I brought him to my single unit in West Los Angeles. Then began the struggle to get him settled.

Having brought no identification with him, he found it nearly impossible to open a bank account. The banker we spoke with finally did open an account – but, as I later learned, in my name. I had Father’s funds transferred and then, when his ID and papers reached him, the same banker transferred the funds to Father’s account. I was, at that time, in frequent contact with my sister. Over the course of one of our conversations, she strongly urged me to keep control of the money. This was in the late 1990s, when Irene was still married to Persio. She sounded quite emphatic about the need to keep control of the money. I refused.

The Wells Fargo banker I dealt with, a man in his forties, would actually come out to my apartment, and was extremely helpful in settling Father’s various money problems. I cannot speak too highly of him.

I began taking Father to UCLA Medical Center for checkups, which eventually led to some minor surgery. I could not, though, untangle the various reasons for his breathing tube and other treatments he had received while in Pennsylvania. Contacting his doctor in New York who, among other things, spoke of my father’s mental condition, I still could not elucidate much in the way of reasons for his trachea tube and previous minor surgeries. Eventually, I arranged for him to have additional medical procedures at UCLA hospital as he was covered by Medicare. He had had half of his vocal cords cut, possibly to prevent him from choking – a problem I mentioned previously, which had plagued him for as long as I could remember.



He and I went once to see my psychiatrist who, after interviewing him, concluded that Father was in reasonably good mental condition for a man of his age. Later, I was to speak of my increasing desperation at being unable to cope as he was, at times, difficult and I was not in the best of mental health myself. During a visit to UCLA, for example, one member of the staff, commenting on the obvious difficulties I was having with him, said: "Not everyone would do this."

I had tried to get him to take medication to calm himself, as he was often agitated, and the meds would put me in a better position to take care of him. My psychiatrist, unfortunately, could not prescribe anything to calm the agitation. For this reason, I began feeling an increasing level of panic, which I could not control.

It was around this time that a former coworker, Bob Patel, visited me in my single. During a return visit to his business, he told me that "Reuven is dead." He was referring to my former friend, Reuven Levy. I found this quite upsetting as it was Reuven's address that I had falsely instructed my accountant to use as my place of residence.

## I Find Father an Apartment in My Building

My apartment became too cramped with my father living with me, so I decided to find him his own place, close to me, and preferably with shopping and a hospital nearby. Since my area was ideal, we found him a two-bedroom in my building. I do not remember the circumstances, but he soon moved in, and I visited him from time to time. What follows is somewhat hazy.

We had loud arguments in my bungalow, at least on my part, as his voice had become very soft due to the operation on his vocal cords. One day, he came out of the bathroom wearing only underwear as I was attempting to deal with a customer. He would go to bed late, sometimes at 4:00 a.m., after having done dishes. I would object to his conduct, but to no avail. I had tried to mend fences with him; I had tried to care for him. But it only led to another suicide attempt on my part. Over the weeks, I became increasingly panicked, and suffocated with fear.

Desperate and unable to reason with him, I canceled his upcoming surgery and left him alone, one morning, in my apartment. I remember his last words to me as I walked out: "Bergendahl, come here!" Leaving him in the apartment with the front door open, I made my way to a nearby police station to see if there was any help available for dealing with him. A curt reply let me know there would be no help forthcoming from that quarter. I then retreated to my shop in Whittier, camping there for days, sometimes calling Irene for updates and advice. She was not surprised that things had turned out this way. Then, from my shop, I arranged to transfer Father's funds to his own account. After his surgery, I spoke with a service person from the hospital who tried to persuade me to pick him up and take him back to my apartment. I refused, saying he was too difficult. She then agreed to keep him an extra day. He had apparently, on his own, reinstated the appointment I canceled and got a ride to the hospital at UCLA. It was sometime during this period that I attempted suicide.

I threw away my passport, my diary of three volumes, and every one of my family pictures – all of it contained in a green leather folder. I did not want him to find them after my suicide, fearing he would use the information to track down Irene as he had threatened to do before. I drove to the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, to what is known as "Suicide Bridge," and waited there most of the afternoon. Late that night, I went over the top of the parapet and, hanging on, with my feet on an outside ledge and my arms behind me holding onto the concrete, I stood there lingering over the edge, hesitating. After changing my mind, I managed to claw my way back to the sidewalk side of the parapet, get back to my car, and return to Whittier. The sequence of

events around this time is necessary sketchy and disordered, although all events related here occurred as I describe them.

## "Meet Cute" of Gail Hooks' Daughter with Father

After my return to the apartment, Father mentioned that he had met a young woman at the supermarket nearby. She introduced him to her mother, Gail Hooks, who managed an apartment complex. He told me he had become unhappy with the landlord in our building because of the three-day notices that had been posted in my absence. The new apartment in a much larger complex nearby was a one-bedroom – smaller but otherwise comparable to the one I had found him. His move was no surprise to me, as I knew of his perpetual dissatisfaction and his intolerance for any kind of perceived ill treatment. Gail Hooks, of course, managed Father's new building, where I visited him occasionally. I very much wanted to talk to him, which was one of the reasons for my having reached out to him in Pennsylvania. Another reason was, as I previously mentioned, my chronic shortage of money. In this he was always willing to be helpful, although, in the end, he rarely was. On the contrary, the disruptions his behavior caused compromised my ability to take care of my work and obligations. Several times I tried to initiate a conversation, needing someone onto whom I could unburden myself. I was tense, often afraid, frustrated. I could see, though, that he was no longer his old self, that he had become slightly demented. When I mentioned this to Irene, she told me that I should not discuss "personal matters" with him. I agreed.

Some months after his move, he left his new apartment for a two-month cruise around the world. Together with Colette, I went to see him on the day of his departure, but I had missed him by a few hours. All his belongings had been put into storage and the apartment was empty. I never saw him again.

I last heard about him from security at LAX airport some months later, someone called me at home one evening, telling me Father had just landed, was ill and wanted me to pick him up. I refused. The guard insisted, saying Father was very sick. I did not relent and left him to his fate. I was told later he was hospitalized for pneumonia. He died some months later, having spent some of his remaining months in an apartment in the building managed by the same Gail Hooks.

While living in my studio, I would drive to Seattle from time to time to visit Colette's brother, Marc. On the way, I sometimes made a detour to see Tom Ellsberg who had a business in Bend, Oregon. At first, Tom would invite me to his house, and later, he would instead put me up, at his expense, at a local hotel/motel. Still later, I no longer stayed overnight; I simply visited with him for a few hours at a coffee shop. On one occasion, Tom mentioned that he knew a lawyer in the Bay area whom he respected. I did not comment. On another occasion, Tom asked me straight out: "Do you want to see a lawyer?" I immediately replied no, without elaborating. He never brought it up again. I was simply too afraid to take up his suggestion and offer, kind (heroic, more likely) though it was. Cowardice and shame, shame and cowardice.

In Seattle, there were occasional, odd occurrences at Colette's brother's house. I was once outside of the residence when some of his neighbors from across the street – two or three young people in their twenties – began drawing attention to themselves by gesturing and talking loudly, laughing, and saying: "Go back to work, go back to work." Though I did discuss many details of my peculiar situation with him, Colette's brother commented little. This was not the point of my visits, though. I simply wanted to get away for a while from the atmosphere in Los Angeles. Gas was cheap at the time, and I enjoyed driving. During those

dark days, the time it took me to drive from Los Angeles to Seattle was the only time I ever felt free. Perhaps, for a moment, I was.

Sometimes in Seattle I went alone to a nearby coffee shop for a few hours. On one occasion, I was having coffee when an elderly couple sitting at a table near me said in a clear voice: "FBI." I distinctly heard it. They had not previously made themselves noticeable, never spoke to me, and said nothing I could hear afterwards. This was upsetting as I had previously been talking to Marc about my troubles. I had even mentioned to him the possibility of contacting the FBI about these peculiar problems that I still felt originated with David Epstein and Sound Solutions.

One time, upon reaching Seattle around midnight at the end of a twenty-hour drive from Los Angeles, he immediately took me to a bar for a drink. A seat opened up next to a young woman at the bar, and I sat down. Without much ado, she began placing her hand on my leg as well as possibly making suggestive remarks. Not feeling quite comfortable, yet not suspicious of anything specific, I said something about mercenary attitudes. She and her friend quickly got up and left. Colette's brother later commented: "That could have been nice for the evening." Indeed, but for whom?

## Unbeknownst to Me, I am Given Cocaine to Transport

Unfortunately for me, my occasional visits to Seattle had been noticed. A customer in LA, a student at Cal Poly Pomona, upon hearing me say that I sometimes drove to Seattle, asked me to deliver a monitor to a "friend" of his who lived just a few miles off the freeway in Shasta County. I agreed to conduct the sale and visit the man, who was middle-aged and lived in a trailer close to a freeway off-ramp. A number of disturbing events were to follow.

After welcoming me, he took me to his PC and I began the sale and installation. At one point, looking at the screen, I noticed some text in Italian. I did not read more than a sentence or so, and do not now remember any of the content. On screen, there were also some pornographic images, mostly of men. He explained to me that he was repairing this computer for a customer, a woman. I did not ask any questions, though I was puzzled about the text, finding it odd that someone so far in the countryside should be able to read Italian. After the installation, we agreed that I would stop by to check on the monitor on my way back.

Some days later, I did so. It was then, as I was about to leave, that he handed me a letter-sized envelope, sealed, with some handwriting on the outside. He asked me to take it back to his student "friend" at Cal Poly, saying it was a present. I agreed to do so and put the envelope in my backpack. At the time, I thought nothing of it. But, on the drive, the possible contents of the envelope began weighing on my mind. Once back at Colette's in Santa Monica, I told her of the envelope and we decided to open it. Inside, we found some powder and pinkish or gray granules. I immediately called the Santa Monica Police Department as well as the Cal Poly student. I was angry when I told him what I had found. He was apologetic.

I asked the police to come to the apartment before leaving for Seattle again. Either the police or Colette later informed me by phone that the contents were, indeed, cocaine. From Seattle, I called the Santa Monica police again. They told me that they wanted to talk to me after my return. I never contacted them. While I was away, an officer had come to Colette's apartment to collect the open envelope for testing. In the months to come I would frequently bring up this event. First with Colette, then with her brother in Seattle, then Colette's father, my sister – anyone really. I never heard again from either of the two men associated with the envelope or from the Santa Monica Police Department.

Sometime after my return, during my stay in the studio, Irene told me she had begun seeing an older American woman, originally from the Bay area. I believe Irene told me she was Jewish. They had apparently met in Florence, where the woman lived semi-permanently. As I mentioned previously, she also had a house in Palo Alto. Still under the delusion that Epstein/Dubrow/Sound Solutions were the source of my problems, I was suspicious of Irene's new acquaintance and may have told her so.

One day at a swap meet, a supplier I knew and liked made a gesture I interpreted as supportive of me in my predicament, adding something like: "Tell them to fuck off!" I distinctly felt he was referring to the people who were harassing me, which at the time, I still thought were Epstein and Dubrow. I was quietly grateful.

Not long after this incident I got a strange call from him at my shop in Whittier. He apologized repeatedly, although I was unaware of any offense on his part. I then realized that it was not to me he was apologizing, but to whomever might be listening in on our conversation. This was a leap on my part, but I now feel it was quite accurate. We spoke a bit longer on the phone before hanging up. He later told me he had had to take a regular job after his business failed and he was forced to pay out a large sum of money to someone whose car had been damaged by a forklift driven by one of his employees. This incident wiped out his working capital, forcing him to close his business.

Her name was Ivanka Fernandez, and she called me looking to buy a monitor. Our dealings became more frequent, and I was to eventually move into the apartment complex she managed. Before moving in, I met with my new landlord at a coffee shop, who warned me about her, saying she had an "unsettled" life. Unfortunately for me, I ignored his warnings.

A former customer who had bought several monitors from me when I lived in San Gabriel contacted me about a project for his company in Santa Monica. Eventually, I was hired for some technical work and, after about a year, a review of my design work pronounced it successful.

One day, while at work on that project in Santa Monica, I called my friend Oscar, who began a curious monologue about Jews and Buenos Aires, his hometown. He then engaged, for no apparent reason, in a long discourse about the Jewish kids he had frequented in high school, saying things like: "We always treated them well." I was surprised and made no comment. Also curious was his tone of voice – almost plaintive and apologetic. In the past, though we had covered almost every subject under the sun, we had never touched on this particular topic. Sometime later, my boss came into my office and seemed to make an oblique between-the-lines comment about what had happened – to the effect that: "This was a wise thing to do." I was left with no doubt as to the reference.

During the time I worked there, my boss was always affable, and I believe we got along well. At times, I did, of course, discuss my obsessions with him and may have mentioned David Epstein. On another occasion, after I had told him I suspected my phone was tapped, he offered to put me in touch with people at the phone company. I turned him down.

One day, before the contract started, I was with a customer in Hollywood, selling a monitor, when I began getting a flurry of pages. All very similar numbers, variations on a theme. None of the numbers led anywhere, except for one variation which I had to figure out for myself, as not all digits were present. That number led directly, without going through a switchboard, to a phone at a desk in the office where my boss worked. Not knowing whom I was calling, I identified myself and said I had received a page from that number. Eventually, he and I discussed this odd event in full. Incredulous as to how it happened, he asked me to recall the number. Of course, I found the whole event unsettling psychologically. This is a typical example of the types of seemingly inexplicable occurrences I've been living with for decades.

Sometimes at work, a funny feeling would come over me, a feeling that there were things going on behind my back. An instance of this was when, one morning, my boss rushed into my room, and stared intently at my computer screen – as though looking for something. He then left abruptly, having said little or nothing. There were other odd moments immediately after these incidents – things I could not put my finger on, but which set me on edge. Whatever had happened, if anything, was never explained to me.

## Another Suicide Attempt

I was still living in my single apartment when, one day, a customer in the Hollywood Hills requested several visits with me to install monitors. He and his sister ran a home-based business with a bank of monitors installed in a room off to the side of the living room.

Over the course of a few visits, I met a young man, perhaps thirty years old, who introduced himself as an Indonesian dissident, living abroad. He said he had been in jail and had indeed shared a cell with *Ananta Pramoedya Toer*, an author I was then, coincidentally, reading. I did not question the plausibility of this claim, although, at the time, *Toer* was already an old man. During one of our conversations, he mentioned he had, here in the United States, met with an Indonesian intelligence operative and discussed the political situation in his country. On a subsequent visit, asking about him, I was told he had mysteriously disappeared.

Months later, this same customer came to my single unit (#9), bringing with him a PC which he said needed work, and which he left with me. Some hours later, upon his return, he asked to leave the front door open. We were both standing at my bench, near the door, while I worked on his computer. Next door to me in unit #10 lived a number of young Black people, with a little girl among them. As I was repairing my customer's machine, I began to hear, through that open door, what seemed like the sounds of sexual intercourse coming from next door – cries of either pleasure or pain; I wasn't sure which. The cries were that of a young voice and went on for some time with no comment from the customer or from myself. I finished part of the repair and, when the customer asked for additional work, I refused. He paid me, and left. Throughout this incident, neither of us referred to the sexual sounds coming from next door. I was very upset by them, and in the aftermath mentioned them to no one.

Slowly, in the following days, I began to lose my mind. As I sank into psychosis, I began hearing voices. I remember sitting one night at my table with the window open, listening. I'm not sure if the voices were real or not; they were faint and seemed to come from outside my window, with some occasional peremptory commands. At some point, one voice said: "Go to bed." I complied. This had never happened to me before. The next day, I decided to kill myself. As I was walking to a nearby mall, I passed two people standing on the sidewalk. One said something about a gun. Neither of them looked at me as I walked by.

The following sequence of events is not chronological. The passage of time and my confusion during those hours make it difficult to properly order events in their actual sequence. The events themselves, though, are quite vividly fixed in my mind.

I remember reaching out desperately to my sister in Florence, and spoke with her by phone at least once. All she could do was to urge me to take my medication. During this time, I visited the company in Santa Monica, and spoke to the owner in the lobby, paranoid and confused. Before long, a woman in a white, pleated dress I recognized as being associated with Encore Video, a company I had previously been employed by, came up to him, abruptly ending the conversation.

A day or more later, on a weekend, I felt well enough to go to a farmers' market in Santa Monica. Returning home, I began feeling bad again. After a pause in which I remember

beginning to write a statement (perhaps the beginning of an autobiography), I left in my car, and wandered down Venice Boulevard, hearing voices, I think, telling me to kill people – Jewish people. I headed toward Santa Monica, intending to see Colette, when I decided not to involve her in my problems. Instead, I turned the car around and stopped at a public phone booth to call the police. They asked me my name, and I explained I was not well and requested a ride to a hospital. Although I was directed to one nearby, I went instead to the Kaiser Permanente Hospital on Cadillac Avenue, leaving my car illegally parked in front of the emergency entrance. Inside, I discussed my mental state with a woman who requested a urine sample, and asked that I wait for a psychiatrist. After what seemed like too long a time, I walked out without having been seen by anyone.

Getting back into my car, I noticed a parking ticket under the windshield wiper. I managed to drive onto the 10 freeway, but, for some reason, turned off at the Overland exit, where I left the car in the middle of the off-ramp. On foot, I went out over the freeway, clinging to the chain-link fence. Once I got over the lanes of traffic, I jumped, without hesitation, narrowly missing a car, and landing on the freeway. As I lay there crippled, a man appeared, identifying himself as a rabbi, and asked if he could help. Within a matter of minutes, an ambulance arrived. The first words of the paramedic were: "He landed on his feet; he'll walk again." According to the watch I was wearing, which was frozen by the shock of my landing, the time was about 5:00 p.m.

## Hospitalized for Six Months

Shortly thereafter, I found myself on a gurney somewhere at UCLA Medical Center, raving that I was not a pedophile, with several people standing around hearing my rant. Sometime later, when it was likely dark, and perhaps after surgery for my broken back, I was placed in a small room. I asked the attending nurse for paper and pen, and when I was handed a notepad, I began writing a plea for help – asking that the ACLU and other organizations be contacted on my behalf. I listed several of those organizations by name. When I ran out of words, the nurse took the paper from me. Within a few days, I had visits from a couple of lawyers, who asked if I wished to speak to them. When I refused, they left without another word. Sometime during my three-day stay, feeling alone and despondent, I asked a young female doctor to hold my hand. When she shrank back, a witness to this moment offered his hand, instead. I refused.

During this time, I complained of hallucinations and psychosis and my request for medications was filled. One doctor, a woman perhaps in her thirties with a Persian surname, asked me if I had any knives or guns. I answered affirmatively to the first, and in the negative to the second. Eventually, I provided Colette's name as a contact. When she came to visit soon after, I threw part of my body cast at her to chase her away. She came back in the next day or so, and we began speaking. She also told me that she had retrieved my car and that there had been no impound charge. I had assumed Irene was frantic with worry, and, in trying to get news of my whereabouts, had probably contacted Colette.

Besides sustaining a broken back in my jump from the overpass, I had also broken my feet, making it forever impossible for me to run. Walking has also become somewhat difficult. My broken back recovered nicely, with no resulting paralysis. From UCLA, I was transferred to Harbor-UCLA Hospital for about a week. The remainder of my six months of hospitalization I spent in a convalescent hospital, where Colette visited me fairly frequently.

For the first time since the late eighties, Irene came to the US for a visit – and with a new boyfriend, Alberto Zucchini, in tow. From what I heard much later, sometime prior to my suicide attempt, Persio had left her. At the time, I had had no inkling of problems between

them. Irene and her boyfriend stayed for over a week, visiting me daily. Then, he left town to attend to other business. During her daily visits, Irene and I never discussed my suicide in any aspect, not did we go into the causes or surrounding events. Instead, she filled out an application for disability on my behalf. By the time she returned to Italy, the application had been completed, and, several months later, after I was evaluated by several doctors, it was approved.

In spite of the sinister events of the previous several months, the time I spent at the convalescent hospital was so uneventful that, again, I was left thinking there was nothing going on – not even the business with what I (still) believed was the Sound Solutions crew.

## Released from the Hospital, I Try to Contact Oscar

After being hospitalized for a total of six months, I was released early the next year. I returned to my single apartment and took up monitor sales again. The technical project I had worked on for a year in Santa Monica had, in the meantime, been canceled following some sort of equipment failure, unrelated to my design.

I called Oscar on numerous occasions, leaving messages which he never answered. I was to never see him again. Dr. Michelle Shelley Hurt, his ex-girlfriend, later told me he had begun isolating himself in his last years, would see only her, and spoke to no one else. Oscar died in 2003 of burns suffered during a fire in his Santa Monica apartment, a consequence of smoking in bed, according to her. In the mid-2000s, after she informed me of his death, I tried to befriend her. She seemed to rebuff my advances, once implying that I had problems with my character.

Beginning in late 1998, sometime after my release from the convalescent hospital, and until early 2010, I saw a series of psychiatrists at the Edelman Mental Health Center in West Los Angeles, where I was prescribed medication.

Through my former boss in Santa Monica, I met a small businessman located in Whittier and, with the help of Janusz, began to work on a controller for his business. This was when, on the strength of this work and the potential income, I moved into a bigger apartment, in the building managed by Ivanka Fernandez. Sometime after the move, the project was canceled. The news came as a surprise and left me in a precarious financial state.

Just before my suicide attempt, and after I walked out of the Kaiser Permanente Hospital emergency room, I noticed a parking ticket on my windshield, which I mentioned earlier. I never paid it; neither was there ever a charge for it. Colette informed me that, after I abandoned it at the off-ramp prior to my suicide jump, the car had not been impounded – or, at least, there was no impound charge. Neither did I ever have to pay for the ticket.

At one point while I was at UCLA, lying in bed, disturbed, with injuries to my feet and a broken back on which I had just had surgery, I raised my hand in the so-called Hitlerian salute to a male orderly or nurse. For several seconds, he did not seem to notice. Finally, he turned to me and answered a question I had posed. This was the gesture that Dennis Allard, a friend I was to meet a decade later, alluded to when, one day at his house, he briefly raised his arm in the Hitler salute – hinting that, were I to proceed with my planned book, this gesture might be used one day to embarrass me.

I have seen this gesture made in various locations by people I never saw before. For example, my longtime friend, Janusz Hetman, delights in using it as we greet each other, sometimes adding the phrase "Sieg Hi!" (sic) or "Sieg."

Sometime before my suicide attempt, I told Oscar I had left my fingerprints on a couple of guns. He did not seem to probe. On another occasion, I had, as previously noted, been telling

him about the odd events that had been going on in my life for some years. He seemed to want a confession from me. I repeated to him some of my misdeeds and remember that his reply was: "Is there anything else?" I asked him if he thought that the misunderstood remarks to David Epstein could warrant such an intrusion into my life. He said, "Maybe."

During the decades I knew him, I occasionally asked Oscar to give me his diagnosis of my mental condition. Although he felt I had a serious problem, he would reply that he was not sure and, seemingly groping for words, suggested that I had an authority problem and also that there was something missing in me – that I was "pretending" to participate or feel. He would not be more specific, other than that he felt there was something lacking in my emotions which I tried, but could not, compensate for or mask over.

My friends and acquaintances and business contacts to whom I spoke of this and other things continued withholding comment, invariably suggesting other, alternate explanations. Not a single person suggested the Government might be the real source, not a single person suggested I might be the victim of a false flag operation. That is, with the exception of Victor Morton, who once speculated aloud this might be the work of people trying to create problems between our "communities." Tom Ellsberg, as I have said previously, was also helpful, potentially *more* than helpful. Unfortunately, I was not swayed by the advice or hints of either of these two courageous, exceptional people.

Before this suicide attempt, I was seeing a psychiatrist at irregular intervals, when I could afford it. He and my sister shared the feeling that being self-employed was putting too much financial pressure on me, and that I should instead look for a paying job. I was quietly adamant. I would not be getting any "job."

### **"Meet Cute" with Hal Bright near San Diego**

A fellow student at Caltech, Hal majored in physics. Through him, I briefly met John Cunningham Lilly, the well-known dolphin researcher. Decades later, I accompanied Colette to a talk in the San Diego area. As she and I sat together, he sat down next to me. He never looked at me; we never exchanged words. Colette had no comment to make, either. I never saw him again.

I heard a number of small comments, mysterious in nature, from Ted Fay, the man I worked for during my time on the technical project in Santa Monica. He once said to the owner, almost as an aside, and ostensibly referring to something in a cupboard: "That's yours, isn't it?" The owner, David Rose, shot him back a dirty look and walked away. On another occasion, he stood near me in my office, having been talking about something or other – maybe the owner or his son. At one point, he leaned in close to me, and, in a soft tone, said: "Jew" or, perhaps, "Jews."

After some months at that company, I began wondering why someone was trying to get me to work full-time, which was very much against my wishes. I became obsessed with this thought, went to the owner, and told him I was leaving. As I was loading my car, I passed a woman at the front entrance. In her thirties, she was loading some kids into a Range Rover. As I walked past her, I overheard her say: "Give him a blow job, perhaps – but not a job." These were her exact words – again, words leaving me puzzled, angry, and destabilized psychologically. I said nothing.

## Provocations of an Ugly Sort



**Two ugly, gratuitous, and senseless provocations by Jewish customers (certainly scripted, in my opinion)**

In addition to various odd occurrences as I went about my day, I also had to contend with customers either in my apartment or at their location, saying/doing odd things. One such event was with a woman who ran an organization called something like The Friends of Israel Jewish Museum. The woman was in her fifties, a PhD, and employed a secretary in the front office. I sold her a monitor and installed it successfully. The last time I saw her, as she stood close to me, she said one word in a low but distinct voice: "Nigger." I was upset not only by the comment but, perhaps more, by the randomness of it and its senselessness, as, up till then, she and I had had good relations. I said nothing.

Eventually, her secretary also bought a monitor from me. I visited her at her apartment near where I lived, and she paid me by check. A few days later, she called me in an odd state. I only remember her agitation, not the substance of the conversation. It was likely about some work or item of mine that was not satisfactory and for which she, therefore, stopped payment on the check – maybe twenty dollars or so. Months later, she called me back to take care of some other computer-related problems. I obliged her, and this time, things went smoothly. I never saw her again.

A second such senseless comment by a customer near the airport, located in a building adjacent to the Westin Hotel on the south side of Century Boulevard, behind a large building. As I was sitting and working on his computer, after an uneventful interaction lasting perhaps half an hour, he approached me from behind and whispered in my ear: "Nigger." I said nothing and continued working as though nothing had happened. Sometime later, my work finished, he paid me and I left without further incident. One of his last comments, probably also whispered: "I am a Jew." I, again, said nothing.

## CHAPTER 10

### After Florence: Part 2 – I Learn of Father's Death

#### I Move to a Nearby Apartment and Get a Contract for Computer Work

After my move to the two-bedroom apartment in the building managed by Ivanka Fernandez, as I had previously been unaccustomed to paying for utilities, I did not think it strange that I never received electric bills. When, months later, I finally checked, I found that my electricity was coming from an upstairs neighbor. Ivanka had added wiring to the building's electrical panel so that my electricity use was billed to him. I quickly arranged to pay him back in monthly installments and went to the power company. I distinctly remember, when I first moved in, having gone to the office in Westwood to establish service; yet, months later, I had to go through the whole process again. Checking with them, I found no trace of previous service in my name.

Around the time of the Second Gulf War, I got a contract to build a multimedia system for a health spa in the Los Angeles area. Working on the project in a lab in my two-bedroom apartment, I made one demonstration before I had another psychological crisis and became unable to finish the work.

#### Colette's Hysteria

Throughout the years, Colette had, with some notable exceptions – for which I suspect she was rather harshly punished – maintained that everything I was experiencing was a figment of my imagination. This passive attitude of hers continued until about 2002 or so when her posture changed from one of passive denial of what I was experiencing to one of active involvement in some of these peculiar events. This new mode of relating to me began after her return from a trip to Indiana, where her parents lived at the time. Having rented out her apartment in Santa Monica, she was now staying with me.

It was then that she began the strangely frightening habit of asking me, innocently, to accompany her to various seemingly innocuous locations. I generally complied and found that frequently strange and disturbing things would happen there – to me only. Colette was oddly unaffected and generally unconcerned. It was as though she and I, though in the same location, were experiencing different realities. Sometimes she would make comments in a detached manner as these odd, disturbing things were happening to me.

The first of these happened at the Culver City Julian Dixon Library, just before March 20, 2003. Colette asked me to accompany her, saying that we both needed to get forms for our income taxes. There, as I waited by the front desk while she picked up some forms, an odd thing happened. The librarian at the desk, an older woman, said abruptly something like: "Go" or "Start" or "Talk." At that same moment, a young girl, perhaps ten or twelve, quickly came out of a side room, walked by me, coughed, and exited the library. I became very uncomfortable and went to stand alone near the entrance, waiting for Colette. She eventually joined me, and at that moment, I noticed her looking at me intently.

Next, Colette took me on a whirlwind tour of some ordinary locations where what subsequently happened was anything but. In West Hollywood we went to a bookstore, the Bodhi Tree (no longer there), where we stayed for some time perusing the shelves. On our way I felt something odd was going on, but things did not really get underway until, upon leaving, Colette said she wanted to take a short walk up the street – which we did. Retracing our steps some minutes later, we walked by a man sitting on the steps of a house. At the exact moment he saw me pass by, he shouted: "I am a white man!" I was flabbergasted. This was more than incomprehensible, it was weird – as was Colette's reaction. I think, perhaps, she was observing me at that moment with a slight smile on her face. We then passed a couple standing on the opposite side of the residential street. She said to them: "Remember, you lost in Vietnam," or something like it. I was at a loss to explain what was going on. My stress level and fear shot up, and I began to feel odd.

Around that time, she asked me to go shopping with her at a Trader Joe's. I went along reluctantly. The first event there occurred when I noticed a man going into the store ahead of us, walking briskly, talking loudly into a cell phone as he passed us – in English, but with a pronounced Israeli accent – and saying things which were, to me, oddly disturbing. This was while I was still under the delusion that Epstein and company were responsible for instigating these strange, frightening events. Colette said something in the man's direction and he reacted briefly before continuing into the store. Throughout our shopping, Colette behaved oddly – in a way I had never witnessed. She would say things which seemed coldly ironic or had a double meaning, or were simply ambiguous. At times, she would calmly comment on my appearance, saying things like: "Berg, you look shell-shocked," or: "What is wrong with you?" All the while creating in me the very emotions she was commenting on and pretended to be surprised by. There also seemed to be comments from some of the store staff. Gaslighting.

Back at my apartment, with the accumulation of these events occurring in such a short period of time, I became highly stressed and asked Colette to leave. The resulting scene is one I will never forget. She refused to go, but I insisted, telling her I was not feeling well and wanted some time away from her. I did not broach the subject too closely or go into reasons. When I became adamant, she became hysterical. When I tried to remove her suitcase from the bedroom, she sat on it and began shrieking. I had never seen her like this, although I had known her for decades. When she began hitting me, I closed the door to keep her out of the bedroom, but she soon forced her way in. At times, she ran wildly throughout the apartment, screaming.

Eventually I called the police and two of them showed up. As Colette and I were both being interviewed separately, outside my apartment, one of the cops said to me in a low voice: "We'll get you your medication." Then, he continued his questioning as though nothing had been said. There was nothing explanatory, no preface – and I was left stunned. This brief interaction only further fueled my distress. Eventually the two of them left. Some time later, Colette also left peacefully. Two or three days later, after she and I had calmed down, I asked her to come back.

After her return to my apartment, she and I went shopping again in Hollywood. At one point, when we had been there for some time, I began seeing, crowding the aisles, several women with little girls in tow. Perhaps half a dozen of them appeared simultaneously from every direction. And there was Colette, nearby, observing me quietly. I found this highly upsetting but made no comment or showed much reaction. A few days earlier, during the interaction with the two policemen, I noticed she had not given them more than her first name, nor had they insisted. In fact, I don't remember either of us being asked for identification. As we waited in line, the checkout person said to the customer ahead of us: "You do not want to give your ID?" Colette overheard and reacted angrily. When our turn came, the checker said in my

direction: "Maybe you cannot make it work; maybe it is too hard?" I immediately thought of the project I was working on for the health spa, and began feeling even worse.

In the difficult period that followed, she and I visited my social worker, Maureen Cyr, at the Edelman Mental Health Center. For some years, I had been seeing her about my problems: social, work-related, and psychological. During one such discussion, after I had spoken of some of the strange events I was facing daily, Maureen Cyr asked if I were afraid. A curious question, I thought. I replied that I thought I was not sophisticated enough to know whether I should be afraid or not.

On this occasion, Colette told her that during her episode of hysteria, I had hit her, which was not so. In fact, Colette had frightened me by her unprecedented behavior, and it was she that struck one or more blows. I was left with the unenviable task of denying earnestly to the social worker that I had ever hit Colette. It would be interesting to see if, given that, during this visit, she accused me of hitting her, she had made the same accusations to the policemen who interviewed us a few days earlier. And if she had, why did they not arrest me on the spot?

Days after her attack of hysteria, after she had returned to her own apartment, I was home when she came to me one night, literally shaking. She had just had a minor car accident nearby and seemed unusually upset for something so trivial. After she calmed down, we discussed it. I remember nothing of the event except that it seemed minor.

During that time, in the buildup of activity for the Second Gulf War, Colette began traveling extensively, unusually so. She would go to the Bay area, to New Mexico, Oregon, etc. – claiming that she was able to travel for free on Southwest Airlines as a result of having been bumped from a number of flights.

One person she met during this period (at an airport, she told me) was Ajay Chaddha, a man, about thirty, from India. Ajay Chaddha held a PhD in physics, perhaps solid-state physics, from a school in the Northwest. After completing his degree, he was hired by Intel as a programmer. They saw each other for several years. The last time I heard Colette mention him was around 2013. It was after this relationship that she met her next boyfriend, Jon Howard, through an ad she had placed on Craigslist.

At the time, I shared a dial-up account with her. So that we were never both online at the same time, she would call my number and ring once to see if it was busy. This added to my disorientation as I would hear my phone line ringing randomly at any hour, day or night – at least until I got an explanation from her. Was this sheer idiocy on her part or calculated and ordered by her Masters?

## I View Child Pornography, Consequences Ensur

This incident is covered elsewhere, but it has particular relevance here: Sometime during this period, I began experiencing chest pain severe enough that I decided to have a stress test done at Harbor-UCLA Hospital. These symptoms began at home, after I had viewed an image of child pornography on USENET. Panicking, I disposed of the computer's hard disk in a trash bin at Albertson's, a nearby supermarket. Soon, I became afraid and paranoid. At one point, during a visit to his house, a PC repair customer, about 30 or so and likely of Persian background, asked if it were possible to remove data from a hard disk. I replied that, in my opinion, it was generally not possible. I felt some connection between his question and my disposal of my PC's disk drive. This may just have been paranoia, but is indicative of my state of mind at that time.

Not long after this, I had a minor car accident, mentioned in chapter 1. As a result of my having operated a vehicle without insurance while involved in an accident, I lost my license for a year, leaving me unable to drive.

Let me summarize here the above sequence of events:

1. I view illegal child pornography on my home computer.
2. Panicked about the possible consequences, I dispose of the hard disk in what I think is a secure fashion.
3. Soon thereafter, I have a car accident of a dubious nature, since the location of the damage does not match the height of my bumper.
4. Regardless, the other driver, Caroline Stroh, reports the accident to the DMV.
5. The DMV revokes my driver's license, since I do not have insurance.
6. I find myself without mobility for one year (later, extended to three, due to a lack of funds).

My conclusion: were it not for the timely and subtle involvement of what I imagine are my Masters around that time, I might not be so proud today, neither might I be speaking so freely...

Irene and Alberto would visit almost every summer. Alberto was generally pleasant and supportive, and once offered me some work designing a web site for his company. Irene did not work, although she often accompanied him on his extensive travels worldwide. His business seemed to be doing well, judging from the quality of cars they rented when visiting the United States. During one of these visits, in a moment of weakness, I will confess to having asked Irene if, perhaps, she might be able to accommodate me permanently in Florence. Her reply was quick and brief: "There's nothing for you there." Quite.

As Ivanka and I became friends, I began discussing the strange events in my life with her, she once suggested it was the work of my father, who, at the time, I did not know was deceased. Ivanka also had the habit of sucking up every bit of data in her path. For example, I once showed her the CD of a computer-aided design (CAD) package, which I had bought for my project in Santa Monica. She immediately put it into a drive and set about installing it before I could even protest, but insisted it was not really installing. She later confessed to having installed it on her computer without my knowledge.

The same was true with a laptop of mine. While I was recovering from my injuries in the convalescent hospital, Colette brought it to me so I could continue writing the code I had been working on. But, astonishingly, I found that the BIOS password had been changed so I could no longer access it. Upon my release from the hospital, I gave it to Ivanka, who claimed to be able to reset the password. Weeks went by with no results. When I finally went to retrieve it, it was still in pieces, just as I had brought it to her, but the hard disk was missing. When I asked her about it, Ivanka replied that she thought I had given her the whole machine for reuse and that she had put the drive in another customer's machine. I never saw the hard disk again, and lost the software I had written on it.

There would be periods when Ivanka would not answer her door – sometimes for days on end. Once she or I found the business card of a police detective (or was it a police officer?) on her door. She seemed perturbed at first, but later told me that he had intended to leave the card at the house across the street. I considered Ivanka a friend, liking everything about her, including her good heart, which, on more than one occasion, she demonstrated to me.

## Parallels Between Colette and Irene

Different as they were, there were several parallels between Irene and Colette. Alberto once related to me that, one day, while they lived in Rome in the early 2000s, he had found her sitting in the living room, crying silently, alone. When he asked her why, she did not offer a reply. She has never spoken to me of this or, indeed, of virtually any other aspects of her life. To me, Irene remains a closed book. Our conversations consist mostly of trivialities, evasions, or lies (on her part). I, too, play my part in this charade, never pressing her for details about any aspect of her life – except at times, in the heat of the moment, as I occasionally, fruitlessly, attempt to cross the nearly forty-year abyss which separates us.

Another similarity between them was the noticeable emotional instability they each sometimes exhibited. On a trip to Rome, likely in the early part of this century, Irene began making comments that were unusual for her. There are also moments of inexplicable anger in her – to the point where I begin to wonder about her mental stability. Irene, a badly compromised woman, is before my eyes slowly being stripped of every shred of humanity and empathy, as was Colette.

During a visit to Rome, Irene tells me: "it is not enough to say you love me, you have to prove it to me." Never in my life have I heard her talk like this. Without explaining why, her boyfriend Alberto tells me that mother and I should make a special effort to show her our love. I have never understood the reasons and background for these unusual statements from Irene. A complete mystery to me, like the rest of her life. In general, though, a human being can't be subjected to the sort of treatment I have experienced for decades and not be seriously affected. For my sister, I imagine it may be worse, far worse.

It was on one of his summer visits with Irene that Alberto confided in me about her not having paid off her student and medical school loans. He also paid Irene a fine compliment, saying that, in his opinion, she had treated me more like a mother than a sister. He also said the reason she had broken up with Persio was that he was tired of sending money to support me.

As for Colette, she once hinted at a wish to kill herself.

I did make some attempts to socialize during those years. I began placing ads on Craigslist, looking for company. One such ad said: "Looking for women to have conversation with; age, looks unimportant." There were some replies but, after a few exchanges, they never responded. I occasionally went to the local library and created an email account where I signed in as "Bert" instead of "Berg." One reply seemed more interesting than the others – from a nurse at County USC Hospital. We began exchanging emails and were at the point of meeting when my email account password was somehow changed, and I was never able to access that account again. She and I never met.

When the monitor business gradually disappeared, I began advertising on Craigslist as a PC repairman. Between that income and my disability check, I became a bit more comfortable financially. Although I have since lost most of my customers, I estimate that over the years I have worked on over 500 clients' computers. Of those, I have retained, at most, a half dozen I consider regulars.

## I Learn of Father's Death

Hoping for some news of my father, I began calling Gail Hooks at irregular intervals, leaving messages which she never returned. Eventually, I did reach her, learning that Father had died on May 7, 1999, in Los Angeles, three years earlier. She explained that, though she had tried to contact me, she had been unsuccessful – pointing out I had changed numbers. I was then living about a mile away from my previous address, and, no, I had not changed my phone number.

When we met in person, Gail informed me that all of Father's personal belongings had been lost by the storage company and could not be found. She said she had been prepared to initiate a lawsuit when he died of pneumonia. His assets had dwindled to nothing as he had a nurse twenty-four hours a day – first paid for out of his own funds and, later, by the state. She said, "It was expensive, very expensive." Years later, when discussing these events with Colette, she reminded me that her mother, on Medicare as my father had been, had not had to pay for any of the care she received at Colette's apartment in the weeks before she died. Not disputing her account, I left Gail after about an hour's conversation and never saw her again. Gail had seemed like a responsible, caring person, although I question the reason for my father's move from the apartment that I had gone to some trouble to find him so he could be nearby, in my building. I also question why it took so long for her to inform me of his death.

I requested a copy of his death certificate from the State, and began the process of transferring his pension to Mother, then living in Paris. On relating these events to Irene, she asked for the woman's address, saying she wanted to send her a registered letter – something I have not done. Irene soon went to Paris to move our mother from her building in Montmartre, which was to be renovated, to another, slightly larger, studio – also in Paris. Our mother then began sending Irene fairly frequent amounts of money, at times commenting on my sister's longstanding spendthrift ways.

After several years, I moved to a studio in the same building, two doors down. Irene did not want me to have a roommate and I could no longer afford to live alone. Around this time, or perhaps before, Irene gave me a debit card to use if I needed money. I think it was understood that I was not to disclose the source of income. We tested the card in Santa Monica, but I have never used it. In my presence, Irene once asked my social worker how to circumvent restrictions on my allowed income. Maureen Cyr replied that she was not allowed to do so. Around that time, I was very concerned that I might lose my apartment.

Ivanka Fernandez eventually lost her job as building manager. I once visited her at her new location for a party. I have not heard from her since, except for a call she made to me while I was still living in her old building. She had just suffered a stroke.

## Interference in My Work

Beginning during those years and continuing until today, there began a pattern of outside interference in whatever software/hardware project I started. Some examples:

On a project to develop software to manage a customer's business, a small concern in Orange County called ConnectComp, all the backups and documentation I developed in the course of months of interviews disappeared: diagrams, documentation, and emails. Until I found an old backup buried somewhere, all I had to show for about two months of effort and driving was a printout, diagramming their workflow. My apartment had evidently been broken into – and every trace of the project readily available had been removed.

Crescent Specialty Foods, Inc., Seattle, Washington, was a chicken processor and a customer for a barcode spreadsheet system. Near the end of the work, they offered full payment; I refused, saying I would not accept until the work was completed and accepted. Unfortunately, they never made that last payment and, when I called several months later, I was told my spreadsheet did not work although they had never complained during the intervening months, and the last results involving some fifty test scans were okayed by them. They had initially located me when, driving by, they saw me in my Toyota with an advertisement for my barcode business on the passenger-side door.

I proposed to sell a long-time PC customer, a solar-powered, computer-controlled attic fan cooling system for his house. We agreed on price; he said he would call back, but never did.

Living in Los Angeles, Fred Sefa was interested in off-grid solar for West Africa. We had initially met in a supermarket parking lot. He never called. I eventually called his office; he or someone else said he would return the call, but never did.

Early in 2017, I proposed to a friend's relation, Eric Allard, that I would implement a solution to some robotic problem involving MicroPython and a tethered quadcopter. Nothing came of it. By way of refusal, he replied by email that he had "other intellectual pursuits to follow."

Richard "Tippy" Cohen of Los Angeles needed software translated from Pascal to C. He found me through a Craigslist ad I had placed. We met a couple of times. At the second meeting, he abruptly canceled the work, saying I had not completed the job – which was complete nonsense.

Mi Alma is a used furniture store located in Hollywood. When another customer, Edna Luer, introduced me to them, I proposed a barcode inventory control system. A company representative soon advised that "their business plans had changed and that they would no longer require my system." This, after telling me in our initial interview that he needed the system in a hurry.

A small business owned by Sean So, Water Studio, located in Culver City, was interested in my developing a computer-controlled bypass valve for modulating water flow. My business partner, Janusz, and I made a proposal. We never heard back from them.

Simon Herrera, a customer working on a self-driving car system, whom I had helped, was going to have me manufacture some related electronics and packaging. He abruptly stopped answering my calls.

Another such was a musician, living in a luxurious house in the Hollywood Hills. He wanted a tablet which would display musical scores. I was also asked to make him a small security system with microprocessor control. As I was progressing in the work, he abruptly stopped talking to me and never called back.

Janusz and I solved a problem for the plumbing company in Whittier – a project involving computers and sewer pipes. But, after a successful demonstration of the solution, the young owner, Billy Haendiges, refused to proceed, claiming funds were not forthcoming from his board of directors.

As of the fall of 2020, I have the impression that someone is leaning on homeless people living in tents clustered near the Federal Building in Westwood in order to prevent me from selling them solar energy systems worth only \$100 to \$250. I believe I can point to two such examples.

I also began to notice a pattern of sabotage of the computers of PC repair customers. Another few examples:

The first instance of sabotage I can remember happened to a customer, Gretchen Davidson (more regarding her later), running Linux on her PC, she called one day, saying it was not



working. I will spare you the technical details. After some effort on my part, and deciding there was nothing wrong with her hardware, I went back and told her the problem was the result of sabotage though the internet, and advised her to find another repair person.

In 2012, I began work for the Nekter Juice Bar at a location in Newport Beach, California, to do some port forwarding for their security camera systems. I was referred to them by another customer of mine, Marcus Sanchez. In addition to the Newport Beach location, I handled (or tried to) their corporate office in Orange County. I was unable to complete the work at either location because, while working, I became locked out of a modem/router at the Newport Beach location by a change in password. Later, I was also locked out of a DVR as I was working on it, also the result of a change in password. At the corporate office, I was able to partly complete the task of setup and port forwarding but found, when I tried to login remotely a day or so later, I was again locked out of the DVR, which I had previously programmed with passwords that only I knew.

I informed my contact, Jeb Ballard, of this and was paid satisfactorily for the hardware I was able to install successfully. I did not bill them for any labor, including travel charges, for several trips to these locations. I believe sabotage through the internet is the only possible explanation for these problems. In addition, there was some technical incompetence on my part, which does not explain the fiasco but contributed to it.

I was once called to a longtime customer, Ike Mordi's house, to set up a WiFi installation for his laptop and other devices. I took about two hours to do work that should have taken perhaps fifteen minutes. The router/WiFi unit was being interfered with by someone connecting to it either through the internet cable or the wireless link. In either case it was being done remotely. I was repeatedly locked out of the router by a changed password. The interfering activity stopped on its own after about two hours, enabling me to complete my work in short order. There were additional problems with other computers at his office.

For a customer with the unlikely name of "Quentin Cheatham," I recall once having difficulties connecting his laptop to his router, and explained that I thought this was sabotage. I'm not sure if I mentioned or suspected the source of the sabotage, which I now strongly feel to have been elements of the Government. With the customer as witness, I then experimented by connecting his laptop to my network at home where things went fine. Back at his apartment, the laptop, once again, failed to connect to his router and the internet.

Wendy Miller (deceased) was a customer for computer repairs, mentally ill, and on permanent disability. I had been taking care of her computer for perhaps a year. On one occasion, having taken her computer home for some work, I was returning it to her, but first made two stops. The first lasted five minutes or so, and the second was at Colette's where I spent, perhaps, an hour. When I finally arrived at Wendy's apartment and installed it, I found it would not start. I was forced to buy her a replacement at my expense. Around this time, I began feeling oddly about her behavior. She would ask what seemed to me leading questions such as: "Do you think Asian women marry Jewish men because they tend to have money?" I then recalled a friend, John Zhou, once having told me the same thing about Asian women. Wendy also started telling me insistently about some class I could take where I could learn to erase my traces on the internet, specifically mentioning LinkedIn. There was at least one other such event.

At Sha Fernando's home in Torrance, I was finally successful in completing my work but it took far longer than expected because I was repeatedly locked out of her DVR and her router.

Edna Luer is a customer from Craigslist. On at least two or three occasions I have noticed instances of sabotage of her computers or routers at her business. During my initial visit, she noticed the background picture on the screen of one of her office computers had been changed, and asked me if I were responsible; I was not and said so. On another occasion, I was called in

to repair the network, which was down, and found one ethernet port connected to another port, making router operation impossible. On the third occasion, a router from Netgear had been reset, making it unusable. Whether it had been reset manually or through the internet, I do not know. For almost an hour, I tried to set it to its correct prior settings, but it began behaving oddly. When connected to a laptop, it would hand out a valid address, but moments later the address would no longer be there. This occurred several times. At that moment, the router was not connected to the primary router or the internet. The WiFi was on, however. I gave up and said that there might be a hardware problem. Later that day, one of the occupants of the building was able to successfully reset router parameters, so the network could be used as before. I was called in on another occasion, my last, because I refused to go back. Edna Luer complained that there was some problem with her PC. I checked it out, but did not fix it. She then suggested that one of her employees was responsible.

At Rex Sampaga's office, after finishing the work I was doing for him, I looked online for some software tools (open-source) for rootkit and malware detection to use on my Linux PC at home. I located several, downloaded them to his PC, and was trying to copy the tools onto a USB stick when his machine refused to transfer them. I had to remove his hard disk, and connect it to another PC, before powering on the other PC – first making sure it was disconnected from the internet. With these precautions, I was able to transfer files. I let the customer know, before and after, of everything I was doing both with my USB stick and about the interference.

Soon after I had sold Mary Gilbert a laptop, she called to complain the display was no longer working. As I checked it at her apartment, I found it would indeed intermittently fail. Without checking further, I gave her a full refund and took the laptop to my friend Janusz, who, more careful than I was, correctly diagnosed the problem. It was not due to a hardware failure at all. Instead, the screen video output was being sent to a (nonexistent) external monitor, thus making the laptop display blank, and simulating a failure. This had been done intermittently under control of someone operating remotely through the internet while I was at her apartment. Furthermore, a data backup to USB flash drive from her laptop made prior to re-installation of the OS was damaged to the point where I could not recover anything.

Several customers for software/hardware design/implementation work other than PC repair have unaccountably gone missing, some time ago and of late. There are perhaps as many as a dozen more such examples. I would sometimes come up with an idea and pitch it to a customer or a customer would come to me with a need. None of these ever led to anything; they were either aborted prematurely or I was destabilized psychologically, making further progress impossible.



## CHAPTER II

### After Florence: Part 3 – The Plot Thickens

#### My Friend Katsumasa Kozono

It was at a restaurant we frequented, the Sawtelle Kitchen, that Katsu, former boyfriend of Colette, met a waitress from Japan named Yuka. They dated before becoming serious about each other. I did not think it a good match, even before I learned about what would happen later. Yuka was common; Katsu was not.

Eventually, Yuka and Katsu married, and moved with her parents to Carlsbad, California, to open a restaurant. For the two years they were together, I rarely saw Katsu but I would hear from him that the restaurant was prospering. He would sometimes come to see me in the single I had moved into. He seemed to be escaping his marriage, although he never divulged any of the problems he was having – not a word. He did tell me he was overworked, underpaid, and not getting along with Yuka. I think I saw her once with him when they visited me in my single. She did not make a good impression. Whenever he came to visit, I would pick him up at the train station downtown and, after a few days, would drive him back. While in my apartment, he whiled away the time watching anime on his laptop. Whether he had any money or not, I do not know. His family was wealthy, though; that I was aware of. It seemed an odd situation for someone of his financial status to be trapped in.

When he came to visit me, there would eventually be a "reconciliation" with his wife. At that point, I would drive him back to Union Station so he could take a train home. But when he arrived in Carlsbad, she would refuse to pick him up. That left him with no alternative but to walk the many miles to their house. While in my apartment, he would talk to her on my phone in a low tone for long periods. When I spoke with her, which was rare, she would tell me that Katsu was immature, a baby, and she made other such derogatory comments about him. After their eventual divorce, Katsu returned to Japan. Later, he told me that, upon leaving the United States, he was forbidden from re-entering the country for a period of ten years. I do not know why this sanction was applied in his case, and he did not volunteer much information other than that he: 1) never had a driver's license while living and working in Carlsbad, and 2) never applied for a green card, although his wife was a naturalized citizen.

I could not and still do not understand his behavior or his predicament. Katsu has otherwise always been a responsible, conscientious, and civilized person – making his present situation seem all the more unfathomable.

#### Subcontractor Work at Malaysia Airlines and a Peculiar Offer

I found work as a sub-subcontractor at Malaysia Airlines for Himanshu Pathak, who had seen one of my Craigslist ads. Early during my time at the airline's offices, my boss sent me to the house of one of their employees, Lee Voon Seong, head of the accounting department for the Los Angeles office. For the first two visits or so, things went normally. It was on a following visit that our conversation, up to then anodyne, took a decidedly sinister and as yet unexplained turn. I was mentioning a book I had found interesting when it became increasingly apparent that he, a Malaysian citizen in late middle age of Chinese ancestry and

with a dysfunctional arm, was carrying on a conversation with me on two levels of meaning. While overtly, the discourse was about his computer, the book I cited, and other benign topics, it seemed to me that the real issues, communicated more subtly, included:

- My general over-qualification for the computer work that I was doing
- Some suspicions on his part regarding my background and bona fides

I became alarmed when I began to realize that Lee Voon Seong seemed to know a great deal more about me than I had told him. Things took an unmistakably dark turn when he began suggesting, in a totally deniable way, that if I wanted to, I could be moved to another, unspecified location – possibly out of the country, given a new identity, and a "fresh start." Those were his literal words: "a fresh start." Even though he and I were to frequently meet again at the El Segundo office during the time I worked there, he never again brought up this subject. That evening, I was so disturbed by the turn the conversation had taken that, in a hurry to leave, I left behind a replacement disk drive and never returned to retrieve it. I had not given his suggestion any encouragement and made no further comments on the matter, ever.

During the mid-2000's, Colette began seeing Jon Howard, whom she had met through Craigslist. At the time, Jon was living in an artist's colony in East Los Angeles known as The Brewery. Owning a small business installing solar energy systems, he hired her to work for him as an installer for a medium-sized solar project in Upland, California, capable of generating a few hundred kilowatts. I would later visit the site at his invitation, and spent some time inspecting it with him. Jon has since told me that his name disappeared from a website listing this project and that credit for the installation has instead been assigned to another firm, one unconnected with the contract. Since that visit, which impressed me, and somewhat inspired by Jon's example, I, too, began selling solar energy systems – though on a much smaller scale. Jon Howard is a member of the Cherokee Nation.

Problems between the two of them soon became apparent. His fall from self-sufficiency and self-respect was slow, but deep. I saw this decline with my own eyes, but without, at the time, knowing what was really going on. In a half-dozen years, beginning when he first met Colette, he went from a small businessman to a seriously mentally ill, impoverished, homeless man. Yet, at the time, and for years thereafter, Colette could only complain about him and his lies and shiftlessness. She called him a psychopath who took her money and deceived her. I suspect there was considerably more to this relationship than met the eye. A customer once referred to Colette as "Ms. Search-and-Destroy" – a designation I have, unfortunately, come to see as accurate.

After I met Renee Chaba through a neighbor, I began repairing her computer. Eventually we became friends. In the aftermath of her husband's death, she moved permanently to Israel. Some month later, though, she returned to Los Angeles. I helped find her an apartment, and began spending a considerable amount of time visiting her. Then, after some years and without any incident that I could put my finger on, her behavior began changing in small, but telling, ways. She would undercut and belittle me – in a well-informed way – and with the power to infuriate me. I have already mentioned one example elsewhere. (Consider the odd event with Annette Roget at Costco.) My only response to her remarks was to be silent and eventually to break off contact with her. Twice thereafter she tried to restore the connection, but to no avail. It was not until 2014 that I attempted to resume seeing her. We began meeting again, first in a public place, then, as before, in her apartment. But something was wrong. I could sense a cynicism that, although she had been through a lot in her life, had not been there before. Then one day, she turned cold – as I had done previously. And, without explanation. I must have called several times and received the same refusals and evasions. Eventually, we resumed

contact only for me to, once again, sever the ties. Renee Chaba is an elderly person, originally from Eastern Europe, who has consistently felt, shall we say, the lash of history.

### A "Meet Cute" with Dennis Allard

An idea I investigated for my friend, John Zhou, about a virtual instrument panel, came to naught, even though I managed to find some tools for a demonstration with the help of Dennis Allard, whom I found through a Google search. I initially went to Dennis for a floppy disk and we became friends. I longer see him, as his behavior has become entirely too suspicious for me.

One particular example: I was once at his house when Dennis, by then a friend, began alluding to things I had done years before we met. Although he was not explicit, I felt his comments were aimed at persuading me to go back to work for Sound Solutions. At that time, I was still under the impression that my chief persecutors were Epstein and company, not the United States Government. I was not yet aware of the real source of this false flag operation.

Another message Dennis conveyed was that all my previous emails from my former ISP were in storage and available for public dissemination, and that they contained embarrassing information. Dennis also alluded to the incident at UCLA Hospital from over a decade previous when I briefly raised my arm in the Hitler salute and hinted it might later be used to embarrass me. I referred to this incident earlier, in greater detail. During a different conversation in which he attempted to persuade me to return to Sound Solutions, I indicated that I would in no way have dealings with anyone connected to them. Dennis called me an idealist. I shook his hand, and left. Dennis also once predicted I would eventually give in, saying it is only a matter of time before I make a slip. There were other incidents of this sort, but these were the most obvious and egregious.

A final comment on these threats, to Mr. Allard and these Princes who govern him:

“Publish and be damned.”

– the Duke of Wellington

While I was still living in my single, John Zhou asked me to get a recommendation on a good university for studying mathematics. I immediately thought of contacting *Evangelos Athanasios Coutsias*, a friend from college, now teaching. He and I had several talks on Skype, during which I got the impression that he wanted me to bend to pressure and return to Sound Solutions. One remark in particular led me to this conclusion: "We have to be realistic." Realistic, indeed. I ended contact with him soon thereafter, and have not renewed it, though he has since made several attempts to stay in touch. By the way, *Evangelos Athanasios*, in English, means “the immortal bearer of glad tidings.” Poetic, no?

Around this time, I began semi-regular visits to Mother, then living in Paris, and to Irene, usually in Florence – although sometimes in Rome. I would fly to Paris to spend some days with Mother in her tiny studio before flying with her to Florence to spend time with Irene and Alberto. These vacations lasted from three to four weeks. While there, I often noticed Irene would avoid me whenever we were out walking. She and I could interact normally in every other place: in her apartment, a restaurant, a car. But never would she walk side-by-side with me in the street. If the four of us – Irene, Alberto, Mother and I – were on our way somewhere, she always either walked with Alberto or my mother. Never with me. Even for a few short blocks. This was brought home to me on one occasion sometime before 2008. The four of us were at a restaurant near the Arno river, not far from her street, with the usual “accompaniment” (that is, people who either listened in on our conversation or would behave

intrusively) when Irene decided to go back to the apartment. I chose to go with her, not feeling particularly comfortable at that moment. On the way back, a walk of perhaps a couple of hundred yards, I tried to walk next to her, but she would not let me. If I approached her, she sped up. Since she is a fast walker and I am somewhat crippled, I could not manage to catch up to her. Then, as we walked by a shop selling antique firearms, she turned her head back to me, and said: "Want one of those?" She then made a quick dismissive gesture with her right hand, the significance of which was not lost on me considering I was still under the illusion that Epstein/Dubrow and company were the source of my troubles – even at a pleasant restaurant near the Arno river in Florence, Italy – halfway around the world.

## Several Years of Caroline Taicher, an Unusual Customer

Caroline Taicher became a PC repair customer several years ago on the Westside of Los Angeles. After a few uneventful visits, she asked me to plant some monitoring software on what she said was her boyfriend's cell phone. She had the cell phone and the software with her. I refused. She asked me again on two more occasions, once calling me to her house on false pretenses, telling me she wanted me to check her phone for possible spying software. When I got there, I found that what she really wanted was – again – for me to install spyware on a cell phone. I refused her requests on all three occasions. She never asked again.

Caroline had always shown a bit of paranoia. For example: she would repeatedly ask me to set/change passwords on laptops and routers. However, I think there was something to her concerns. Once, after I visited to deal with some computer problems, she called me right back because she could not get the password right. After an attempt to deal with it, I left, telling her I could not fix the problem. I, too, have had such difficulties with my own computers and with customers' machines when passwords have been occasionally changed without my involvement.

When she moved to another location, Caroline began complaining that someone was interfering with or monitoring her computer and cell phone. She showed me traces of the stuff and asked me to look into it. At one point, she said: "I want you to become my sleuth." She also asked me to find her a technical person capable of doing such things, something I tried to do without success. She emailed me screenshots and gave me Bluetooth device numbers which I looked up for her, later deciding it was merely the activity of a nearby car stereo trying to link to her smartphone. I did not do any computer hacking on her behalf. Neither did I investigate further the causes of her computer problems.

During this time, she told me she had had to get a restraining order against a man she had been dating. She referred to him as a "trust fund baby." She also said they had been involved in the past, that it had not worked out, but that she was seeing him again. When I asked why, she offered no explanation other than that she had been gullible.

Around the time I moved into my bungalow in 2010, she brought me a Blackberry from which she wanted text messages retrieved. According to her, the file system had been damaged. After I recovered some of the data, not wanting to intrude, I read only small fragments of it at random to check on the quality of my work. The texts were of a personal nature, written in good, if not perfect, French.

One evening, Caroline asked me to come to her new place. She greeted me wearing a skimpy bustier revealing more than I had seen anywhere in a long time, certainly from her. I only stayed briefly, having developed a headache while driving there.

Once, concerned that someone was listening in on her phone conversations, she contacted me. Thinking her command of the French language was adequate, I told her to speak French.

She struggled to string five words together: "*Je ne suis pas fou*" ("I am not crazy," in poor French). Given her demonstrated inability to put together a short, simple sentence, I did not see how she could have had the skill to write the long text messages – in fairly good French – when, some years before, she had asked me to recover data from her Blackberry.

Soon after the brief, abortive, conversation in French, she stopped calling. The calls resumed several months later, culminating in a flurry of contacts (which I ignored), text messages (also ignored), voicemails (also not listened to). The calls stopped, only to resume with another cluster of activity some weeks later. I returned none of the messages. Still later, she tried to contact me with another shower of calls/text/voicemails. She even wanted to stop by. I refused all contact and never heard from her again.

Caroline was attractive in a "Stepford Wife" sense: polite, intelligent, somewhat jaded, with a definite sense of entitlement stemming from her upper-middle class background which, however, she rarely displayed. I was never interested in her due to what I felt to be her NQOCD attitude and her too-perfect face and body – the result, I concluded, of extensive and expensive plastic surgery. But then I noticed her become increasingly emotionally vulnerable. I was fond of Caroline, having known her on and off for several years, but I was also more than a little afraid of her.

In that same year, Colette visited an invalid, paralyzed from the neck down due to an accidental fall from a balcony. Of Nigerian descent, *Chudi* was about thirty years old and of large build. Colette asked me to accompany her to see if I could suggest some computer applications that might help him. It turned out that he already had all the tools he could use and neither Colette nor I were of any use. During that visit, I met his sister, a lawyer, who exhibited a wariness or fear of either Colette or me. We eventually left, and I never saw either of them again.

### **"Meet Cute" with Annette Roget**

I met Annette Roget while we both worked at Malaysia Airlines. By the time she was laid off, I had known her for about two and a half years. I asked if I could see her again, and she gave me a phone number. I called her sometime later, and left a message. When I got no reply, I looked up her address on the internet and sent her an email. I had no reply to that, either. Later, another friend, Renee Chaba, asked me to accompany her to a Costco store. While there, to my surprise, I noticed Annette Roget standing in one of the aisles. Her gaze was fixed toward the distance, but she was looking in my general direction. As I passed within two feet of her, she did not acknowledge me in any way. Renee Chaba, meanwhile standing ahead of us, looked back at me. None of us said anything.

Sometime in 2012 or 2013, Colette and I were involved in a long argument at her apartment over her mother. Colette wanted to invite her mother to Santa Monica for an extended stay, as well as for the Thanksgiving dinner it was our habit of preparing for about a dozen people. I said no. Emphatically. Equally emphatic, Colette said her only friends were *my* friends and that she was set on inviting her mother. Completely mystified, I entirely missed the point of this desperate attempt on her part to avail herself (and her mother, then in her nineties) of some sort of protection she might have felt by associating with me. This is clear to me now.

During one of her near-yearly visits, Irene invited Colette and me to spend the weekend at a motel in San Diego. One evening, I noticed Colette react silently in fear when someone began working the door handle as though they had mistakenly chosen the wrong room.

Another unpleasant occurrence was with Hamish Dean, a new referral from Camille Solari, another customer, for computer work. My first job for him was trivial – installing a driver for one of his laptops or desktops at his downtown high-rise apartment. Later on, he came to my



bungalow for more work. He told me that he had a license from Microsoft for downloading copies of Windows XP. I offered to buy one or more from him. But I did not make the purchase, neither did Hamish offer to sell. The initiative was strictly mine. During that visit, I also loaned him a copy of a Windows disk-imaging program of mine.

On our third visit, he called me to his apartment/office for work. I retrieved the disk I had loaned him and asked him if I could uninstall the software from his computer. He agreed, and I removed it. The desktop was running properly before I rebooted; it was also connected to the internet. But now the machine could not reboot, so I tried to find out what had happened and attempted to repair the damage.

I ascertained that the data contained on Dean's computer's second disk was still valid, and we needed to make it available to his customers by a certain time that evening. With no operating system, there was no way to get his data online. So, with the help of someone I called, I made an attempt through the internet to get another copy of Windows installed on his malfunctioning machine. But the transfers repeatedly stalled. As a result, I was uncertain if Hamish was able to get his data to his customers on time. Any attempts to download and bring up another copy of Windows in order to get his data online by the deadline were mine alone.

Before I left that evening, he and I discussed what had happened. I told him that, through the internet, someone had destroyed his Windows XP operating system disk drive – probably while I was uninstalling my program from his machine, leaving him with “stranded data.” I also told him how his computer address could be discovered and his computer attacked from some remote location. He seemed incredulous. I was still feeling that David Epstein and Michael Dubrow of Sound Solutions were responsible for this kind of sabotage and harassment.

I believe Hamish Dean gave me the hard disk with the damaged operating system to take home and recover emails from. I was successful and returned the hard disk and recovered emails to him on the following day. I may also have wiped some files from the disk drive – emails, I believe. He and I proceeded to an ATM in his building so he could get cash to pay me, but it didn't work out that day. Ultimately, he paid me out in public, on a street near his apartment.

A longtime customer, Steven Sauer, had his computer broken into by means of email spoofing with clear signs of a continuing break-in. The incident was reported to the FBI through their web site. He called one day to tell me he had been the victim of an attempted fraud based on a spoofed email, though the fraud was not fully consummated. It happened sometime around February 27, 2012. I went to his office where he showed me the spoofed email, purportedly from him to his broker and the reply from his broker asking for wire transfer instructions – providing the amount of funds in the account. As I worked on his machine, I saw unmistakable signs of entry occurring. A speaker icon on screen showed a red bar across, meaning the sound had been muted. There were possibly other signs present. At any rate, I felt someone else was in his laptop at the same time I was. It had to be a fairly obvious set of signs, as I am a novice when it comes to computer security. I called him over to show him and explained that I felt this activity was coming from David Epstein and company. (This was still before my Epiphany.) I elaborated and gave him a thumbnail sketch of events in my life over the previous decades. He then asked me if I knew anything about Epstein and Sound Solutions. I replied in the negative, saying I had a policy of avoiding all contact and connections with anyone associated with them. He replied that it would be good to have a look before proceeding to use his computer to check out the company's website. In light of the seriousness and strangeness of the attempt, and the fact that there were indications that intruders were in the machine at the same time I was working on it and willing to let me be aware of it, I asked Steven for permission to call in the FBI. He replied in the affirmative.

Soon thereafter, I went to the FBI's website (IC3.gov), registered a complaint in his and my name, and provided my Social Security number as well as full details of the attempted fraud. No transfer of funds had been made. The IC3.gov site replied with the following information, which I later forwarded to the customer: "Complaint ID I1203062050063992 with a password, (redacted)."

## Things Become a Bit "Kinetic"

Treva Silverman was a PC repair customer who found me through Jeannine Frank's email list. As I set about repairing the various computer problems that she pointed out during my visit, I began noticing that she was harassing me – in a subtle way. I began pushing back verbally and things became progressively more explicit until Treva said: "Well, now it's time to use other methods." Or words to that effect. I cut short our session, told her I could not fix the remaining computer problems, asked for payment, and left. Sometime during this visit, puzzled and annoyed by her behavior, I had quoted Shakespeare: "So foul a sky clears not without a storm." By way of a reply, Treva instantly quipped: "So foul a sky clears not without a song."

On the freeway leading to Manhattan Beach, I got a call from another customer, Camille Solari, asking me to pick up a webcam for her. I pulled off at the right offramp, headed for Fry's Electronics, and made the purchase. But I had an odd experience in the checkout line where people behind me were speaking loudly and laughing – and saying something like: "He's going to have to go back to work with Michael." I had quietly completed my purchase and had just stepped down from the stairs at Fry's and began walking. Then I turned to the left to reach my car parked in the handicapped area. The driver of a late-model four-door car was going very slowly, perhaps at less than parking lot speeds, when she hit me with the driver's side of her car. I was not knocked down. The driver rolled down her window and may have asked if I were okay. She appeared to be an Asian woman in her thirties, possibly of Japanese descent, as did her passenger. This, within an hour of the odd exchanges with Treva. I later spoke of the incident to Colette and her boyfriend, Jon, who commented: "Time to go to the Feds."

Some months later, hoping to contact the authorities surreptitiously so as to not warn whoever was behind these acts, I finally called the FBI. I had obtained their phone number and address from a customer's Mac computer – one I had never used. I went to the FBI website and wrote down the phone number and address of the Los Angeles office. Within a day, she began trying to contact me by phone. I would not take her calls until she called from a number not listed on my phone. She might have called once more in the recent past; I did not take that call, either. I believe I related this and other events to Camille Solari without substantive comment from her.

I would sometimes place a Craigslist ad for my business at 5:30 a.m., only to find it removed less than thirty minutes later. This interference went on repeatedly, for as short a period as a month, and as long as about a year. I complained to Craigslist, but to no avail. Of course, this irregularity had a negative impact on my business.

At the Social Security office on Robertson Boulevard, I was called in to change the status of my disability. I had become, I do not know how, eligible for a substantial monthly increase with greatly relaxed financial restrictions. Unfortunately, in the process, I signed a statement which I knew to be false. I tried to correct it sometime later, but the period in which I could make changes to my statement had expired. The fault for this is mine, but I also question the role played by the interviewer. Particular attention should be paid to his motives, especially

against the background of the decades of curious activity and events surrounding me, events I have described in this book. I related all this at greater length in one of my email "Laundry Lists." There have since been additional curious events surrounding my Social Security as well as Medi-Cal benefits. I have also covered this at length elsewhere, in the section titled "Money."

### **Three nearly simultaneous fraud attempts against people I know (all Jewish)**

Curiously, these attempts happened within a short span of each other, and while I was still living in my single – although I don't think anyone ever seriously considered me a suspect.

Renee Chaba had a fraudulent charge (in the five figures) on a credit card for which she gave me the number before she left Israel to return to the United States. She wanted me to reserve a room for her at a Los Angeles hotel. Her accountant spotted the fraudulent charge in time, and had it annulled.

Ann Kogen (deceased), mother of a friend, had a check or something similar taken from her checkbook. There was either fraud or attempted fraud perpetrated on the account.

Shelly Pina's mother (both women were neighbors of mine) had a sum of money taken from her bank account by someone with access to her checkbook. They concluded that the culprit was possibly a man named Mitch.

While in his office for computer work, I overheard a phone conversation from which I learned that Larry Anderson, a PC repair customer of some duration, had a bungalow available at an attractive price, which I ended up renting. Sometime later, the tenants in all three neighboring bungalows moved out. The woman I nicknamed "*Baba Outrom*" and her male companion took the bungalow across from mine. His daughter took a second bungalow, and his son, along with his family, rented the third. I did not discover the relationship among them until almost a decade later, after Baba Outrom had died (?) and her companion moved away. Later, I will discuss in greater detail the sequence of events leading to this outcome.

Back in Osaka, Japan, during our frequent Skype conversations going back several years, my friend Katsu seemed often to ask probing political questions of me. Something surprising as he does not have a political bone in his body. Among his questions was my attitude toward China. One time he suggested we sell memory cards, either in Japan or the United States. At that moment, my netbook was running from just such a card, but within an instant, the operating system failed. I later found out that the card's software had been damaged.

Once, of my own volition, I transferred a video porn film of about five minutes duration to Katsu through the Skype file transfer facility. On another occasion, Katsu sent me a set of files – a few megabytes in size – from an acquaintance of his with a USB flash drive containing a corrupted file system. I tried to recover the data, failed, and did not charge him. Katsu once asked United States authorities for permission to return to this country. They suggested he just show up and see what happens. A curious statement.

In the summer of 2020, I ended all contact with Katsu as he had become too obvious in his trolling, leading questions, and provocations.

# CHAPTER 12

## Epiphany

In the summer of 2012, a time I called "The Year of Living Dangerously" (partly in remembrance of Sukarno, deposed former leader of Indonesia), I have my "Epiphany."

It happens at UCLA's Royce Hall, during a performance of Ionesco's "Rhinoceros" on Saturday, September 22, 2012, by the *Théâtre de la Ville-Paris*. After the performance, I went home certain that elements of the United States Government were responsible for the peculiar events in my life occurring for, by now, almost five decades.

"The unpredictability of humans is the revenge of the powerless."

– Anthony Daniels

After I had taken my seat, before the performance, I began noticing peculiar behavior from both seatmates on my left (a young Frenchwoman) and on my right (a young American woman). The Frenchwoman, before the performance started, lowered her right hand below the top of the seat ahead of her, shaping her fingers into the form of a gun before raising her hand again. The American on my right, also before the performance, repeatedly began making odd gestures, abruptly moving the theater program she held in her left hand toward my face several times, causing me to draw back involuntarily. She may even have chuckled immediately afterwards. Later, sometime before the play began, I distinctly heard someone nearby, in a loud, clear voice, utter one and only one word: "Obamacare." What could this have meant? While, after the play, walking back to my car, I also saw a young woman, a few feet ahead of me, extend her arm in the Hitler salute for a prolonged period of time.

During the performance, my demeanor had changed so much, so quickly, that I believe notice had been taken. It was now firmly in my mind that this was a false flag operation by the Government, attempting to fix blame for my problems, in my mind, on Jewish people. Instead of going home directly, I drove, listening to an opera on my car stereo, reflecting. Having had this idea before but never for very long, I was stunned and fearful.

The next day, Colette visits, something unusual for her. She wants to know who talked, was also scrutinizing titles of library books I had lying around. Her curiosity satisfied, she left after some time without revealing anything. The best answer to her (unspoken) question and to the *nekulturny* who seem to be running this operation into the ground would have been one word: "Ionesco" (the author of the play I had been to see). Days later, both Colette and a mutual friend drop by together. I make sure to confirm what I had said earlier to Colette, adding that I had been a fool. After their departure, alone in my bungalow, stunned and afraid, I lie on my couch for days, perhaps a week.

Then began a period when random, unknown people began apologizing within earshot of me and even, in some cases, to me directly, with no obvious reason (though sometimes with very bad grace).

- On more than one occasion at the Robertson branch of the Los Angeles Public Library.
- Outside a customer's hotel in Marina del Rey.
- Several other locations over the next period.

Usually about seemingly nothing.

## Random, mysterious thanks

People thank me. People I've never seen before, some neighbors as well. Also policemen, bowing as my car drives by.

A regular customer of mine, Marina Golden, who buys and sells businesses, puts me in touch with a broker in her office who has a proposition, one involving my handling the repair work for a small computer repair shop he was negotiating the purchase of. I pour cold water. Politely, I hope.

Jeannine Frank I have known for several years, having been introduced to her by a friend. She placed ads for me which, for a time, brought in a good amount of business, a veritable lifeline for which I am grateful. Our relations had always been cordial and proper. It was therefore with some consternation that I began getting a jarring note from her toward the end of 2014. During a visit involving computer work, she alludes to money being available (something about credit cards), seems to suggest "they" (an unspecified party) would help me but I would have to leave the country afterwards and drop Colette Walczak (referred to by her as "the little friend"). I become silent, leaving quickly without finishing my work entirely. As I walk out, she makes an odd remark: "The light won't come on." The next day, to send an unmistakable reply and give her some idea of how I feel about her behavior, I have Colette Walczak call her to let her know I will not be available for some time. That night, as I walk out of her apartment, she is still speaking. I am more than incensed, I am furious. 'Ere, I'm turnin' into a regular little Savonarola, aren't I?

At a new customer's location, a Susan Stanley, referred to me by Marcus Sanchez, I visit twice on the same day, connecting a DVR to her smartphone when, during the second visit, I hear her in the next room discussing with someone what seemed to me to be a recruitment attempt or offer of a bribe which I believe I am the intended recipient of. She goes on at some length about someone "being given enough money to own a house free and clear," and as an aside, adds "how many Black men can boast of that?" She also speaks of a relationship with a certain woman to be severed as part of the "deal," something I believe I have heard before. Infuriated, I leave quickly, without completing the work or asking for payment, picking up the business cards I had left. I became so angry, I was shaking. She follows me to my car and stands so close to me that I have to motion through the window for her to move out of the way in order for me to pull out.

The next day, I am in Whittier, visiting Janusz, when, on returning to my car parked, I notice a flat. The mechanic who repairs it tells me there is a puncture on the inner side of the tire. Later, as I return home, I find one of my front door locks broken, I have difficulty entering my bungalow as a result. The owner of the building soon repairs it. Some days later, another of my door locks is broken.

Regarding the purported bribe, no mention has ever been made of the actual potential donor, though I have since developed my suspicions.

*Je ne mange pas de ce pain-là* (Quote of unknown origin) (I do not eat of that sort of bread).

A Black employee, fifty or so, at a Goodwill drop-off center on Robertson Boulevard I often visited, says one day: "You're free... free!" I give him a pat on the shoulder and remember being happy at that moment. Then I begin getting the impression that conditions are being set. Is the United States Government the "good guy" here? I want to believe. I now begin to hear from people I have never seen before, people I never see again, that I must sue if I want to stay in this country.

At home I get a flurry of calls from customers. I decline to answer, not feeling well. Repeated calls from some, up to a dozen in a few days. Start of verbal and sound activity in my neighborhood, e.g., lying on my couch in the living room, I begin to hear: "Got Goldberg?" or "Got gold, Berg?" Shouted by a woman, likely Black, somewhere outside my bungalow.



# CHAPTER 13

## To Another Suicide Attempt

### I Appeal to the Law

I contacted the ACLU in 2013, speaking to someone on the legal intake line by phone for about ten minutes. I described my problem and touched on some of the international dimensions, at which point the woman I was speaking to quickly ended the conversation, telling me I would be told by mail of any decision reached. I receive a written reply within two days, turning me down. I had even offered to write and mail a summary of my situation.

Sometime around then, I tried to get a copy of the arrest report from the City of Santa Monica Police Department dating back to 1988. I failed after:

- Sending an email to Santa Monica police
- Going to the Santa Monica Police Department website
- Sending them a letter by mail

Only after I contacted an attorney were results forthcoming. I then received a copy of a police report within a couple of days.

As I mentioned before, still thinking Epstein and Dubrow were the source of my problems, I tried to contact the FBI surreptitiously by asking Janusz Hetman and a customer, Roger Ty, to get me the address and number of the local office. Neither would help. I then got the number myself and called from near the Wilshire Federal Building in Westwood one afternoon, thinking I would be allowed a face-to-face meeting. That day, I spoke to three FBI people by phone over the course of a few hours and finally offered to fax them a summary of my situation. They gave me a fax number but I never went through with it. In addition, one of the agents I spoke with, as I was explaining my predicament, asked me the, to me, irrelevant question of whether I had quit Sound Solutions or been fired – conceivably setting me up for a Federal felony charge of lying to an FBI agent had I answered falsely. I did not, saying, truthfully, that I had quit. Another man I spoke with that day went so far as to laugh at my expense during our conversation, thinking to make play with a pun on the word blackmail when I suggested to him that I thought David Epstein and Michael Dubrow might be up to this. Pretending to not understand me, he made me repeat myself several times, laughing each time as I did so. At the very least, the FBI knows something of this affair.

Regarding the Los Angeles Police Department:

- The first LAPD policeman who was sent out after I complained of a break-in to my bungalow was, to me, clearly "in on it." For example, by gesturing to a neighbor of mine who was watching us, opening his hands and shrugging, he betrayed a complicity in the whole business. He only made what looked to me, even at the time, like a cursory examination of my bungalow for signs of break-in.
- Another LAPD officer at the Venice Boulevard station once refused to enter a complaint of a car break-in into his system, telling me, after he had filled out a report and verified the incident had happened in his catchment area, that I would have to report the incident to another station. He then handed me the report he had



just filled out. This unfiled report (I never went to the other station as he had suggested) has since gone missing from my files.

- After another break-in to my bungalow where some pages of my xeroxed autobiography were stolen, I was able, after having to go to the police station in person (due to peculiar problems in reaching them by phone), to report the break-in. A very helpful police officer promised that someone would come out to investigate and even gave me his card, writing his badge number on the back. Days later, two officers came by to investigate. Helpful.
- Years later, another officer, a woman, gave me the runaround when I tried to report yet another series of break-ins to my bungalow by phone.
- When I had the first hit-and-run car accident which left my car disabled and totaled in the fast lane of the 10 freeway, I had to call 911 three times, watch as two fire trucks briefly stopped at the scene (the driver of one of them laughing and joking with the driver of the car I had hit), saw at least one motorcycle policeman drive by without stopping, and waited perhaps an hour and a half before the highway patrol finally sent someone to help.
- On a visit to the police station in my area to report a stolen car (station on MLK Boulevard), I was asked by a police officer at the desk if the woman with me on a visit, days earlier (Colette Walczak) when I first went to report my car stolen, was my wife. Apology from him when I said no. The meaning of his statement, for the time being, sailed by me (see the glossary for a definition of "Wife").

One lawyer I contacted, looking for advice on the many car accidents I was having, engaged in intimidating and confusing talk which upset me. In 1989, another lawyer I went to see about my arrest in Santa Monica was more concerned with hustling me out of his office as fast as he could than giving me any advice. I, of course, spoke of my problems to anyone who would listen with the result that I was universally gaslit and stonewalled and perhaps, initially at least, considered mad. This includes my sister Irene, my close friend Colette Walczak, as well as practically every other friend and acquaintance. The only partial exceptions were, as I previously mentioned, my therapist, Victor Morton, and a friend, Tom Ellsberg (since deceased). All of these people and institutions seemed to know stuff about my situation. However, they preferred to ignore the grave injustices of it as well as some possible implications for themselves so long as it was not (yet) their ox being gored.

In summary, over a period of nearly three decades, I turned, unsuccessfully, for help to:

- Friends
- Family
- Lawyers (with two notable and valuable, though temporary, exceptions; another lawyer, though, went so far as to materially mislead me)
- Police (one refused to accept a complaint of a car break-in, another gave me the runaround when I tried to report a break-in by phone. There was one welcome exception, mentioned in this book)
- FBI (one fellow laughed at my expense during a phone interview while, on the same day, another may have tried to get me to lie to a federal agent)
- ACLU (I was turned down by form letter within two days of initial contact. I had even offered to mail them a report, I believe)
- The Los Angeles branch of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, leaving some documents with a receptionist who assured me an employee by the name of Aaron Breitbart would receive them

The Germans have a word for a kind of state governed by the law; they call it a “*Rechtsstaat*.” It seems to me that I owe my current state of (relative) freedom not to the law, though I repeatedly appealed to it. In my experience, it has all too often been used as a sword in the hands of the powerful to threaten and frighten me, when it should be a shield in the hands of we, the powerless – no, I believe I owe my freedom to other naked, countervailing forces. Some have said there is freedom to be found in the interstices between tectonic plates. I believe I can attest to this.

The "kickoff" for what I call “The Year of Living Dangerously” (2012) came in early December 2011 when I went out to my car one morning to find it gone. I made a police report of the theft and borrowed a car from a kind friend, Beth Wolfson. That night, the paper coffee cup she had bought me when I drove her back to the San Fernando Valley was missing from the car when I returned from a visit to a customer. I spent that night at Colette’s. The next morning on getting home, I found the empty coffee cup on top of my trashcan. I then called the police to report a break-in. An officer was sent out. He was dutiful and polite but not, it seems to me, terribly interested in getting to the bottom of things. My conclusion is that the LAPD, along with the Los Angeles Fire Department, were, at the time, willing and knowing collaborators of whoever was doing these strange and highly illegal things. During his visit, outside my bungalow, as I mentioned earlier, I even noticed this policeman making an apologetic, shrugging gesture to a neighbor watching the scene from across the street as he, the policeman, inspected the car I had borrowed and from which the empty coffee cup had been stolen. It may perhaps not be surprising if, at this point, I surmise that my whole neighborhood was by then aware of (some) elements of this operation. Yet, no one spoke up. To me or the police, or if they did, the police took no notice.

What can one say of a state of affairs, where an entire neighborhood, after having been explicitly appealed to by means of fliers and notices posted on my bungalow, remains silent when one of their neighbors is the victim of repeated break-ins? Or else that, in the event the authorities were alerted, these authorities, THEMSELVES, refuse to take action. This is more than an instance of injustice. This is an instance of the most elementary lack of law and order. Before the Second Gulf War, an Iraqi dissident, describing conditions in his former homeland, gave his book the title *The Republic of Fear*. He was referring to Iraq. How apt. How very apt. Sadly enough, apt for more than one “Republic.”

## My Suspicions about Colette Harden

At some point, I finally realized that Colette had more to her than met the eye. During one of her visits to my bungalow, I cried out, “You betrayed me,” and was angry with her for up to a year, sporadically. I manifested this by refusing to look at her, behaving coldly, not taking her calls, hanging up abruptly. I have since come to defend her and others in similar situations. I now consider her to be a member of my family on the same footing as my sister. After all, are they not alike in their predicaments? And was not the betrayal that of the State, with Colette merely acting as intermediary?

Colette’s mental state worsened visibly after 2012 or so. She began showing signs of erratic emotional mood shifts, irascibility, sometimes wooden affect – very unusual for her. Her insomnia worsened, she seemed haggard at times. One day, at her apartment, she started crying for no reason I can see, refusing to tell me why.

In 2012, I lost a backpack at a swap meet and with it two checkbooks and other personal items. I proceeded to the Palms branch of Wells Fargo to remedy the problem. It was then that

began my Calvary, which continued for some years, until I finally closed my accounts and safe deposit boxes.

Some illustrative events taken from my voluminous notes:

- A forged signature by bank employee was used to open multiple accounts with zero balance.
- Safe deposit box fees were left unpaid even after strenuous efforts on my part to make sure payments were current.
- Money orders somehow drawn on accounts with insufficient balance, this by a Hispanic man, Wells Fargo employee, at the Palms branch.
- My account handled by personnel untrained and not qualified to handle business accounts.
- Confusing instructions on proper procedures to follow given to me by bank employees.
- Odd computer system behavior; e.g., system will not accept one of my addresses as a main email account when it can accept an older email account. At the same branch, a day later or so, the first email address is finally accepted by the system.
- Very odd behavior on part of other customers while I am at various branches, particularly the one at Palms. There, in one instance, a man in line bellows: "Five years for anyone who talks!" or very similar words.
- Refusal by the branch manager at the Palms office, a woman of possibly Persian descent, to accept payment for a safe-deposit box, saying I have to go to the branch where that safe deposit box is located.
- Curious comments by branch employees at the Fairfax branch.
- Unhelpful behavior from a Fairfax branch banker.

At around that time, I was introduced to James Finlay by a friend, Dennis Allard. James Finlay became an occasional customer for computer repair until what appeared like sabotage of his computer through the internet (which activity I informed him of). I was never called again. James Finlay works for Wells Fargo.

By the summer of 2014, things had become very stressful for me and I had been feeling frequent pains in my neck and shoulders for months – to the point where, when driving, I was reluctant to turn my head when changing lanes, so great was the discomfort. I got my cortisol level tested at Kaiser Permanente Hospital with results showing a level of 36.2 mcg/dL, with a normal reading being in the range of about 4 to 25. And this was some time after the worst of the stress.

In protest at this treatment, I put a sign on my door in plastic-laminated paper, clearly visible from the walkway. It reads:

*“Mr. Government Man:*

*Since you visit my bungalow so often, what would it cost you to tidy up things while you are here? And while you are at it, it wouldn't hurt for you to do some dishes for heaven's sake!*

*Sincerely,  
Akakiy Akakievich/  
Berg Hawkins”*

It may be that some in our Government lack a sense of humor, since the very afternoon I put this sign out, I happened to go out but, having forgotten something and returning minutes later, I found my tea kettle cold, but with the gas lit underneath. I had not used it that day.

The year 2012 was the beginning of an intense period of frustration, harassment, and overt or covert crimes committed against me, of which the car theft was just the first. In the following four years, I had nine car accidents of varying severity and of which I can document about six. I have since had two additional accident, one minor, the other not.

Around that time, a focus of peculiar events and harassment was my local supermarket, Albertson's, from some of the staff but mostly, by far, from customers. This went on for several years, unexpected meetings, people bumping into me or nearly bumping into me while swerving at the last moment, odd comments made within earshot of me, longer than expected delays at the checkout counter, strange attitudes from staff. I came to expect it on a daily basis. The same for other markets where I regularly shopped: Trader Joe's, Vons, Superior Grocers, etc.

In 2013, using a notary, I made three FOIA requests:

- To the US Army
- To the FBI
- To the Department of Homeland Security

These requests resulted in no information being released; i.e., Glomar responses (see the glossary). The reply from the FBI also came back with my name spelled incorrectly.

Around 2014, Colette and I were driving down Lincoln Boulevard in Santa Monica when from a side street to our left a motorcyclist made a turn and as he passed us shouted "Push!" Colette was visibly shaken though she said nothing. Around that time, she brought me some manila envelopes I had asked her for and said: "Here are some not-so-good folders for you." I said nothing. Throughout this time, I noticed a cynicism and callousness in her; most striking was her increased emotional instability.

A police officer, white, strikingly tall, once stopped us on Lincoln Boulevard as she and I were having an argument. He asked me what the matter was, I replied that we were having a discussion. I was surprised because the argument was not loud and there was no physical violence or even personal movement involved. He then went to her side of the car, asking her the same question, she replied we were having an argument. There was more conversation between them that I did not hear or cannot remember. He then left without asking for ID, papers, or issuing a ticket. I was to see him again sometime later, months perhaps, near the same spot. He was standing on the sidewalk, talking to someone and, as I drove by, moments after meeting Colette and Dennis Allard at his house, he wagged his finger from side to side while looking at me. A curious moment.

The last such peculiar occasion that year was in October 2014 at a laundromat in Venice, California, where Colette went to do laundry in the hours prior to her departure for Chicago. I insisted on going with her, realizing that there might be something unusual about to happen, wanting to show support. This particular set of "skits" went on for up to two hours, with Colette and me each being, by turn, intimidated and manipulated. While there, Colette, in a comment to me, said, "You're not a good folder" (as I am helping her fold her clothes); she then adds, "That's good, very good." I may also have noticed, hovering in the background, individuals silently observing the proceedings, not taking an active part.

The next day, I sent an email to the State Department's passport office asking how I could void my passport officially, in a gesture of protest at my treatment. I did so by using Colette's email address and in view of her. She smiled. I wanted to send her a message, a message making clear that I was not going anywhere, no matter what Government forces might wish. I also spoke by phone with a State Department employee, asking if there were any procedure for deactivating my passport. The woman, perhaps puzzled, responded by asking for my Social Security number. Which I gave her.

## The Saga of "*Baba Outrom*," Provocateur Extraordinaire

Sometime after I moved to my current location, courtesy of my former customer and current landlord, Larry Anderson of AFJ Investment, I got a new neighbor. As I did not know her name, I eventually nicknamed her "*Baba Outrom*." Russian for "the afternoon (or morning) woman." I called her this as she was home most of the day, talking all the while. There may also have been some physical resemblance to a figure from Russian folk tales, known as "*Baba Yaga*" (though I confess this to be pure speculation on my part).

I have written extensively about her in my email "Laundry Lists" as well as having made copious, time-stamped, and detailed entries regarding her behavior and utterances in the diary I always carry with me. She exhibited several qualities, unusual in themselves that, when taken together, formed quite a potent package. She moved in after the previous tenants abruptly left, some months after I moved in. *Baba Outrom* was about sixty, Hispanic, with a companion and at least one grown daughter. I have never had such a loud neighbor, nor such an apparent polyglot, nor such a well-informed one.

Years later, I discovered by accident that the tenants in the other two bungalows which make up part of my complex, people who moved in soon after her, were the children of her partner. One of them, a daughter, still lives there. It would be interesting to find an innocuous explanation for not only her outlandish behavior but also for how two of her companion's children and their families came to live in the same complex at about the same time that she moved in. *Baba Outrom*'s companion would occasionally also get into the act. His signature move: a hoarse, loud laugh. He almost seemed proud of it, using it once on Colette as we were walking by. Because of this, my nickname for him is "Lord Haw-Haw" after the well-known WWII British collaborator and Axis propagandist.

A brief summary of her techniques will suffice; for extensive descriptions, see the "Laundry List" emails:

- She is frequently talking in a voice which carries to my bungalow and to the street. Either on the phone, to someone else in the house or to her dog. Mostly it is to the phone.
- Continuity; she is given to monologues sometimes lasting over a half an hour at a time with rare pauses for the other person to respond.
- I have known her to speak words in: French, German, Italian, Russian, as well as English. I believe her native language is Spanish. Some representative samples: "Come here, *nera*": Italian. "*Da*": Russian. "*Ai Stasi, nigger*": German and Spanish or Italian. "*Il est poli*": French.
- She sometimes times her utterances to my movements even though we are both in our respective bungalows with both our doors usually closed. I have noticed this peculiar thing often enough that I feel confident in making the statement.

- Her verbal behavior exhibits the quality of "feedback"; that is, she may repeat an action – be it word(s) or sound(s) – until there is some reaction on my part, usually an involuntary, nervous one. Again, there need not be and usually is not any visual contact.
- She has displayed at times astonishing, deep knowledge of my life, consisting in the use of certain words, names of people, buttons available to push.
- She has mastered the (to me) peculiar art of holding a conversation with one person while at the same time engaging another person within earshot. This went on for so long that, at the time, I could not remember when it was not going on. She seemed to function as a human transducer, or as a computer peripheral. There is no other word for it. And this with a tenacity and a dedication which is awesome to behold – and even worse to be the target of.

I have come to believe that the people controlling her and others make use of some technical infrastructure specifically installed in my bungalow which is linked to the smartphones of people like Baba Outrom; i.e., there is an app, running on their phones, connecting them to commands issued elsewhere based on the output from sensors located in my bungalow. This is the only way any of the events I have experienced over a period of years can be possible and make any sense. See the included diagram, Figure 31, attempting to sketch out a possible infrastructure. During a visit, Colette once told me (how could she know?) that Baba Outrom was mentally ill.

The examination over, she seems to allude to the peculiar situation I find myself in. Just as I am about to leave, Dr. Gair delivers herself of this comment: "You should wash your hands twice, before you have anything to do with us sick people around here, before and afterwards as well." Also: "Let us handle it among ourselves." Am I hearing this right? I make no comment. Even in my near catatonic state (I must've been quite a sight that morning), I am flabbergasted by what she has just said. She leaves. The interaction had lasted in all maybe ten minutes.

She likely died of natural causes sometime in February 2017. Her companion remaining, her place was taken by another woman, perhaps a roommate. Then both the new roommate and the man left. He comes around from time to time to be with his children. I have the impression he is now homeless.

The next tenant also began exhibiting the same traits as Baba Outrom, but in an attenuated form. Her heart just was not in it. This tenant, a woman with a son and companion is, by comparison to Baba, a rank amateur. She moved out after about a year of occasional, desultory (though not uninformed) provocations of a mostly verbal sort aimed at me. In addition, during her stay, she was the victim of an attempted break-in which she reported to the police.

In the summer or fall of 2013, Irene, in the course of a Skype conversation, says, as she ends our conversation: "*C'est là qu'il faut appuyer*" (that's where you have to push). I take this as my marching orders and within two days have contacted Victor Morton about being executor of my will and a former customer regarding finding a lawyer willing to sue the government. By then, I had been writing what I call "Laundry List" emails which I sent out to about forty people for several years. This continues. I also had been writing my autobiography and, insensibly, sped up the work.

I recall that one evening in Florence, several years ago, before my Epiphany, walking back from dinner, as we pass a closed butcher shop, Irene suddenly tells me about how one day, the owner abruptly closed his shop, leaving with his family. Apparently, he owed money to the wrong people and did not, using Irene's own word, want to be "*amoché*" (beaten up). She then

looks at me pointedly. I do not know quite what to make of this but resent the attempt at intimidation. I occasionally would make clear to her that I had no intention of shutting up, though, of course, at the time, I had little idea of what I was up against. Peculiarly enough, I believe I was also, on more than one occasion, intimidated in this way by a friend some years ago. I won't mention his name as I cannot be certain his was such an attempt, though his name occasionally comes up in this book.

Professor Richard Farson (deceased), a friend of Alberto Zucconi, taught at UCSD, while living in La Jolla, California. One evening, during dinner, he discusses with Irene an acquaintance of his; then, while looking in my direction, comments: "Pedophile," giving me a scathing look. Irene then turns to me with a peculiar, resigned look on her face. Neither says anything to me directly. Back at his house, after dinner, as Alberto mentions, apropos something or other, that I'm seeing Colette, the professor quickly shoots me a glance.

In the early to mid-2000s, most every year, Irene now visits the United States, spending two weeks in Los Angeles with Alberto, before he leaves to attend a yearly psychiatry conference. One year, Alberto comes alone. Visiting me, he asks to meet all of my friends at a picnic to be held at the house of a friend of his in Los Angeles. She refuses him the use of her house for this purpose.

Relations with him are very good at this point. He is likable, very intelligent, funny and supportive of me. He occasionally probes my feelings and beliefs: 1) asks what I think of the extent of anti-Semitism in the United States (during a presidential election in which a Jewish VP candidate is running); 2) asks me what I think about, what I daydream about. My reply: "I think/dream about things I cannot have."

During one visit, Irene, Alberto and I were sitting on the grass in a park in La Jolla. I noticed her twitching and being generally uncomfortable. Looking up, I saw and heard a man standing fifty feet away, on some bluffs, talking loudly on his cell phone in a voice which could be distinctly heard. What he was saying made no sense to me but I distinctly saw her react with involuntary movements and generally be uncomfortable. Neither she nor Alberto made any comments.

Eventually, in the years following my release from the hospital, there are frequent conflicts between the two of them. Some of these stem from what I think is Irene's deep attachment to me. This was brought home strikingly on at least two occasions: 1) the first email Irene ever sent me had in the subject line: "Beloved" (this email has, by the way, disappeared from my Gmail account); 2) while I lived alone in my two-bedroom, Alberto once remonstrated with me sharply for sleeping late, accusing me of being a prince, coddled by my sister. He grew very angry at this. Irene made no comment. Later, I do not probe, but sense that he and Irene are no longer together. This feeling is intensified in December 2014 when I, becoming psychotic again, begin to sense something odd about her. Sometimes in 2014 I become aware of the absence of Alberto Zucconi. I had stopped talking to him for the last several years since he began, unaccountably and gratuitously, being rude and insulting to me. He did so during two successive visits. Eventually having had enough of it, I told both of them off at a restaurant in Santa Monica one evening, leaving them to make their way back to their friend's house by themselves.

## CHAPTER 14

### *Walpurgisnacht* Told in the Mode of Innis

#### A Definition and Disclaimer

*Walpurgisnacht*, originally a pagan celebration, "is a night when witches and other evil entities roam freely around the land" (quote of unknown origin). Unfortunately, however, this night turned out to be more prolonged for me, lasting about a month in all. Some of my statements and interpretations in this chapter are subject to disagreement as I was psychotic during part of the time. Thus, this part of my story is fragmented and neither necessarily chronological nor exhaustive. The chapter covers events from December 2013 to January 2014 with a few flashbacks and flash-forwards. However, I have at all times kept this account factual, not mentioning most of the "atmospherics," which were also very much present.

In my effort to get across to you, Gentle Reader, the fragmented and chaotic nature of this sad, confused and, above all, mortally dangerous episode of my life and to avoid engaging in what is known as a retrospective fiction, I will present this chapter in what is called the "Innis Mode." Named after the Canadian academic, Harold Innis, an influence on Marshall McLuhan, the Innis mode is an attempt to break with the linearity of traditional text. Marshall McLuhan wrote in *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, "Innis makes no effort to 'spell out' the interrelations between the components in his galaxy. He offers no consumer packages in his later works, but only do-it-yourself kits..." This unusual technique has been used by, among others, John Dos Passos in the trilogy *U.S.A.* and John Brunner in his novel *Stand on Zanzibar*.

Simply put, I list here, without any attempt at coherence or correct chronology, such facts and events as I can recall from this period in an altogether raw fashion. All I can vouch for is my sincerity and truthfulness. In summary, this was a time of manipulation, fear, and great confusion – culminating in a suicide attempt. The above disclaimer applies to this chapter ONLY, not to any other sections of the book. Consider that, in this chapter, I have possibly given up on trying to make sense of a world gone mad.

#### The Kickoff

Early in December 2013, I went to Costco for my monthly shopping. A warning? Before I entered the store, I heard a curious phrase, shouted from some distance away by someone I had never seen before: "They hate your *cull*!" (In French, *cul* means ass). After I was done shopping, while I was waiting at the checkout line, I noticed random apologies from several people, all Asian.

Back home, as I unloaded my groceries, several neighborhood kids assembled nearby. I heard one or more of them say: "We love you."

I have already spoken of a paramedic I met in a "Meet Cute" while in college. A few years later, he mysteriously showed up again. He is to make another appearance soon.



One day before Christmas, I came home to find a water spill below the gas water heater in the kitchen and requested a visit from the landlord's handyman who fixed the leak, then walked around, inspecting the apartment.

A wine leak. At some point during that winter, I notice that from the case of wine I had bought, I had five empties on the kitchen counter. Oddly, I may not have drunk all of the wine they contained. The bottles seemed to have been draining of liquid without my drawing from them – except for the last bottle, on which I had made a mark with tape. I quickly gave the remaining bottles to my friend Janusz.

I had become wary of Colette. Her interventions with me, which often upset me so, became increasingly verbal as I began automatically declining to follow her anywhere. During that period, I would never go anywhere with her in public.

Colette visited my bungalow frequently, coming and going, which was unusual for her. I suspect my psychotic break was related to her verbal interventions over a period of several days. She came here a few times, looking bedraggled, as though she had not had enough sleep. Also, she did and said odd, disturbing things. She stayed with me one – two – perhaps three nights. When she slept, she would close the bedroom door and windows, turn on the fan, and try to rest. Refreshed a bit, she went home. She repeated this routine a couple of times. She seems to be at the end of her rope.

Colette Walczak was a confirmed insomniac, whose condition worsened over the years. In the last decades of her life, she had also become a hoarder.

On some potential side effects of combining alcohol and an antipsychotic: It is a fact that when the mentally ill consume alcohol while taking such medications, they are at greater risk of suicide.

Before Christmas, I ask Colette to spend the holiday with me. At first, she was noncommittal; then, a few days later, she agreed. I think. Afterwards, I asked her to spend New Year's Eve with me. Again, she refused to commit. Giving no reason. Then a few days later, she agreed to visit. Again, without reason. She ended up *not* spending New Year's with me.

Christmas Eve with Colette: She spoke of possibly moving out of Santa Monica. Sitting next to me on the couch, she elaborated at length about having to leave much stuff behind or out in the street. Somehow, this had a peculiar effect on me. In the following days, I became afraid of becoming homeless. This feeling may have been reinforced by some brief conversations with others. Nevertheless, sensing something was wrong and wishing to comfort her, at one point that evening I kissed her on the forehead in spite of the tense atmosphere. A lugubrious Christmas.

I have written about an encounter with an ex-military man, a former corpsman and Vietnam War veteran, whom I met at a library in Caltech in the 1970s, while I was a student. When we initially met, I was listening to a series of Alan Watts talks on tape. This was the start of some odd interactions with him stretched out over several years.

Colette visited me again. After returning from a brief walk around my neighborhood, she switched on the radio, and tuned it to KPFK. I briefly heard the voice of Alan Watts. Finding this disturbing, I immediately switched it off. Colette said, "Oh, that's... But then I don't need to tell you." On hearing this, I immediately became upset, in general, and with Colette, in particular. She left soon thereafter.

New Year's Eve: I did not leave my bungalow for days, except for nighttime drives during which I played music. I did not eat much, and lost some weight. During this time, I kept a partial diary of my weight, blood sugar levels, and diet. All this happened late in December. During the celebrations, alone, I heard the sounds of firecrackers. Interpreting these as gunshots, I became afraid and hid in the bathtub until it was over.

Stress, for me, is almost literally, a killer. An elevated level, sustained over some time, has, in the past, been a sure cause of paranoia if not outright psychotic breaks, sometimes leading to suicide attempts.

Colette called to ask me to drive her boyfriend, Jon Howard, to the train station, perhaps. Afraid and suspicious, I declined to help. I mentioned this to Irene during a Skype call. She replied by asking me if I know what Jon did for work. I did not pursue this further. Soon thereafter, I became afraid for my life, specifically of Jon Howard, and tried to secure the apartment against entry from the outside. I managed to secure all the windows against possible entry and even jammed the door to the walk-in closet for fear of someone getting in through the attic.

There was a feeling of oddness about my Skype calls with Irene, a feeling heightened by the lack of light in her apartment. It led me into a kind of delirium with unpleasant consequences. I became very concerned about her, perhaps due in part to Colette's behavior around this time.

A nearby Wells Fargo branch on La Brea Avenue I frequent, shares a space with the Superior Grocers market. The presence of the branch is advertised by a large, visible sign on the outside of the building.

I sent off a string of emails to Irene, which reflected my deep concern. Irene became very unhappy with Colette. She did not say so directly, but I could tell from the tenor of the emails she wrote. This was highly unusual for her.

Late one night, I saw a very bright light outside; it was shining in the general direction of the front bungalows. A very strong light. There were several knocks on the front door of the bungalow opposite mine, where Baba Outrom lived. I heard screams, and then another knock on the door. Inside her bungalow, a light came on. Then, nothing. I had no idea what happened.

One evening, past midnight, I heard steps, heavy stomping, and running just outside on the walkway between the four bungalows. Someone was running and (deliberately?) brushing up against the hedges lining the path, I heard them run past my bungalow, then back in the other direction. This may have been repeated once more on a different day.

During a Skype call, Irene told me: "You are a paranoid schizophrenic."

A friend, Beth Wolfson, visited during December, and we looked at some pictures of a monastery in Bhutan. In the kitchen where I was making a cup of coffee, she commented on the digital scale I was using to weigh out the beans, saying the plastic scale cover looked like part of a cell phone. Something about her comment likening the scale cover to a cell phone shell stays in my mind. During her visit, she offered to have me manage the finances of an elderly person. Immediately concerned by some possible negative implications of this, I declined.

Some days later, tentatively emerging from my bungalow, I went to my car to find two electrical wires – part of a small project I had been working on – jammed through a crack in the rear window with the bare wires hanging outside. I did not know how this could have happened. I found it somewhat disturbing in that it was something quite unusual that I had nothing to do with. Overall, though, this (perhaps contrived) spectacle left me surprisingly indifferent.

I had put a laminated sign on my door (an event I have described above), poking fun at whoever has been entering my bungalow without my permission. One night as I lay in bed, I heard what sounded like someone rattling the sign. I realized it was unlikely to be the wind, since the sign was wedged between the metal grille and the decorative ironwork. So vigorous was the rattling that the plastic shook the metal door. Seconds later, the noise stopped.

Irene sent me an email in which she made what sounded like a comment (very negative) about Colette Walczak. Highly unusual for her. I was to call her the next day, but did not. How did she know these things?

Colette, here for another of her visits, commented as she entered: "Your sign is still there."

For a change, I went to see Colette during this time and picked up some oatmeal I had asked her to get me. Oddly, among the groceries, I also found a packet of polenta, an Italian specialty – something I had definitely not ordered. Meeting me outside her apartment to deliver the groceries, she sounded bitter and said odd things about "my friends not being different from her friends," and "these (yours?) are better?"

The manager of the Wells Fargo branch sharing space with the Superior Grocers market, a Hispanic in late middle age, accosted me as I waited in line. He, seemingly curious, asked how I have come to know about this branch given that, according to him, it is not well-known. He then speculated that I must live nearby, therefore would be familiar with the area, adding something like: "That is good; should you not have a car, you could walk here."

Why did Colette, after having given me a reproduction of a famous Japanese woodcut depicting fishermen manning a boat in rough seas, later tell me that, in reality, they were not fishermen, but people fleeing Japan?

At Christmas, I was in my kitchen with Colette. She hugged me – her eyes brimming with tears. She said, "It would not be good for you." She did not elaborate; she did not need to. I immediately understood what she meant. A priceless moment revealing what the poor girl was really made of. Her defects were of the surface. I will never forget. Never. The tragedy of her life. And by extension, the tragedy of this poor country (America), a country where some elements feel compelled and free to make such a use of such people in such a way.

Another Skype call with Irene just before New Year's Eve. Her apartment seemed dark with low ambient light; everything was bluish. Her face seemed swollen. During the conversation, our mother, who was also present, and had become a bit gaga, said at one point: "the police." Irene quickly attempted to clarify: "She's commenting on what is on the TV." Mother's comment set off a train of speculation in me – leading later to some ghastly images, the fruits of my mental illness, stress, overactive imagination, and perhaps other environmental influences.

When I get back to my car, after a visit to the Wells Fargo branch on La Brea Avenue, I find it has been moved to another parking spot nearby.

## Watching in Silence as Colette Grovels

I take her to Western Mixers Produce and Nuts, Inc. in Glendale. Before we leave my bungalow, I sense Colette's reluctance to accompany me but am unable to draw the right conclusion. While there to buy peanuts for myself, in the office of one of the few people there that day (a man in his fifties), I notice Colette apologizing to him repeatedly for no reason I can see. He is a study in calm and indifference: "it doesn't matter," he quietly says several times. I do not understand. On the way home, she seems very tense, yells at me about my running a stop sign. Some years later (in September 2020), hoping to track down this man's name, I returned to the company and, speaking with a young Hispanic man, got a first name and a phone number. Somehow, I doubt this information is correct.

Colette's self-abasement paralleled that of the NKVD operative who, sometime after the war, escorted a prominent communist figure to a train taking him back to Moscow from Siberia, where he had been held for some trivial offense. At the train station, as he took his leave, the poor *Chekest* got down on his belly and kissed the man's shoes.

Why did Colette include a bag of polenta in the groceries she bought for me when I had not asked for any?

Throughout this period, I took no drugs, drank no alcohol.

Sometime after my suicide attempt and after reflecting on Colette's emotional state, I decide, one night, to prepare her a meal. I was eventually to bring Colette two meals I prepared myself after deciding she is doing poorly. Simple meals, nothing much. Seeing how exhausted and forlorn she was, I wanted in a small way to show her my support. Though I am dimly aware of her agenda, something which informs my sister's intense dislike of Colette at the moment, I cannot stand to see her so.

Colette may have tried to get me to kill myself over the holidays. More than reason enough for Irene's palpable dislike of her, something unusual in my sister.

I make an omelet with veggies on the side; I add fruit and, on the tray, a flower that I had stopped to pick up at the supermarket. Delayed by this last-minute purchase, on my way to her apartment, she calls several times to see if I am still coming. When I reach her apartment she does not, for some reason, allow me in, saying she has a cold. Instead, we speak outside her door for some time. She has never behaved this way.

Some days later, she asks me to confirm I had stayed to talk to her and not just to retrieve the tray I had brought with the meal. A pitiful scene played out in a ghastly country. (A categorical statement and an exaggeration, I know, but I strongly feel this way as I write this.)

Since I deduce that she is getting the "Sound Therapy" treatment, in January, I decide to put together for her a stereo with two sets of speakers in both her living room and bedroom. I kept nominal "ownership" as two or three previous speakers I had sold her unaccountably stopped working, conceivably damaged by the application of DC voltage to the coil of the woofer. She would probably not know how to do this herself. I connected computers, MP3 players, TV, radio. I also bought her some headphones to afford her greater isolation from the sounds which seem to bother her so much. I give her a CD with the sounds of surf, it soon goes missing. I then lend her mine, a disk my sister had thoughtfully bought me years earlier.

She eventually asks me to build her a more elaborate noise-masking system. After several weeks and some technical problems having to do with a wiring error in her apartment, I deliver what I call the "Fader," a noise generator with programmable audio levels. It outputs masking, soothing sounds to speakers in both her living room and bedroom.

After a series of Skype calls with Irene, for some reason, I imagine my sister is undergoing a "horror." I can no longer be considered rational. My thoughts are obsessive and of a feverish intensity.

Another "horror," this time mine. I begin imagining I have become a prisoner in my neighborhood, with the neighbors as either fellow inmates or my actual jailers. These thoughts frighten and confuse me.

During a Skype conversation, Irene mentions a Czech friend with an adopted child, speaks of a possible visit to her. The conversation over, alone in my bungalow, I begin to embroider on this theme. I fear Irene has been kidnapped, that the Skype calls are from someplace not her own. That, for some reason, a set, resembling the part of her apartment I see on Skype, has been built, I know not where. That things with her are not what they seem. I imagine Irene has escaped or, as part of a convoy, is on her way to the Czech Republic. Or that she is being rescued. Or that the rescue attempt failed. The would-be rescuers are American.

In a suggestible state, one afternoon, I get in my car, I know not why, and drive eastbound on surface streets. Confused thoughts of murder, violence, whether by me or others, run through my mind. People I see on the street evoke strong emotions in me, emotions of an inevitable loss or defeat. I become fatalistic. I read meaning in things I see, whether signs on

businesses or in the behavior of people. For some time, I park my car and let my disordered thoughts cascade through me.

Quite some time after *Walpurgisnacht*, I am accompanied by Colette for a colonoscopy at Kaiser Permanente Hospital. There, I am asked by one or more doctors whether and when I have heard voices. I reply with the truth. For some reason, Colette then protests that I had not been taking my medications. One of the doctors curtly replies: "It doesn't matter."

I make a frantic attempt to write a will. A reproduction of the document can be found in Figure 22, among the pictures included. In it, I attempt to ensure that, were I to become disabled, I would not be transported out of the country under any circumstances. A desperate attempt to avoid leaving the United States. This thought has become an obsession with me which contributes to a serious suicide attempt.

Briefly, I come to reverse my opinion about what has been going on for decades; exonerating the Government, my reaction is one of gratefulness to them. I am in a highly suggestible, confused state. This is around January 2014, just after my suicide attempt. This reversal of opinion lasts a few days at most.

Misled about my sister's occupation or "a Head Fake?" Around this time, looking through a family album put together for me by Irene, imagine my consternation when, in the middle of the album, I see a picture of Irene on a bridge in Florence, accompanying what seems to be a famous actor. I, thinking the worse, become upset for some days. Looking at this curious picture in my photo album, I become wild with grief. Is it a fake, a manipulated photo? Speaking to myself, I keep repeating: "*La der des der*" (meaning, this is the last straw).

Days later, I am among the aisles of my local supermarket when, hearing someone nearby, I hear: "They've got him thinking his sister's a prostitute." Then someone else says something like: "That's awful." At that very moment, I imagine another shopper, very nearby, indicate – somehow – that this has to be, that there is nothing wrong with this state of affairs.

## I am Drugged

On January 2, 2014, I make two visits to Kaiser Permanente for blood to be drawn and to have a complaint of esophageal discomfort looked at. I also call psychiatry to be seen by someone but do not make an appointment. I report my suicide attempt to various doctors, and have my fingers looked at. There were some minor burns caused by the pilot lights on the stove that I had extinguished.

The day before, Colette calls to tell me that her friends have said to advise me not to drive if I smell something funny. I have no idea what she is talking about and, paying no further attention to her, I ignore this statement.

I go to Kaiser Permanente Hospital at 6 a.m. for the first of two scheduled visits for a blood test. A curious time for having blood drawn, as the lab usually only opens at 6:30. I park and go to the basement; once there, I dimly remember odd events I now would characterize as some sort of maneuvering by others present. Afterwards, my blood drawn, I leave. It is still dark. I cannot now recall why the blood work was needed.

Days later, I notice that my appointment book with the appointment listed for 6 a.m. has a blank page instead, though the rest of the appointment book is intact. Colette Walczak had given me the appointment book at the beginning of the year (2014). This particular page is blank. All the other pages and written appointments seem to be there.

How is it that a small leak developed near my water heater once, never to repeat itself?

For my second, 9 a.m., appointment, disregarding the previous day's warning from Colette, I start my car and find almost immediately: 1) the interior fan on full blast, and 2) the inside of

the car immediately filled with a strong petrochemical or chemical odor. This is NOT a gasoline smell at all. So strong is it that I pull over, come out of the car, and try to find the source of the odor which had just filled the car with such a stench. I sniff around the area of the windshield wipers just above the hood and do smell something, I think. There is nothing else wrong that I can see. I had expected maybe some engine malfunction but the smell, I decide, came from the external air intake grill near the windshield wipers. I get back in the car and, in less than a minute, the smell dissipates.

Was this odor the “vector” or merely a “tag”?

Then drive to the Kaiser Permanente Hospital nearby, about a mile away. I get there still feeling normal; a short time later, very odd feelings begin. Symptoms were as follows:

- Dryness of mouth
- Unable to speak properly
- Feeling numb, dazed
- Difficulty thinking
- Possible difficulty moving (clumsy walk), the simplest action a chore
- Loss of memory
- Symptoms lasted for the entire time I was there, from a half hour to an hour
- A short period elapsed between my exposure to the smell and start of symptoms
- There were no aftereffects

I began wandering around a great deal, first going to the second floor to check in and getting the room number for my appointment. Back downstairs to find the room, forgot the room number, went back to the second floor to be reminded of it. Finally, after asking people for directions (sometimes more than once as I cannot properly understand what I am told), I went to a room on the first floor. During this time feeling as I have never felt before in my life, I bumped into people, or nearly so. I remember asking one man I passed in the hallway for directions; he did not seem to understand me.

On the way back to the second floor after I had forgotten the room number, I share the elevator with a tightly packed group of people. Right next to me, on my right, is a large, burly man. I am facing a woman (in her 30s, with a baby in a carriage, long skirt, likely Jewish – she seems frightened or very uncomfortable). In the elevator for maybe twenty seconds, without speaking to anyone, I am standing by the door and walk out when the doors open.

As I approach (or leave) the second floor office, an older man, Black, accompanied by a woman, walks by me and says: "Don't you just love the machine?"

Back downstairs, near the elevators, I see many people; curiously, they are mostly Black. I have never seen so many people there.

I finally made my way to my destination and, after presenting my card at the desk, I sat waiting. Called in to the examining room, I put on a gown and waited. A doctor, Ericka Marie Gair, an optometrist, and a per diem, soon examined me, we discussed my symptoms, which had to do with an irritation in my esophagus. I mentioned that I drank wine sometimes; she asked in what quantities. I replied: a small amount per day. Then, during the examination I noticed her eyes immediately drawn to the bandage on the crook of my left arm, where I had had blood drawn a few hours earlier. She made no comment. I was also wearing around my neck some keys and a USB stick on a lanyard. Her eyes were drawn to these objects as well.

The examination over, she seems to allude to the peculiar situation I find myself in. Just as I am about to leave, Dr. Gair delivers herself of this comment: "You should wash your hands twice, before you have anything to do with us sick people around here, before and afterwards as well." Also: "Let us handle it among ourselves." Am I hearing this right? I make no

comment. Even in my near catatonic state (I must've been quite a sight that morning), I am flabbergasted by what she has just said. She leaves. The interaction had lasted in all maybe ten minutes.

During this surreal interlude, did an *Askari* (see the glossary for a definition) nearby make his presence known to me?

I become a package (and, it seems, am treated as such). I go back to the waiting room, and am told by a Hispanic nurse in her fifties, in a rather peremptory tone: "Come here!" A command I comply with, walking the several feet separating us. She then issues another command: "Go to her!" pointing to another nurse also standing nearby. I feel like a bundle being handed from one person to another; nevertheless, in spite (or perhaps, because) of my dazed state, I comply quietly.

The visit ended quietly without further incidents. I found my way to my car, and the fog lifted gradually as I drove home. I laid down for some time, disoriented and puzzled as to what has happened.

Won't some kind soul step forward and speak of what they saw that day?

The next day or so, I go to the Robertson branch of the Los Angeles Public Library and notice the same Jewish woman, with the same baby carriage and the same long dress I had previously seen in the elevator at Kaiser. Neither of us spoke but I recognized her immediately. While waiting in the checkout line, I hear a voice: "It only gets worse" or "You are not helping yourself" which may possibly have been a comment addressed to the woman.

On January 9, I met with another doctor. He examined my hands which I had burned as a result of my suicide attempt. I also had frequent dryness of mouth, an "itch" in my chest/trachea. We discussed my suicide attempt. The only unusual symptom I can report is a great dryness of mouth around that time.

All along, there had been an unusual background of sounds. Sometimes inside my bungalow, sometimes outside. At times mechanical sounds, e.g. car horns, sirens, mechanical clicks of an unknown source; sometimes animal sounds, bark-like sounds with a synthetic quality to them, sometimes people saying things.

In the immediate aftermath of my suicide attempt, I drive to the beach, up the Pacific Coast Highway where, on the way, I am met by a strange sight. On either side of my car, on the freeway, just short of PCH, I notice an escort of about thirty large, mostly black, domestic-make SUVs of the sort I associate with government agencies. They were split into two groups on either side of me. Matching my speed they escort me down the road. After a few miles, they all disappear.

I park along the coast, past Santa Monica. Soon, a pack of motorcycle riders stops just ahead of me. I have the impression they are Israeli. One of them then gestures as though to suggest the operant strategy is to confuse me enough to have me leave the country permanently. Just then, another black SUV, like the ones in the escort earlier, appears and parks just ahead of me, blocking my view of the motorcycle riders.

After my visits to Kaiser Permanente, my car begins having unexpected problems. Is it my carburetor? I pay quick visits to Brigido Gomez (now deceased), my carburetor mechanic, three times in as many days. He charges me nothing. Each time, I see him at KS Carburetor, driving there with a barely functioning car, leaving a short while later with the engine running fine, only to have another malfunction some hours or a day later.

## I Hear Voices

One afternoon, for no reason I can recall, I throw away much computer stuff: CDs, hard disks, two unused computers, EPROM chips, then return later to the trash bins to retrieve some of the very same stuff. I do not know why I did this.

I hear voices on more than one occasion during a period lasting perhaps days. I remember having discussions with these voices. Sometime during late December 2013 to early January 2014. I hear them for at least parts of two days, back to back, maybe for longer. Eventually my doubts about the reality of these voices grows with the voices diminishing in intensity. But before I do, I have conversations with them, congratulating them on their "expertise" in speaking to me.

In stressful times, I tend to forget to eat or else I lose my appetite. For about a week, I track my weight and keep a food diary of sorts on a sheet of paper I have kept to this day.

One morning, after brewing some coffee, I notice a vile taste, I throw away a full cup, then get rid of the whole bag of beans – taking the opportunity to also get rid of the polenta Colette had given me; it annoys me with its presence, suggesting Italy. I also throw some food out of the freezer.

Another unfortunate result was the latest of several suicide attempts on my part sometime before January 2014. A combination of stress, brought along on by external and internal factors (I am officially diagnosed as schizoaffective with paranoid features) leads me to attempt to kill myself with gas.

## Another Suicide Attempt

One night, around midnight or so, I snuff out the pilot lights on the stove, placing pictures of my family and Colette (sic) on the couch near me; turning on the gas, I then lie down. The characteristic smell of escaping gas becomes overpowering. Soon, I become somewhat dizzy but nothing more. Eventually getting up, I still hear the hissing sound coming from the stove. Sometime later, still feeling dizzy but wondering why I am still conscious, I find that, while the hissing sound is still present, there no longer is a smell. Sometime during that night, the gas was shut off and compressed air substituted. I turn off the stove. The apartment is full of the smell. I air out the bungalow, opening the front door and some windows. By now, it is around 2-3 a.m.

As an aside, let me remind you, Gentle Reader, of the attempt, by what is thought to be the FBI, to induce Martin Luther King to either kill himself or forgo the Nobel peace prize as part of something called COINTELPRO. An image of the document, a letter which was mailed to him in 1964, is included among the illustrations (see Figure 23).

## Rescued by a Miracle of Rare Device

The next morning, still lying on my couch, I hear workmen outside, in the back, behind the kitchen, near the sidewalk, also in front, right outside my window. I cannot see them but hear their voices and tools for some time. I hear a peculiar sound, one I have never heard before. Like an electronic gong, sounding for maybe one half second with a pause of a couple of seconds then a repetition. I first hear it near the sidewalk, then very close, underneath my window. Also possibly around the back of the bungalow, near the kitchen.

I wish to remind you, Gentle Reader, that when gas is turned off to a number of houses, all the pilot lights go out – a potentially dangerous condition once gas is restored.



I had, of course, been psychotic. With vivid, strange, disordered visions, occasional voices, great fears. I used no drugs, no alcohol, though earlier, for part of the winter I had been consuming wine at a rate of about one third to one fourth of a glass a day, for the resveratrol. I soon stopped, as I cannot stand the taste of cheap (or any other, for that matter) wine.

A customer calls and I mistakenly give him my bank account number for him to make a payment. Confusion and panic ensues on my part as I realize giving out my account number is not a good idea. This leads to an anxious and confused attempt by me to secure my account(s). Another customer, requesting technical help, is forced to come to me as I am reluctant to go out. A third customer, a young Hispanic living in West Los Angeles I have dealt with before, brings me a laptop to repair. After failing to do the work properly, I have to contact him repeatedly before he consents to picking up his unit. Seems strangely resentful as he does so. As he leaves, I hand him my business card, suggesting his acquaintances may be in need of computer help. He drops it and, not bothering to pick it up, says: "My friends have your number."

On January 8, 2014, I make a visit to the Wells Fargo branch at the Superior Grocers market on La Brea Avenue to close an account. There, an odd sequence of events involving the branch manager and other employees ensues. I am given advice by persons not qualified to handle business accounts.

I call the Kaiser Permanente psychiatric help line and my psychiatrist's office to make appointments. Eventually see my regular psychiatrist who strongly recommended intensive intervention which I refuse after one visit with psychiatric personnel, not really trusting anyone at that moment.

I was not taking my antipsychotic medication during this period. And had not been on it for most of the year leading up to this suicide attempt.

Much later, I overhear a comment from a neighbor outside my bungalow around the fall of 2014: "We cannot get any gas in the house but we can smell it outside." Is this related to my suicide attempt, months earlier?

Years later, in my efforts to set down more facts about the episode at Kaiser Permanente Hospital where I was examined, I speak with security personnel in an effort to locate traces of my meanderings that day. Without success, security camera recordings not being kept for that length of time.

I am on my way somewhere, during the day, not clear now about exactly where. I get on the on-ramp. Then I change my mind and try to back up, cannot do so. So I pull over to the side and wait. After a while, I notice someone pull over on the other side of the freeway and put his hands on the steering wheel. I follow suit. Then, minutes later, that person leans his head against the steering wheel. After a long while, a tow truck stops and the driver asks if I need help before getting back into his truck and leaving. I eventually start my car and leave.

An obsessive thought takes hold of me and will not let go. A refrain establishes itself in my mind: the way out of my problems necessarily involves my going through the "Twin Towers," a Federal jail in downtown Los Angeles.

For some time around this period, I read meaning into unlikely sights. When, for example, I see a car with the make "Nova," knowing the meaning of that word in Spanish, my heart is lifted. On the other hand, a car of the make "Kia" has the opposite effect on me (KIA can be understood as an abbreviation for Killed in Action).

# CHAPTER 15

## Life After My Suicide Attempt

### An Offer from the American *Securitate*

Long after Walpurgisnacht. The scene: my bungalow, I am sitting at the living room table one late afternoon in the fall of 2014. I have tears in my eyes, thinking of what may be in store for Baba Outrom and company (my neighbors in the bungalow across from mine). Minutes later, a lone white man, probably in his mid-thirties, walks by on the sidewalk talking (presumably on his cell phone and loud enough for me to hear). Unusual for this neighborhood. "Come see us, shake hands and come to work for us." Or very similar words.

"This is contempt of a rare order."

– Thomas Pynchon (*Gravity's Rainbow*)

### The Travails of Colette

One day at Colette's apartment, sometime after my Epiphany, we were on the sofa discussing something to do with video or films. Colette abruptly reached out, took my hand and, raising it to her lips, kissed it quickly. I was appreciative and somewhat puzzled. A show of sympathy and maybe loyalty. Perhaps because of an implied guarantee of her security as she felt I was not compromised.

There may have been repercussions for her. One afternoon in the following week or so, she called to say her car was disabled. The engine lacked for oil and had to be rebuilt. Later, I could not find a pool of oil on the ground in her parking spot at home. She ended the week frazzled and almost in tears – at one point even sobbing as I hugged her. So persistent were the destabilizing events and skits being aimed at her, at one point, I even yelled at her over the phone.

Colette and I were in her car one evening near the beach when in a gentle, almost sad voice, she said: "After all these years of faithful service..." Leaving the sentence unfinished, she began talking about going out for a swim in the ocean – a form of exercise she enjoyed from time to time – and not returning. I did not know how to respond. She might have thought that once the game was up – once I had finally figured things out – her Masters might be willing to dispense with her "services." When she found this was not to be, it might have precipitated her emotional crisis. I went home in a panic that night and added furiously to my autobiography. The next time I saw Colette, she seemed to backpedal.

My emails to Irene became more pointedly ironic. She remained neutral. I sensed growing impatience with me from her and others – most notably from Colette and her mother Andrée, during a visit in 2014 when they were trying to rush me into completing my writings. The pressure continued into the fall, by which time Irene might have become exasperated. I had reached the one- to two-hundred-page mark by then and felt that much was going on here and in Europe – but nothing I could point to. Irene had been placing our mother front and center during Skype calls, even though, by that point, she needed to be propped up. I speculated that

Irene was sending a message that our mother was being properly cared for and that on no account should I travel to Europe.

Most of our conversations were through Skype, which had suddenly become almost unusable. During 2012–2013 I experienced odd effects while conversing with Irene, Colette, and Katsumasa Kozono in Osaka. Things like my face appearing blue-tinged on screen, frequent interruptions, bars overlaying my images, and frequent freezing of the screen. Overall, conversations became so distorted and unreliable that they were hardly worth the effort of repeatedly reconnecting and attempting to conduct normal conversations through these frequent interruptions.

In early November 2014, without explanation, Irene gave me the name of Italian journalist Federico Rampini. I looked him up on Wikipedia and found him to be a left-wing writer working in Milan for *La Repubblica*, a center-left Italian newspaper, with an interest in Silicon Valley.

As I walked the aisles of Costco, a man (likely Hispanic; probably in his forties) walked past me and said: "Manzanar." No more than a few days later, I looked out my window at home, and saw the same man pass by.

In October, after I reported a break-in, two policemen visited and read my summary of the break-ins occurring around that time, which I had prepared ahead of time, a document of four pages. After filling out a report, they handed me a copy. The document is included in the attached CD.

Sometime after Jon Howard left Colette's apartment for the last time (he was in bad shape, mentally and physically), she asked me to accompany her to Walnut Creek, a town in the Bay area, to retrieve a car he had taken. We found him living in a parking lot, delusional, and called one of his sons to drive from Northern California to take care of him.

Before arriving, we made a detour to a police station nearby. Colette went inside and, after waiting an interminable time, I followed. I had a curious interaction (one of several that day) with a police officer, possibly Asian – one of two people manning the front desk. Later in her car, Colette seemed to be trying to get me to articulate the name of a nearby street named Oak Grove Road, or something similar. This street had the same name as the entrance to JPL where, decades earlier, I tried to get an employee arrested. There were other such coincidences and peculiarities during this trip.

In November of that year, I received a letter from the Highway Patrol in San Bernardino. An item belonging to me had been found in a stolen car. Without describing the item, the letter said it was available for me to pick up. Rather than doing so, I chose to go to my local police station. Later, speaking by phone with a detective, I believe, when I mentioned my desire to close the case, he said: "What's your hurry?" I have heard nothing of the matter since. Could some legal problem of mine be held in abeyance? And if so, why?

### **Gratuitous insult by Colette, after a trip to Texas**

Around March 2015, with no preamble, Colette made an uncharacteristically insulting remark to me one day in Santa Monica. "You've got a bit of the bitch in you." Quite uncharacteristic of her. Where had she gotten that phrase? I heard those exact words directed at me by a Black fellow Caltech student named Arno, in the seventies.

Once, Colette wanted to know where I had gotten some printer paper that dated back to the late 1970s, and why I was still using it. She also once asked me for details about a mugging that took place when I lived in Echo Park in the 1980s. On another occasion, she wanted to know whether or not I had slept with a landlady in the 1970s. Nothing if not thorough, these blighters.

## I Give a Talk, My First

On February 14, 2014, I gave a talk at the Los Angeles Public Library branch on Robertson Boulevard. The talk was sparsely attended due to a simultaneous athletic event in LA, making access to the library difficult. A few days before the talk, I had the last of several hit-and-run car accidents. The incident, along with license plates of the car involved, were reported to police. Covering several decades of my life, the talk – “My Dealings with the Government or It Takes a Schizophrenic: an Ugly Story” – laid out my reasons for believing the Government was responsible for sustained harassment, intoxication, and provocation – with the goal of leading me to commit destructive acts against Jews or Jewish interests. A video is still available on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/DDAx6UgQ-OE> (mind the capitalization). It can also be searched for by typing "berghawkins" (without quotes) into the search box at [www.YouTube.com](http://www.YouTube.com).

Afterward, when I returned home, loaded down with my video recording equipment, one of my neighbors, a man named Tyson, walked by as I opened my door. "Anything for a buck," he said. Colette later commented that the fact this video existed was a good "insurance policy" for me. The talk was later, on May 23, uploaded to YouTube.

## Suggestions that I Rewrite My Autobiography as Fiction

Jeannine Frank once suggested I present my autobiography in a stand-up act as fiction – and perhaps comedy. I declined.

In October 2014, back at her apartment after a "busy" visit to a laundromat in Venice, which I previously related, Colette said: "You can write your book, but as fiction. I can get you a 'special deal.'" I refused to entertain the idea of writing fiction, replying "nonfiction only." She seemed to quietly approve.

In the spring of 2015, while I was visiting Janusz in Whittier, he remarked that I should or could rework my autobiography into a piece of fiction. When I protested, he reminded me of a famous author who had made changes in society solely through his fiction. I firmly refused. He seemed cross.

Sometime around 2019, Irene said I should change names or publish the book under an alias – going so far, at one point, as to suggest my motive for publishing was a desire for attention. Irene has also emphatically told me to leave her name and the names of her friends out of it, as has, at various times, Colette.

Not a bit of it, Gentle Reader, not a bit of it.



## CHAPTER 16

### Colette Walczak's Cancer Returns, Her Death

#### First Bout of Cancer

Sometime in 2010, Colette called from her mother's house in Indiana to tell me of a lump in her breast. She cried; we both cried. On returning to Los Angeles, she began a course of counseling and treatment, which eventually led to a lumpectomy. At that time, her margins were said to be clear – a good sign. She elected NOT to have chemotherapy or radiation treatments. Neither would she, at my suggestion, consider a radical mastectomy. Instead, unbeknownst to me, she began getting medical advice from one or more charlatans. This was to continue until her death in 2018. Over the years, I would repeatedly question her about any possible recurrence of symptoms, referring to her cancer as "Mr. Bobo." The answer was always no. Until, that is, symptoms reappeared.

I now suspect our visit to her father, Ted Walczak, and his companion in Idaho in the summer of 2017 may not have been entirely welcome. (See the brief note in one of my emails regarding the behavior of Carole Lewis, Ted's longtime companion, at dinner one evening during my stay.) It is entirely possible Colette had engineered this visit to provide me with an opportunity to extort a sum of money from her father, a well-to-do former banker, in the guise of a "loan" – thus making good on the offer of a bribe some years earlier in Los Angeles. (I have already related that incident.) Any such attempt on my part might have been frowned upon by the law – perhaps qualifying as attempted extortion. A further bonus for the *Securitate*.

#### **A brief (and ugly) aside**

In case, Gentle Reader, you are somewhat taken aback by Colette's maneuver vis-a-vis her father, and feel I am taking undue advantage of your credulity, I would remind you of a somewhat comparable situation in the Soviet Union of the 1930s – the notorious case of Pavel "Pavlik" Morozov, who apparently shopped his parents to the NKVD for, perhaps, showing insufficient zeal for the communist adventure. Disgusting, but true. This attitude, characterized by a striking lack of respect on the part of the state (any state, apparently) for the institution of the family is, take it from me, not restricted to the former "Worker's Paradise." I firmly believe that Colette, in dealing with her own family, showed marked tendencies in this direction. Having been eyewitness to this sort of behavior on her part, I make this statement with confidence. I can also rely on my own experiences with Irene, who, while not as extreme as Colette in her treachery (at least toward me, her own brother), has shown similar tendencies. Is history not replete with indecent parallels?

#### Her Cancer Returns

That summer, during a bike ride, Colette complained of tiredness, forcing us to cut short our excursion. Back in Los Angeles, Colette's symptoms soon became increasingly serious. She began seeing doctors. Some months later, by the winter of 2017, Colette's symptoms seemed

significantly worse, and she moved into my bungalow. We began going from one emergency room to another. Colette would be hospitalized for several weeks at a time, but continued living with me until the spring of 2018.

A recurring theme around this time was her reluctance to deal with her illness constructively. She would order quantities of herbs, and have me pick up remedies of a doubtful nature from pharmacies while refusing to consider getting adequate health insurance – something her sister and I repeatedly tried to convince her to do. On many occasions, when I wanted to discuss such serious matters with her, she would sweetly brush me off with the same phrase: "Not tonight; I'm going to sleep now. Time to count sheep. It's 'fluffy time'." Cute but, given the gravity of the situation, maddening.

I remember hijinks with Colette around that time. While she was living on my couch, I would sometimes pinch her cheek lightly. She would then show some animation and perhaps give me a smile. Pinching her cheek a second time, she would show a wider smile and more animation. With the third pinch, she broke out into a manic grin and tilt her head sideways. With the last pinch, however, she would pretend to become somewhat unhinged, waving and shaking her hands on either side of her head, a totally manic expression on her cute face...

While staying with me during the spring of 2018, Colette selected me as sole beneficiary of her entire estate. After I demurred, she settled on Irene and a mutual friend. At that time, no will was drawn up or signed.

In the spring of 2018, Colette became angry with me. Her condition having greatly improved, she returned to her own apartment in Santa Monica. Several months later, sometime after the Fourth of July, 2018, it was decided Colette could no longer live alone, unaided. I was obliged to move in with her. As an aside, see below: when, during a visit by part of her family, Colette attempted to discredit me.

In the summer of 2018, while living with her in her apartment in Santa Monica, I had a will drawn up in accordance with her earlier wishes, as well as a durable power of attorney (DPOA). She eventually signed the power of attorney but, without explanation, refused to sign the will.

During that last year, I noticed occasionally at several hospitals, nurses or persons unconnected with the facility intimidating her verbally and physically.

## A Sample of Colette's Entrapment Attempts

Several years prior to her death, when I was still operating under the delusion that Epstein and company were the source of my problems, Colette took me to an LA jazz club and coffee shop called Doughboy Dozens. There was an open mic hour and she encouraged me to take the microphone and unburden myself. I declined to do so.

Some years before her own death, while her mother was still alive and living her last days at her apartment, I used Andrée's credit card on two occasions. Once, to buy takeout food for the three of us and a second time to buy a pulse oxygen meter from a pharmacy nearby. For the second purchase, Colette suggested I sign her mother's name. I declined, and signed my own.

On August 12, 2017, on our return from Sun Valley, Idaho, where we had been visiting her father, Colette indicated her wish to proceed through Nevada rather than Utah, as we had done on the way up. At nightfall, driving through the Las Vegas strip, my car broke down due to an electrical problem. This required a tow, an overnight hotel stay, and a repair the next morning. Every opportunity to gamble was made available to me, which I suspected was the real reason for the detour. Decades earlier, I had been manipulated by Subhash Sharma into taking an

interest in gambling. It was perhaps hoped that lightning might strike twice and that I could be tempted into resuming my gambling activities – perhaps even intemperately. The memory of the American *Securitate* seemed to be that long.

I have, as I disclosed earlier, a history of sexual involvement with underage girls. I am also attracted to voluptuous women. During the spring of 2018, when Colette was in remission and back in her own apartment, she was visited by her sister and brother-in-law who brought with them their thirteen-year-old daughter. During their visit, Colette called me to advertise the girl's presence, advising me she was thirteen and, more than once, mentioning the girl's ample breasts. Given my well-known proclivities, what is one to make of these remarks? I listened, made no comment, and got off the phone as soon as I could.

Before her death, during my stay in her apartment, I had been picking up (and signing for) her opioid, Norco, at the Kaiser Permanente pharmacy in West Los Angeles. The controlled substance had been prescribed by her oncologist to ease her breathing. I would generally give her the pill in the evening as she was about to go to sleep, but, one night, preparing her for bed, I could not find the bottle. After anxiously searching for it for some time without results, I called her oncologist's office, left a message explaining the situation, and requested another prescription. The doctor never returned my call, neither that night nor the next day. The following evening, on returning to the apartment, I resolved to find the missing bottle. Colette, being a hoarder, made this a challenge. She was resting on the couch when I turned the living room upside down, and she let me know she was unhappy with me – calling me "mean." After a half hour's fruitless search, I moved on to the bedroom and, within five minutes, I had found the bottle of Norco wedged in between the bed's headboard and the wall behind it. I left her doctor another message, canceling the previous request. Once again, he did not call back. Colette offered no explanation, neither did I ask for one.

## Colette Walczak's Death

During her last days, as I tried to assert control over her finances using the power of attorney she previously signed, I found that the account she had recently used to pay her rent no longer existed. Calls to the bank were fruitless, even though I had with me the checkbook she had used in the prior month. In addition, the original of a voided sample check from that account, reproduced here in Figure 25, has gone missing from one of my safe deposit boxes at Broadway Federal Bank/City First Bank in Los Angeles. With the branch manager, Ms. Delmy Martinez, refusing, in writing, to file a complaint with the police, claiming that, as I am the only person with knowledge of the contents, there is no basis for a complaint. When asked, the LAPD informed me that it was up to the bank to initiate a complaint. A copy of the bank's reply is included in the companion CD.

During her final illness, and after much searching on the internet and consultation with the charlatan(s) she never seemed to be without, Colette eventually settled on a silver bullet for her cancer. Namely: a product her brother-in-law, an MD, later characterized as a saline solution. What's more, in keeping with her general thriftiness and to save money, she elected to join a multilevel marketing scheme being promoted by the product's manufacturer.

After a struggle of nearly one year, fifty-eight-year-old Colette Walczak died on September 12, 2018, at 1:56 p.m. in her apartment in Santa Monica, surrounded by friends and family.

Colette's voluminous diaries, handwritten and spiral-bound, went missing after her death.

Except for my childhood, the last year of her life was the happiest year of mine, although I knew early on that she was dying. I had finally been able to do something tangible for her.





# CHAPTER 17

## Life Since Colette's Death

### Continuing Harassment and Provocation

A summary of several odd comments by a doctor, Sarah Elizabeth Hooks, during routine medical visits to Kaiser Permanente Hospital. "Lawson Hawkins is a... (long pause, sentence not finished)." I distinctly heard the comment as the MD walked into the examining room where I was sitting alone. I said nothing. Later, during the same exam, this doctor spoke briefly in what, at first, I took to be a Southern accent (on reflection, perhaps, an attempt at a Black accent). I said nothing. In the fall of 2014, during an examination, the same doctor, standing close by, said verbatim: "Drop her," and, a bit later, "We can get you something a little higher than that." I said nothing. On a later visit, she may also have said something favorable about my having disregarded the previous suggestion.

More than once, at the pharmacy where I had prescriptions filled, the pharmacist, an Asian man, would behave in peculiar ways, difficult to see as part of his role. At least once, he gave me a military salute as I approached him at the counter. I sent a complain about his behavior and the occurrence of other incidents at this hospital to the ombudsman. I never received a reply or acknowledgment.

I experienced a series of similar incidents over the years at several bank branches, which I covered exhaustively in several emails to be found in the accompanying CD.

#### **An ATM tampered with (as I am using it)**

I believe that, quite unusual in my experience, an ATM at the Wilshire Boulevard branch of Broadway Federal Bank/City First Bank was interfered with remotely while I was using it in August of 2020. The symptoms were:

- I was unable to properly enter a specific cash request and was incorrectly issued a hundred dollars instead
- When I tried to use the ATM again, I was unable to get any amount of cash whatsoever
- At times, the ATM would abort an ongoing transaction prematurely

A bank employee, first name Manny, witnessed this incident. I also reported it to a teller in the branch stating, incorrectly, that the ATM might have had a bad keyboard. In October 2020, in Huntington Beach, someone tried to use my business debit card unsuccessfully. As a safety precaution, the card was frozen and a new one issued. In view of my occasional inability to withdraw money using debit cards, I have begun carrying cash with me at all times.

At the beach early in 2020, I crossed paths with two women while walking toward my usual seating area. As I passed them, one said to the other the almost exact phrase I heard my sister utter decades earlier: "I'm taking this to laundry." Or words to that effect. The women said nothing else. Those words had a certain emotional impact on me.

Sometime before April 2019, while driving her to an appointment, Gia Segura, a longtime customer, suggested that I do my laundry. During the drive, she gave me some bedbug spray,

which I accepted, having recently had an infestation. After dropping her off, I drove home, loaded my car, and headed to the nearby laundromat I frequent: the Launderland Coin-Op Laundry.

Upon arrival, I found a welcoming committee laying the groundwork for a two-to-three-hour extravaganza. As I approached the entrance, a man offered me free or discounted laundry services. Brushing him off, I went inside to encounter a half-dozen or more people – mostly Americans, including some Hispanics or Mexican-Americans. Each engaged me in different ways, verbal or physical. Over the next couple of hours, as I did my laundry, I was subjected to a torrent of minor verbal abuse (of the plausibly deniable kind), physical provocation, allusions to some of my offbeat sexual practices and, for the coup de grâce, a short phrase apparently recorded in Bremerhaven, Germany, around 1970, at the apartment of my peculiar friend, Robert Seidenstein.

"Nigger-nigger-nigger!" As I heard this, I suddenly recalled Seidenstein had once used those exact words, for God knows what reason. Apparently recorded at the time and saved for a proper occasion, it was replayed for my benefit on the cell phone of a Mexican-American man standing several feet away from me as I sat reading. Relatively trivial in itself, albeit strange, the incident had implications, which is why I drag my customer's name into it. At some point during the evening, one man even found it in himself to mention my anal use of lubricated candles.

As she was leaving the scene, a Mexican-American woman said: "Is there anything else?" The evening had passed without a single response from me except for a long, challenging stare at her earlier, to which another fellow, also Mexican-American, responded with something like: "*Mátala, mátala!*" (Kill her, kill her!)

Surreal. *¿Qué no?*

Irene had always been stronger and more emotionally stable than me. In the fall of 2019, however, I became so alarmed at some of her erratic behavior that, for several sessions, I discussed my emotional reactions to her with a mental health professional at Kaiser Permanente. The sessions helped. Between what I had witnessed and what I learned from Alberto, I had already suspected something was emotionally amiss with my sister. Unlike Colette who was more fragile and weaker than her, Irene has seldom betrayed the anguish and moral injury she must have been feeling for decades.

## Death Threats

At one of the coffee shops I frequented as well as various other places during 1994-1995, I would hear statements (never aimed directly at me) like: "He should be shot."

Coming from a friend's apartment one night in Beverly Hills, as I was riding my bicycle on the sidewalk, I heard two men standing nearby say: "Excellent" and "Kill him." I had just received a call from someone receiving emails from my "Laundry Lists." She had congratulated me on the contents of my latest email with these precise words: "That is excellent."

At the beach in Santa Monica, near Bicknell Avenue, I overheard reference to the death of Bob Tajima, fellow student at Caltech who died after being run over by a car while riding on the sidewalk in Pasadena, decades earlier. The man making reference said: "Taj."

On another day at the same location, someone said something like: "We can cut your brake lines."

Around 2019, as we stood outside his house, John Zhou alluded to the possibility of someone being killed, should I publish my book.

## Quotes

While in my bungalow having software installed on his Mac laptop, Audley Simpson said, randomly: "Do you want all this to come out?"

Sometime in 2013 I was shopping at my local Albertson's supermarket in Culver City (now closed) when a seemingly deranged, homeless-looking individual standing nearby bellowed at the top of his voice: "Do you know where Uzis in the ghetto come from? Israel!"

Around 2010, when I moved into the area, a Black female neighbor in her fifties called out as I walked by her house: "See that man? He is child-happy." (I believe the phrase "child-happy" refers to a child molester.)

Dennis Allard twice took me to a French restaurant where, each time, unpleasant and peculiar incidents occurred. These contributed greatly, although not exclusively, to my decision to break with him. On the first occasion, after seats at the counter had become available, he and I sat down. A bit later, a woman sitting next to me, who had been seated earlier, said into the air: "Berg has a fetish." I said nothing. On the second occasion, after Dennis prompted our move from one part of the counter to another, a fairly young woman began flirting with me outrageously – if "flirt" is the right word. Perhaps "sexual harassment" would be more accurate. I said nothing and ignored her as well as I could. After several minutes of rebuff, she desisted. Dennis commented casually to nearby diners about me. "He's writing his autobiography."

## Recent Distractions and Strain on My Finances.

At about the time I begin work in earnest on this book:

- There began the three-ring circus of the RVs. During the summer, I invested what was for me a significant sum of money in the RV rental business of Greg William, someone I had previously done much solar work for. This investment is now in limbo. It took me three days to realize what my proper response should be, to have nothing more to do with this person other than by email. There have been no such communications on his part to date.
- A request to write a business plan. As I took up work on this manuscript, Xue Jun "John" Zhou called to ask me to write him a business plan. Initially I agreed, but the next day, I called him back to decline.
- A request by John Teque, for rides all over town. A day later, my sometime helper called to ask me to drive him around town to various job interviews. I declined, and instead offered him a loan for bus fare. He turned me down. Some months later, he was to avoid me when I tried to collect on a small loan.
- A request from a solar customer, Hugo Sanchez, a man living in an RV, for a substantial refund, claiming his AC had never worked properly. He had had his system operational for well over a year. A request I granted immediately. My sister's comment on hearing this: "he must be happy."



# CHAPTER 18

## Government Methods: A Summary

A survey of the concerted provocations, harassment, and intoxication I have been subjected to for decades reveals the following patterns:

- **Financial insecurity:** In my case, artificially created when, through actions of my own, I put into jeopardy the government disability income to which my mental illness entitles me. In the case of my sister, the same was achieved by the simple expedient of cutting short a potentially lucrative career.
- **Sabotage:** Attempts made to disrupt my activities materially; i.e., “show stoppers.” An example would be the repeated (minor) damages sustained by a solar-powered LED sign I attempted to install in my car as a way to advertise my services. Consider, also, the frequent sabotage of my technical work in general or the breaking of the laptop screen I had once mentioned would be the center of my proposed home solar control system.
- **Fear:** Violations of my privacy by persons entering my bungalow in my absence apparently being insufficient, I have also endured break-ins WHILE I am sleeping. The suffocating fear this has, at times, caused can be paralyzing. (See my description of one such incident in Florence, Italy.) As I have already mentioned, fear is a solvent capable of greatly weakening family and other ties of deep friendship, as in the case of Colette Walczak.
- **Entrapment:** Over the last several decades, I have been subjected to repeated attempts at entrapment which, if successful, would have subjected me to serious legal penalties.
- **Humiliation:** Frequent and repeated humiliation and put-downs. I have recounted elsewhere some of the shocking and bizarre situations, many with sexual or racial overtones, I have had to endure while shopping at most of the markets I regularly frequent. This goes on elsewhere, as well (see appendix VI for a comprehensive list of venues).
- **Physical and other provocations:** Attempts to play on my, by now, well-known temper and impatience by what I call “the death of a thousand frustrations.” This sometimes happens daily. Additionally, I consider myself particularly vulnerable to physical provocation of the sort that occurred before my arrest at the Santa Monica library in 1988, due to my having a “prior.”
- **Psychological undermining and manipulation:** Minor sabotage of trivial objects, leaving unclear whether anything has happened which, while not having a material impact, nevertheless undermines my sense of reality or leads me to otherwise doubt myself.
- **Exploitation of ethnic differences:** A staple of intelligence communities, I have found this a fertile field to exploit here in Los Angeles, home of myriad diverse groups – a city once referred to by a noted *Afrikaner* film director as “Johannesburg Lite.”
- **Technical means:** Anything and everything technical I deal with in any way is susceptible to interference. To the extent I depend on technology, I am subject to potentially being held hostage by the convenience of these devices.
- **Threats or instances of sexual violence:** Over the decades, a pattern of repeated threats of sexual violence has been made against me as well as people close to me.

## Financial Insecurity

I experienced clusters of Craigslist ad cancellations for periods of up to a year. Three such clusters, occurring in 2012, 2013, and 2014, were of varying duration, lasting up to a year, during which time I could not advertise my PC repair business. As I understand it, canceling ads in this fashion takes an effort by more than one person. I tried on several occasions to contact the management in protest, but without success. I also asked the Craigslist community for help – again without success. At that time, Craigslist advertising was a mainstay of my business and the ad cancellations affected my operation substantially.

I have already written of the concerted efforts to deny me work, both routine computer repair and the more interesting projects I would sometimes come across. There is, of course, a psychological aspect to this but, more directly, these efforts have had a significant impact on my income. When I was interviewed during the switch from SSI to SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance), the interviewer maneuvered me into signing a false statement, potentially jeopardizing this crucial portion of my income.

Finally, see chapter 19 to see the lengths a person, in this case my sister, may be driven to by financial pressure.

## Sabotage

This has been going on since I lived in my previous apartment. There are never visible signs of entry. I can be gone for five minutes and, when I return, I will find some visible, obvious sign that someone has dropped in. This person must be close enough to my bungalow to be able to respond so quickly. Usually, but not always, nothing of monetary value is taken or damaged. Therefore, motives other than criminal are involved. I have distributed written notices throughout the neighborhood as well as posted signs on my bungalow, asking anyone noticing someone other than me entering my bungalow to call the police immediately.

One key feature of these entries is that seldom is anything of value missing. Exceptions: a pair of prescription glasses and two laptops meant for sale. However, I have frequently noticed:

- Items damaged
- Items moved, sometimes from the bungalow to my car
- Items hidden out of sight that I find months later
- Items I have recently used, disturbed
- Items previously removed that, sometimes later, are returned

For a more exhaustive list of these random instances of vandalism, see the CD included with this book containing the file “Damages.txt.” For an even more complete set of complaints, read the twelve emails, some called *Laundry Lists*, others *Lunaya Pravda*, also to be found on the CD.

An unusual event where a SATA hard disk power connector on my PC was tampered with, leading to a small fire when I turned on the computer on coming home one night. Unusual in that this had the potential for causing serious damage.

More than harassment; these intrusions seem to involve a strong psychological dimension, to wit: the general subtlety and inherent pointlessness suggest an insidious attempt to have me question my grasp on reality. After such an incident, I frequently find myself wondering whether it actually happened or if I were responsible for the event and had simply forgotten about it.

A common trick by the intruder is to remove, though other forms of disturbance are possible, only one item that I recently made use of. Though generally something trivial, that is not always the case. The appeal of this technique is fourfold:

- To increase my level of anxiety once I notice the item is missing.
- To let me understand, in a subtle way, that I am closely watched, even in my home.
- In the event the item is of some consequence, to impede my progress in whatever task I am trying to accomplish.
- When the item is later returned (as in some cases), it only serves to double the impact.

I have, to date, had twelve car accidents since the year 2000. Most, though not all, trivial. Beginning in early September 2020, I began experiencing, once again, a series of encounters with drivers who swerved either quickly or drifted slowly into my lane – sometimes repeatedly over a period of up to a minute. I began noting particulars in my diary. While on the road, I noticed what I call the "taillight show." In this scenario, cars (usually more than one) traveling ahead of me on surface streets or freeway flash their taillights in unusual ways. They typically lightly touch their brake pedal, activating their taillights, without slowing down measurably. This goes on, occasionally, for weeks with each cluster of incidents lasting up to a half hour.

My car was stolen for three weeks in December 2011. After recovery, my license plates were also erroneously reported as stolen, causing me to have unneeded interactions with police.

In 1995, John Zhou engineered a car accident which precipitated a series of events culminating in my leaving the US (possibly permanently) to return to Europe.

## Fear

The second time I noticed someone had been in my bungalow was when the empty cardboard coffee cup stolen the previous night from my car was put in the trash. The next time, several dozen recently xeroxed pages from my autobiography were stolen. Years later, after multiple further break-ins, I wrote a second summary of these incidents and again, called police to report them.

I firmly believe I have also been the victim of intrusions while I am home, in my bedroom, sleeping in my loft bed. The evidence, to me, is incontrovertible. For example, for reasons explained elsewhere, at one point, I had been sleeping with a fanny pack that I always carry whenever I am outside. One morning, I woke up to find it was no longer at my side but on the desk underneath the bed. I had certainly not put it there. Another instance involves a pair of stolen glasses. At other times I found that someone had been inside my bungalow while I slept. There are never physical signs of entry, nor have I ever been disturbed in my sleep. (See the glossary entry for the meaning of "Hot Prowl Burglary.")

There have been entire nights when I have been terrified to the point of being unable to get any sleep. I remember at least one other occasion, over ten years ago, when I was in bed shaking uncontrollably for at least part of the night.



I occasionally experience instances of reckless driving by unknown drivers:

- Cars lunge at me from driveways.
- Cars pull out in front of me or directly at me.
- Cars move from parking on one side of street to across all lanes in front of me, forcing me to brake.
- Cars wander out of their lane ending up perilously close to mine, generally on surface streets but also, at times, on freeways.
- Oncoming cars recklessly make left turns or U-turns in front of me, sometimes forcing me to brake sharply.

In just over four years, I had nine car accidents, and, in 2021, I had another two. I can document about six of them. They ranged in seriousness from minor bumps on the road to accidents serious enough that my car was totaled. At least two of them were hit-and-runs, both of which were reported to the police. Additionally, at least one attempt to report an accident to my insurance company was oddly unsuccessful. The first and most serious of these showed signs of premeditation since the car, a modern SUV, had to have been equipped with air bags which did not deploy, else the driver would have been in no condition to make good his escape. The force of impact on both our cars was so great that my car seat broke.

My various car accidents, listed in order of occurrence

1. Caroline Stroh's car I supposedly backed into in a parking lot on La Cienega Boulevard, causing minor damage. She reported the accident to the DMV and, as I had no insurance at the time, I lost my license.
2. (Name unknown) Serious hit-and-run accident on the 10 freeway, leaving my car totaled. The highway patrol took about an hour and a half to arrive. (April 20, 2012)
3. Nathan Baruch Zakheim backed into me at the Normandie Bakery. I had problems reporting the accident to both of our insurance companies. (June 1, 2012)
4. (Name unknown) in Santa Monica. While leaving the curb, I backed into a car, causing minor damage to his license plate.
5. (Name unknown) Very minor accident on La Cienega Boulevard. I was bumped from behind; no insurance claims.
6. Brittany Dubay backed into me, was reluctant to give insurance information. Payment by her insurance company was offered. I declined. (December 18, 2013)
7. Ida Odell Watson, an elderly person, drifted into my lane, hitting me. Reluctant to give information, at one point during our conversation, she physically hit me. Later, she claimed there had been no accident. (November 26, 2014)
8. Ingeborg Goldston drifted into my lane on the 405 freeway, hitting me. (December 30, 2014)
9. John L. Bell drifted into my lane on the 10 freeway, then drove away. Later, he claimed to Highway Patrol that he was home at the time. (February 10, 2016 – days before I gave a talk about my predicament)
10. Steven J. Weitz backed into me at a local library. I collected insurance payment. (January 9, 2017)
11. He gave his name as Edgar Velasquez though, unable to provide a single piece of documentation, I had to take him at his word. Hitting me from behind as I drove on La Cienega Boulevard, he was behind the wheel of a black Nissan Altima, license

- plates: 7YVA224. I reported the accident to my insurance company and got a claim number of: 212653658, although I claimed no damages. (January 18, 2021)
12. I rear-ended the car of Peter John Karim of Santa Monica while driving on Lincoln Boulevard. He was driving a black Mercedes Benz, license plates: 8NSD316. The fault is entirely mine as I had not had sufficient sleep the previous night and, consequently, felt drowsy though I remember my Tercel accelerating as I hit him. The accident was reported to Progressive Insurance, my insurance company, with claim number: 216499063. (July 2, 2021)

## Entrapment

According to a well-known saying by the former head of Zaire, Mobutu Sese Seko, it takes two to be corrupt. This comment is particularly relevant here as I describe some of the many attempts at entrapment to which I have been subjected over the last several decades. For yes, Mobutu was right, it does "take two to tango." It is difficult to imagine entrapment without at least some slight degree of willingness on the part of the target to go along with what is being offered. There is likely always the germ of an impulse to do wrong in the mind of the victim when entrapment is successful.

Specifically, in the case of my customer needing a Windows XP machine "in a hurry," I initially had no thought of selling a PC with an unlicensed copy of Windows 7 and would not have done so on my own. Just before the customer's arrival I had found that the laptop in question had an unlicensed copy of Windows 7, instead of what the Windows XP sticker on the bottom suggested. But, once presented with the option of either losing a sale or making a profit, however uncomfortably, I went ahead with the sale anyway.

In the case of my friends who, over the decades, have repeatedly engaged in this sort of activity with me, you might well wonder, Gentle Reader, why I continued seeing them. The answer may lie in my all-too-human need for personal contact, perhaps allied with a certain lack of self-respect. I do resent, sometimes deeply, their betrayals but usually, in my loneliness, I come back for more. For a poignant example, see my possibly pathetic reliance on, and deep feelings for, my closest friend, Colette Walczak. It was the same (though to a much lesser extent) with the others. Also, I dimly perceive the parallels between their behavior (and predicament) and those of my sister, Irene.

Irene, for reasons unclear to me, at some point voluntarily furnished me with the address and phone number of a cousin in Paris. This is particularly curious, because, in the past, I had felt great reluctance on her part to allow me to contact relatives. Later, upon getting news from her about the death of an aunt in France, I mailed a letter to the aunt's daughter – my cousin. Although I did not get a written reply or phone call, I did get an email, reproduced in this book. Two other attempts on my part to elicit written or verbal messages from her met with failure. A postcard with a tracking number never got to her, or so I was told by the post office manager, who also told me it was "being held by Homeland Security" in France. The tracking number was of no help either, as the tracking ended before the postcard left the LA area. This may have been an attempt to provide me with the opportunity to "let down my hair" with a relative and perhaps reveal some otherwise private thoughts which could be used to discredit me. Otherwise, the elaborate episode made little sense.

At critical moments, it also seems I have been tempted by offers characterized by varying degrees of unwholesomeness. Temptations ranging from "McDonald's," a nearby fast-food

place, mentioned on the occasion of a car accident with “atmospherics” much in evidence; to less traditional fare: underage girls. And, of course, to more “canonical” adult women, the latter a staple of *Securitate* entrapment attempts in my personal experience.

## Leading Questions

During a conversation with longtime friend Walter Szymanski (now deceased), he abruptly asked me a leading question: “You hate this country, don’t you?” Possibly with the same goal in mind as with the engineered attempt to hook me up via email with my purported cousin.

Recall James Lazell’s leading question, sometime around 1995, referring to David Epstein: “You want him dead, don’t you?” A positive response to this question could have had grave consequences for me.

Paul Blum, someone I had known for some months, asked me, in the frankest of terms and without introduction, questions like: “What are your sexual fantasies?” and “In your business, do you take money under the table?”

Emmanuel Okolo, a customer I had previously worked for, led me into a conversation about politics and was able to elicit from me a derogatory statement concerning former president Obama. I have detailed the incident above in explicit detail.

One day, sometime after my Epiphany, Colette Walczak randomly asked: “You and your sister are not that close, are you?”

Sometime before my suicide attempt, in his Santa Monica office, Ted Fay, my boss, abruptly “confessed” to urges of self-mutilation or self-destruction. He went on at some length before asking me if, perhaps, I felt the same way. I replied that no, I did not and was left puzzled by the interaction since he did not, in the least, seem the sort of person to engage in this behavior.

At an outlet of the Nekter Juice Bar, as I was working on a technical problem for a PC repair customer, I mentioned to an employee an incident in which police had been shot at. The employee said: “It’s great to shoot cops, no?” or something similar. My reply: “There’s no future in that sort of thing.”

After his return to Japan and a hiatus of some years, Katsu contacted me. This was the start of years of frequent conversations between us on Skype. Eventually, I began suspecting him of ulterior motives, but it was not until the summer of 2020 when his trolling became too obvious that I finally broke off all contact with him.

I have already mentioned Caroline Taicher’s repeated attempts to embroil me in felony-level activity involving tampering with computers and phones. (See chapter 11: After Florence: Part 3 [The Plot Thickens] for a detailed account of her multiple attempts to compromise me.)

A young man claiming to be a high school student contacted me through an ad on Craigslist for French lessons. What he really wanted was for me to translate what he pretended was his homework. The texts, however, were so abstruse as to be incomprehensible to me, a native French speaker. I had never seen the likes of them. I have since come to think that what he presented as his “homework” was actually quite a bit more interesting than that. I now think it likely that the text was high-order synthetic French, computer-generated. In other words, likely-sounding nonsense! In addition, there was much to question about his background. I only met him once in my apartment, preferring to work remotely when I became suspicious of his provenance, and that for just one more lesson via Skype. A peculiar young man, perhaps even too old to be a high school student. What could have been the purpose of this charade? Curious.

In the summer of 2012 during the installation of a WiFi range extender at the house of Gretchen Davidson, a long-time customer in South Pasadena, I was the subject of an attempted sting involving the underage daughter of a tenant of hers. The sequence of events:

1. I made an appointment by phone to install the range extender.
2. I arrived on time. No one was present but a young, maybe fifteen-year-old, girl of possible Eurasian descent. I waited about an hour, during which time I did not engage the girl in extraneous conversation. At some point, a young man dropped by and sat with her in the garden. Unable to work since no one else was present, I finally left.
3. On another day, after calling Gretchen Davidson, I returned. Mother, daughter, and Gretchen were present. The mother seemed sedated and the girl occasionally came in and out of the guest building where I was working.
4. After about two hours, I finished my work and was paid. Suspicious that something was afoot, I did not engage in unnecessary conversation with anyone.
5. Since my departure that day, I have had no contact with any of the three parties.

On at least two occasions, I dealt with a customer calling herself Eleanor Hancock. Some months later, claiming she lived on the East Coast, she mailed me a laptop with, she said, “an infection.” When I started her laptop, I noticed on the screen a picture of a barely ten-year-old Black girl, wearing a bikini. Taking care to limit my examination of her disk to the minimum and after running preliminary tests which revealed no problems of the sort she had complained of, I reported to her that her machine was clean and returned the laptop.

On August 14, 2020, an older woman, Jane Stoetzel, called me with a computer problem sounding like an infection. I picked up the machine but, on checking, found nothing wrong. I did install a free anti-virus program, which she lacked. After returning the laptop, I charged her a nominal amount.

During a visit to a customer calling himself “Winston Saxon,” ostensibly for computer repair, I overheard him on the phone talking at length about stolen airline tickets, seemingly unconcerned about my presence. I left as quickly as possible, later reporting the incident to my boss at (coincidentally or not) Malaysia Airlines.

Two men, likely Italian, inside a van at a gas station, offered me some suspicious items (Armani jackets). I declined to buy. Quite some time later, possibly one of the two Italians selling the Armanis came to my bungalow looking for a Windows XP machine. I sold him a laptop with a sticker for Windows XP but which had a (pirated) copy of Windows 7. I had had this laptop for months, assuming the OS was Windows XP. I had only found out it had been upgraded to Windows 7 just before the customer arrived. I sold it to him, anyway.

A French-speaking man living in Beverly Hills suggested I could make some money with a pirated copy of Windows 7, which he would furnish me. I refused. He called me again, but I did not answer.

A young Black man calling himself Kwame, apparently having found me through one of my ads, was interested in hiring me for some elaborate computer project. During his visit, it becomes apparent that he did not know what he was talking about. I began to suspect he was sent to me to see if I would try to scam him. I refused to help and charged him nothing.

In the hope of perhaps eliciting an intemperate reaction on my part, I have for years been the target of abortive but seemingly aggressive moves on the part of usually unexpected people including a neighbor, Baba Outrom (as I nicknamed her), plus other neighbors and numerous random individuals.

## Humiliation

Sometime after 2000, Dennis Allard got wind of the embarrassing incident occurring in the first days of my hospital stay after my suicide attempt in 1998. That was the time when, from my bed, I raised my arm in the Nazi salute to an orderly or nurse in my room. Dennis attempted to persuade me to drop my quest for a full airing of the Government's involvement in my, my family's, and my friends' lives, thinking perhaps that the threat of embarrassment would be sufficient to deter me.

This anecdote also made its way to another friend, Janusz, I know not how. Over the years he repeatedly made the Hitlerian salute in front of me or would say: "Sieg Heil!" or some variation thereof – perhaps hoping to elicit a response to further discredit me. To this day (in 2021), his attempts continue. Perhaps merely as a gentle reminder from my (former) friend Janusz that I, too, have feet of clay.

It may rightly be objected, at this point, that I should, in the name of decency and out of respect for those I care deeply for, gloss over or resort to euphemisms regarding the repugnant topics to follow. Sparing you, in the process, any discomfort this might occasion. Not a bit of it, Gentle Reader, not a bit of it.

#### Fellatio

At the Trader Joe's on Culver Boulevard in Culver City, a customer in the checkout line ahead of me demonstrated a graphic, simulated display of the act of fellatio. He did this in full view of the checkout clerk who, seemingly delighted at the customer's unusual pose and rhythmic movements, laughed loudly as his head bobbed up and down. After the customer left, the clerk turned to me and handled my purchases as though nothing had happened. I said nothing.

#### Fisting

On one occasion while I was at Irene's apartment in Florence, her then husband, Persio Dello Sbarba, perhaps checking the thoroughness with which I had discussed my life and predicament with Mother, verified that I had discussed with her a sexual practice known as "fisting." Though perhaps unable to fully understand what I was saying she, nevertheless, retained some residue of the emotional impact – enough that she reacted perceptibly when he tested her at dinner one evening. A bit of innocent fact-finding on his part.

#### Mimicry of various sexual acts in public

I have occasionally run into people enthusiastically mimicking various sexual practices of mine in:

- Fast food outlets
- At the opera in downtown Los Angeles
- My local branch of the Los Angeles Public Library on Robertson Boulevard (from a librarian, no less)
- Several local supermarkets

I can only assume that Irene received similar reactions in Italy. Here is another small but representative sample.

#### Vaginismus

Here is an incident I was able to grasp thoroughly. At Colette's suggestion, four of us, including Irene, once went to a Chinese restaurant, Hop Li, in West Los Angeles. From the

comments of both waiters and nearby customers, I was able to piece together the fact that my sister probably suffers from a medical/physical/psychological condition akin to that suffered by former Philippines First Lady Imelda Marcos: vaginismus – a condition making sexual intercourse painful, if not impossible. It was further suggested, *a demi-mot*, that this was the reason for a certain, perhaps inevitable, proclivity of hers. It could be argued that I had learned of this directly from Irene. But I categorically deny she and I have ever discussed sexual matters. To this day (some ten years later), I have had no direct or indirect confirmation from her that she suffers from this condition.

#### Cunnilingus

Personal information regarding my sexuality has been widely distributed to, among others, my sister, who once commented at dinner on a sexual preference of mine, cunnilingus, by way of a pun in German: “*Deli-CAT-essen*” (*essen* being the German verb meaning to eat). Neighbors and co-workers occasionally betray knowledge of intimate details, characteristics, or infirmities of mine – all of a sexual nature.

#### Hot buttons (in the form of words and gestures)

I have, over the years, noticed a recurrent pattern of behaviors by people nearby, most of whom I do not know and have never seen before. These interactions usually last no more than a moment, although they can go on for some time, depending on circumstances. I have heard or witnessed each item listed below, often repeatedly.

#### Verbal:

1. *Ja* (presumably German, spoken by a Spanish speaker)
2. *Cabrón*
3. Weird
4. Nigger and “*forme fruste*” variations on the word; i.e., “nearer,” “dinner,” etc.
5. (*Calmaté*) *Mulata*
6. Mother
7. Father
8. Go! (Home)/(You don’t belong here.)
9. *Perro/Pero*
10. Gay/Homosexual
11. Shoot (him/you)!
12. Get you!
13. Bye!
14. Do you want a bag?
15. (Is that) good? (Are you) good?
16. Are you ready?
17. Work, sucker!
18. Berg! (sometimes stated repeatedly)
19. Jew!
20. Sue!
21. Brief burst(s) of laughter
22. Nice!
23. Screams/shrieks (including those of children)

#### Physical:

1. Arm (partly) raised in approximation of Nazi salute

2. A nearby person taking ¼ step toward me
3. Someone placing hand on (his own) butt in view of me (sometimes repeatedly)
4. Cutting ahead of me in line
5. Briefly stopping ahead of me or blocking my way

In brief, a summary of my fears and personal problems brought to light and exploited.

## Physical and other Provocations

I find myself the frequent target of provocation of a physical nature, generally in stores where I regularly shop. Notably, this is a regular staple of my experience whenever I shop at my nearby Trader Joe's or at Costco in Marina del Rey – provocations sometimes carried out to extreme lengths. This takes the form of customers or employees approaching me as though unaware of my presence – only to swerve, avoiding me at the last moment. Intemperate Negro that I am, I have for years been the target of this kind of abortive but aggressive and unexpected moves of a verbal or physical nature.

At the Karabagh Meat Market and Deli on Santa Monica Boulevard in Hollywood. After a while, the bakery, from which I had previously bought some excellent bread, no longer seemed to have any in stock whenever I went there. Even a close friend, Seweryn Skrybinski, got into the act, suggesting on one occasion that I leave a deposit with the store to ensure a loaf was available the next time I visited. Practical, wot?

Visiting the Best Buy on Pico and Sawtelle in West Los Angeles. In the course of completing a PC repair assignment, I found that an item online that was said to be in stock at the store was not. Upon my arrival there the next day with the model number and price, the clerk, apparently unable to find it, directed me to a similar item, which turned out to be incompatible. Several hours later, after I returned to the store and spoke with a manager, the correct item was suddenly available. No explanation was offered for the clerk's earlier inability to find the article. For years, I have also had numerous problems at another Best Buy location.

### **At the Beach or "the Voice of His Master"**

From the genteel, upper-middle-class *hausfrau* of Santa Monica parading her talents in verbal harassment at the beach (Bicknell Avenue area) to the knuckle-dragger with a face from Lombroso summoned from the depths of Pacoima (not that I have anything against the good people of Pacoima) for a bit of physical intimidation at the same venue. I refer to all of this as "Talk Therapy." (See the glossary.)

Over the last few years, this has been happening frequently, sometimes for days running, when I go there alone to sit quietly near the bike path. After some delay, a procession of people (blending in with the normal crowd and indistinguishable from them) begins strolling by, seemingly innocently, to deliver themselves of their verbal "payload" as they come within audible range of me. Without pausing, they continue on their walk although, at times, some stop to sit near me for an extended session. I have sometimes had this kind of theater develop and reinforce a theme over several days in succession, depending on how long I am there and the level of desired emotional impact. On any given visit to the beach, there may be as many as several dozens of these "skits," as I call them (see the glossary), each as short as a few seconds.

I imagine this type of operation requires a staging area where participants are marshaled, with pairs (they usually travel in pairs, unless an individual uses a cell phone), then briefed before being sent off for their performance. A theme selected and fleshed out, scripts written beforehand, roles distributed – the whole operation needing synchronization. Considering the number of people sometimes involved and the duration of these events, the logistics must be daunting.

An instance of physical intimidation: in the fall of 2020, a young Black male neighbor walked by me on the sidewalk and, as we passed each other, he, seemingly to avoid contact with a tree's protruding branch, suddenly swerved in my direction causing me to flinch. As he moved on, I heard him say: "Now, you are not so high." No one else was present.

## Psychological Undermining and Manipulation

Meeting with someone I have known for several years, someone who has been crucial in my efforts to advertise my computer services and generally very supportive, Jeannine Frank. At a restaurant and/or café in 2020 (not necessarily on the same occasion):

Utterances:

Statement #1) Asks: "Is Irene still alive?"

Statement #2) Asks the leading question: "You speak German, don't you?" When I respond in the negative, then asks if Irene and I are from the same family.

Explanation:

Regarding statement #1) Intent: I was meant to report this bit to Irene, verbatim, to increase pressure on her. This is an instance of manipulation, ugly in its implications.

Regarding statement #2) The statement implies my sister is so notorious a liar that whether we are from the same family is questionable. Intent: same as with statement #1) as well as perhaps expressing frustration with something in my sister's stance or behavior.

This, not from a friend, obviously, but an ally...

I must here pause to consider whether, and to what extent, my sister and I are considered to be "cannon fodder." And, if I read the tea leaves correctly, whether Irene has not been grasping at straws lately.

During a Skype conversation on Saturday, July 3, 2021, my sister Irene took pains to point out the "damaging" effects some of my writings could have on my life. Specifically, she quoted the following phrases from the book's front and back covers:

1. "...meant to be a killer."
2. "...I want a scandal."
3. "...Jewish People..."

She emphasized that once these and other inflammatory words found their way to the internet, people would quickly make a connection to me, ultimately affecting my reputation and potentially impacting my business. She added that the effect was "scary," and that I even risked being regarded as a potential killer.



I'll briefly mention here that, on the previous afternoon, I had had the 12<sup>th</sup> car accident of this century. An accident which left me somewhat shaken and my car in need of repairs and practically undriveable.

Her behavior rises to the level of that of my other (non-biological) sister, Colette Walczak. There is, as well, the likelihood — given the demonstrated morals of these Gentlemen of the *Securitate* — that they might not be above using emotional blackmail, in which they hold Irene's safety and well-being over my head in an attempt to ensure my "good behavior."

Can there be a thing more ignoble than using a compromised — how deeply, I cannot know — and sometimes desperate woman, who has (partly due to my own general cluelessness) shown signs of being at the end of her rope against her own brother? My immediate email response to Irene Hawkins, currently residing in Florence, Italy, was simple and heartfelt. "May our tears prove invincible." And if I can, somehow, expiate my sin of Mediterranean *jem'en-foutism*, having dawdled for so long that, by now, she may conceivably be compromised beyond redemption, that, too, would be welcome.

I had known Colette to become verbally abusive — even, on one occasion, to physically attack me — in futile attempts to discourage my mentioning her in my book. While not as vehement in her efforts to muzzle me, Irene has:

- tried to dissuade me from writing the book
- coaxed me to use a pen name
- tried to persuade me to change the names of persons involved
- requested that I not mention her "friends" (among them, a certain *Nilüfer Çagatai*)
- insisted I not include her name in my story

And now this...

In some cases, I will admit to having hesitated and considered accommodating her. Not for long, though. By now, my responses to Colette's entreaties are well known, as is my behavior toward her in the last year of her life. As for Irene, I can only state that the past is often prologue to the future...

My touchstone, these many years, from the "dark decades" till now, has been the simple-minded phrase "The more, the merrier." I see no reason, my sister's apparent reaction notwithstanding, to deviate — not by so much as an inch — from my firmly committed stance.

*Offensive à outrance!*

And to my beloved sister, I repeat: The best of luck to you. May our tears prove invincible.

Other instances of psychological undermining:

- Gaslighting. I have covered this above in detail.
- Noises. Colette, I, and possibly Irene have been subjected to this technique in which sounds disturb my sleep or make it difficult to concentrate. Often faint, they occur in random clusters, day or night, sometimes from inside the apartment. I have discussed more common uses of sounds in other sections.
- Events happening at the threshold of detectability. Either sounds or conversations which, as I have mentioned, can be so faint that one cannot make out the words, or

even fainter, in which case I have actually strained to detect whether there is any noise at all. In another category of “events at the threshold of detectability” are instances where I am not sure whether I actually did something – move a pen, say – or whether someone actually intruded into my private life and was responsible for the event in question.

- In either of the above cases, the purpose here is not to influence my life materially (e.g., slow my progress on a project), nor even harassment; no, the goal seems to involve, at least in part, destabilizing me psychologically and loosening ties to reality by causing me to question myself.
- The complexity and intricacy of these sounds effects rise, at times, to the level of veritable “sound montages.” Just as in the movies.

A person who feels bad, either physically or emotionally, is less likely to offer resistance to his Masters. In this business, constant put-downs seem to be the order of the day. At the beach one day, I was sitting, reading, when two matronly late-middle-aged women of Asian/Korean descent walked by me. One of them said: “*Le Monde*.” Interestingly, I had recently looked over that French newspaper online. This illustrates the used of several tricks: surprise, incongruity, and reference to recent events. But what happened next was even more interesting. As they discharged their obligation, an American male observing the scene said something like: “I bet you’d both like to do him at the same time.” These two poor creatures visibly cringed at this declaration before continuing on their way. Maintenance of dominance by humiliation.

From the Stalin era, in the camps of the *Kolyma* in Siberia, comes a story told by Shalamov in his book *Kolyma Tales*, of a relatively humane commander who, new to the job and thinking he could get more work out of (relatively) better fed inmates, upped the food rations. It was not long before he was forced to reduce them again when the inmates, reacting to the improved conditions, killed themselves in greater numbers.

Drugs used on me without my consent or awareness

See the lengthy description in chapter 14: *Walpurgisnacht*, told in the Mode of Innis, of what I believe to have been the use of drugs on me without my knowledge. If these are the lengths these people will go to here, where there are laws in effect, what do you suppose they get up to in, say, Jakarta?

Zersetzung

A mainly psychological technique widely employed against enemies of the regime and dissidents of the former East German Republic (DDR). (See the glossary.)

Comments about me either made in real-time (i.e., as I do something) or after the fact is a technique applied to me most every day. What is commented on or repeated can be something I recently saw on the internet, something I said, something I did, or something I wrote. In a conversation once with Oscar Revey, he explained the psychological impact of a situation in which people at a party are filmed by multiple video cameras with the images projected onto a wall. He said the effect is more unsettling than amusing. This is, in essence, the position I find myself in: constantly being monitored for my behavior and regularly being commented upon, either in real-time or after the fact.

As two people walked by me, a man said: “*Khokhol*” (Russian slang referring to a Ukrainian). I doubt there is ANY word even remotely similar in pronunciation in English or Spanish. He did not say “*Kokol*,” as most Americans, usually having difficulty with the sound

"Kh," would have done. Coincidentally or not, I had been using this word recently in my bungalow.

Jean Levitan, a customer for PC repair, had on her computer a set of pictures which, during the course of my work at her house, and in her presence, I saw. They consisted of pictures of little girls in bikinis and of a corpse in a car, the result of an accident. Gruesome, inappropriate, and incongruous.

As mentioned in a previous chapter, an accumulation of incidents – many minor, some not – happening over an extended period led me to experience a noticeable increase in nervousness and tension. Tangible proof was found in elevated stress hormone levels, as documented by my doctor. I call this the "strategy of tension."

## Exploitation of Ethnic and Sexual Differences

Over the last few years, there has been a consistent pattern of provocation by, among others, Hispanic individuals – crude provocations at times involving neighbors I have known for years. The same, to a lesser degree, applies to Blacks.

As I finished this manuscript early in 2021, during a meandering Skype conversation lasting well over an hour, my friend of over thirty years, Janusz, currently living in Poland, referred to a former friend of mine, Renee Chaba, also an acquaintance of his, as "that old bitch." A woman over ninety years old. Someone I have previously mentioned here as having "felt the lash of history." He may even have repeated himself. This sample is illustrative of the leading question technique, as well as of the exploitation of ethnic differences. I find this to be off the plate and am therefore ending a decades-long relationship with my former friend. In years past, I had considered and been considered, by both Janusz and Seweryn Skrybinski, to be brothers.

To summarize events happening during two visits to a friend, Jadwiga Szymanski, the widow of Walter Szymanski: in a meandering conversation lasting over an hour, this individual made negative remarks accompanied by mimicry of the mincing movements of a homosexual, among other displays, while attempting to elicit my opinions on subjects seldom discussed by us – certainly not for this length of time:

- Black people
- Lesbians
- Transgender and LGBT people
- Well-to-do people
- Jews, briefly mentioned; my assent to a negative comment solicited – and given

For another instance, see the leading question by Wendy Miller (deceased), PC repair customer: "You believe Asians marry Jews for their money, don't you?" This dovetailed with a comment made by John Zhou, sometime earlier. You will note, Gentle Reader, that the overwhelming majority of such statements attributed to me seem to have occurred since my Epiphany. Furthermore, as the date of publication of this book nears, the frequency of these statements AND leading questions asked, only increases in frequency.

It seems to me that someone is attempting, not only to influence others by putting on display purported opinions of mine, but mainly to influence ME, discouraging me about my prospects by showing to what extent I can be manipulated.

## Technical Means

Over the last two decades I have had bursts of odd computer and cell phone-related problems. A brief list, followed by a sample of some actual incidents:

- Problems with Skype during calls to Irene, Katsu, Janusz
- Cell phone problems of various sorts
- Several of my cell phones bricked. I have kept some as evidence
- Strange, cryptic calls; pictures and text messages, sometimes at odd hours
- Hacking of my computers and those of Colette, Irene, and several customers
- Software uninstalled in my own computers, and data destroyed
- Multiple backup hard disks and external drives, either physically or logically (i.e., file system altered) destroyed. Actions with particularly grave implications for my work. I keep several such damaged drives at home as evidence
- Deleted email(s)
- Internet-related fraud attempts, not consummated – with both myself and a customer as victims

There may even have been an element of provocation in the harassment – as though someone were looking to tempt me into retaliating. In that case, I could have faced severe criminal penalties. I note that these intrusions were meant, at least in part, to catch my attention, as I am too unsophisticated to detect abnormalities except for those of the grossest, most obvious kind.

Colette Walczak used to call me occasionally to report problems with her laptop, which were clearly instances of intrusion. Of a visual, obvious sort often involving malfunctions of her word processor, these would have been impossible without outside interference.

A WiFi router I was trying to set up for a longtime customer had its password changed numerous times as I worked. Resetting the unit, which had the effect of restoring the password to default value, did not help as the password was immediately changed. I eventually gave up, telling the customer what had happened.

A customer in Santa Monica, Lena Simovic, whose computer I was working on at her apartment showed signs of being broken into (while I was there, working on it), making my job more difficult. Some days later, she called and accused me of having broken into her social media account. An understandable accusation since the account showed the computer used for the illegal access had been running the Linux operating system – an unusual one, which I myself use. I believe I was able to convince her otherwise, but, understandably, there has been no further work from that quarter.

I have already touched on the case of the purported student for French lessons who brought me what he said was homework to translate that was not only well beyond the level of comprehension of ANY high school student but, I suspect, may actually have been computer-generated, plausible-sounding, nonsense possibly meant to embarrass me had I attempted to translate this gibberish. It only took me over a decade to come to this (tentative) conclusion.

In September 2020, I was installing the Linux operating system in a tower I was about to sell to a customer when, while downloading updates, I found the password had been changed – requiring me to redo the work. The next day, when demonstrating the computer to the customer, he asked that I show playback of some YouTube videos, necessitating connection to the internet. When I did so, it immediately resulted in a peculiar malfunction of the browser.

The YouTube page partly loaded, but would not play videos. The customer declined the purchase.

The USB music stick caper with a “Hot Prowl Burglary” thrown in for good measure. For some years now, I have been unable to play music stored on USB sticks on my car stereo – something I had enjoyed for years. The problems first manifested several years ago as I tried to play a song from a USB stick permanently plugged into my car stereo. The file system had been tampered with, and most of the music it contained had disappeared.

I tried to copy files from a laptop at home onto the stick. That began a multi-year struggle to get music back in my car. Usually a trivial task, this time it took me years before I was successful. When I finally had the complete set of music back on the USB device, I stored it in my fanny pack without actually testing the stick. There it sat for weeks until Katsu, speaking to me on Skype from Japan, began gently reminding me to try it out. After a few reminders, I checked the fanny pack and found the stick missing. The pack, which also contains important items such as my diary and some backup hard disks, is always, as I have previously stated, either on my person when I am out or hanging on a doorknob in my bungalow when I am home. Alarmed by the implications, I began sleeping with it next to me. Imagine my utter consternation when, on waking up one morning, I found the pack, not next to me on my loft bed but on the desk located underneath the bed. I had definitely not left it there the previous night. This may not be the first time this has happened to me. I have related above another such occurrence in Florence, Italy, in 1995. (See the glossary for the definition of “Hot Prowl Burglary.”)

## Threats and Instances of Sexual Violence

### **Irene**

Threat of sexual violence made at a La Jolla restaurant, and witnessed by me (mentioned in chapter 1)

### **Bergendahl**

A brief incident, perhaps telling, during my first suicide attempt in 1988. As I related in chapter 5, while sitting on the window sill of Irene's apartment in Manhattan, I happened to look up at a cop leaning out of the window of the apartment above who looked down at me while licking his lips. A gesture perhaps somewhat out of place as the fire department and police were, just then, about to foil my suicide attempt.

### **Diagnosis in a Manhattan psychiatric ward, Oscar's later comment**

While being held in the closed ward of St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital in Manhattan, I was asked by a psychiatrist if I thought homosexuals ever made passes at me. I replied in the affirmative. Much later, relating this incident to Oscar Revey, my psychotherapist friend, I asked for an explanation. He said that paranoia, such as I, at times, exhibit can be associated with fear of homosexual impulses.

### **A possible manipulation by Colette before my most serious suicide attempt**

In the late nineties, Colette suggested (and may have provided copies of) two titles for me to read. One was *In Praise of Older Women* by an Eastern European writer. The other, of particular interest here, was the autobiography of a criminal who, on release from prison, became a writer. I eagerly read both of them. Part of the second book, devoted to a somewhat lurid depiction of prison life, made something of an impression on me, and may have contributed to my mood around the time of my forthcoming suicide attempt. I suspect that both titles, particularly the second, were not selected by chance.

### **Anecdote involving a customer over a decade ago, while I lived in my single**

While still living in my single, I was visited by a customer, and the ensuing interaction proved to be anything but normal. This man – a stocky, muscular Black – proceeded to subtly intimidate me while we carried on a meandering conversation. At the time, feeling vaguely uncomfortable but not really aware of what he was doing, I noticed he would continually touch me, mostly on the arm. It was not until later that I began feeling there had been something distinctly odd about his behavior. Almost a decade later, in a surprising turn, Colette referred to this disturbing incident when I advised her to not take too seriously the people who had wrecked her life and were threatening me with the same fate. Her immediate response, showing how well she had been briefed at some point, was to imitate the gestures that man had made long ago by touching me on the arm. The import was unmistakable.

### **Colette**

As she and I arrived for a performance in Griffith Park, we made our way to an empty spot on the grass. Just as the play was starting, Colette seemed to make a threatening gesture in the direction of a young woman seated nearby. Why she did this, I do not know. Minutes later, though, a heavy-set Black woman sitting in front of us began glaring at Colette, making her distinctly uncomfortable. Nothing was said by anyone.

### **Others**

At a business I often frequent, I heard a customer who had been waiting for service speak within earshot of a nearby employee I believed to be homosexual, "Are you open down there?"

Summarizing the above paragraphs, it seems that the technique of threats of sexual violence is part and parcel of the toolkit of this Government. And, if I may hazard a guess, at least some of my suicide attempts may have been prompted by a fear of imprisonment, possibly accompanied by the thought of homosexual rape. Furthermore, I may not be the only one in my circle haunted by such fears. Here be dragons.

An attempted seduction by one who shall not go unnamed, instance of implicit sexual violence. What is one to make of an attempted seduction by an attractive, well-heeled woman (surely not lacking in potential partners) of a man much older, not always observant of the best hygiene practices, flatulent, balding and obese – namely me? I will name here that poor, unfortunate creature: Caroline Taicher (previously mentioned at length). Try as I might, I cannot fully convince myself of the mesmerizing potential of my brown eyes... Truth no libel.

### **The stranded Swiss**

She called, likely through an ad on Craigslist requesting computer work. I visited her several times, working on her PC.

Some facts concerning her:

- A Swiss national, she spoke French fluently.
- She also said she knew German although she hated the language and would not speak it.
- She spoke excellent English with little or no accent.
- During one of several conversations, she mentioned a book she had written and self-published in English. While the title escapes me, the subject was advice for men on how to pick up women. She eventually gave me a copy, a paperback of maybe 100-150 pages.
- She lived on Fairfax Avenue, in a 2nd floor, 1 bedroom apartment on the west side of the street, in a building with an inner courtyard and a gate at the entrance. Her living room window faced south into the courtyard while her door, up a flight of stairs, was on the left.
- She told me she was supported financially by her mother, back in Switzerland.
- I think she said she had not been back home in some time.
- She told me her consulate or embassy would, for some reason, NOT issue her a passport, leaving her stranded here.
- I always went there during the day, never at night. She never volunteered what she did for a living.
- She said she advertised on Craigslist. I don't know what services she offered.
- She looked to be about 40 years old, attractive, with no children I knew of. Neither did she ever mention a husband, past or present.
- She seemed to live in her kitchen (which is where her computer was), with the rest of her apartment, including the bedroom, decorated in what I would call "Louis of Baghdad" style.
- Her computer was old and obsolete.

My responses:

- She called me several times for computer repair work.
- Taking her book when it was offered, I barely perused it and put it on my shelf in the bedroom, giving it no further thought.
- I did speak of it to a friend, Beth Wolfson.
- Eventually after a "spill" of water on her computer that she complained of, I decided something was wrong and refused to return there.

Individuals involved:

1. The Swiss woman
2. Beth Wolfson
  - At her house, I once elaborated on the incident and mentioned that this woman had given me a copy of her book.
  - I must have mentioned the publisher or shown her the book in question as Beth, who has worked around that business, recognized the publisher's name.

3. Bergendahl Hawkins
  - This happened BEFORE my Epiphany in 2012.
  - It happened sometime after I had moved into the bungalow I currently live in.
  - I have only spoken of this to one person: Beth Wolfson.
  - After several visits, I never saw her again.
  
4. Kenny
  - Was a customer for PC repair.
  - I think he had been a customer before this incident.
  - Work I did for him during his last visit was either:
    - installation of an operating system (for which he still owes me money).
    - Or, I sold him a video card.
  - His name was possibly changed (to Kevin?) in my files.
  - He was a young Black man, about 30 years old.

Aftermath:

- Kenny came to me for PC work and, noticing the book on my desk in my bedroom, asked if he could have it. I agreed to give it to him.
- I never saw him again.

Conclusions:

- Is this likely a case of “state-sponsored prostitution”?
- Could this woman’s predicament be considered sexual slavery?
- Is she involved in forced prostitution?
- Might her predicament qualify as “forced transfer” or “forced detainment”?
- I strongly feel this was an attempt on her part to get help discreetly.
- An attempt forestalled by Kenny, the customer, as he successfully removed a piece of evidence, including a name (though likely not her real name) which could, conceivably, be used later on to trace her.
- She may therefore feel she has become an invisible person.
- Was the retrieval of the book by Kenny an attempt to warn her and, at the same time, send her a message with maximum psychological impact?

I feel a deep sense of revulsion combined with shame; shame because my ineffectual behavior and inaction in this case may have put this woman at risk, also because of the general state of affairs prevalent here and as commentary about elements of the *Securitate* as well as the implied tacit complicity of this Government.

This. In. The. United. States. Of. America.





## CHAPTER 19

### This Preterite Shore: Concluding Remarks

#### My (Mis)adventure Seen from the Point of View of H.G. Wells's Novel

In *The Time Machine*, H.G. Wells describes a society where, in the distant future, mankind has bifurcated into two groups: 1) Eloi – ethereal, carefree, nonworkers; and 2) Morlocks – wretched creatures who live below ground by day and provide the Eloi with sustenance and comforts. By night, however, the Morlocks come out of their burrows, kidnap Eloi at random, and bring them below ground where they are used for unspeakable purposes. Captured Eloi never return.

One could draw a parallel between Wells's portrait of a dismal future and our world of today, where we (the people of this country and elsewhere) represent the Eloi and the "Organs of State Security" (i.e., the security services of America) are symbolized by the Morlocks. The difference with us today is that when individuals are taken (the proper term of art should perhaps be "Extraordinary Rendition of the Other Kind"), they DO return from the underground – part Eloi, part Morlock – to prey on their fellow Eloi/human beings on behalf of the dreaded Morlocks/security services types. Sentenced to prey upon us for the rest of their lives, these unfortunates are "half-breeds," as they are neither wholly Eloi innocents nor Morlock predators, but possessing the qualities of both.

My biological sister, Irene Hawkins, and my other sister, Colette Walczak (deceased), are/were (to a greater or lesser degree) unfortunately numbered among them, as have been so many other friends, acquaintances, neighbors, and customers.

The term "Eloi" is related to the Hebrew word *Elohim*, or lesser gods. The source of the word "Morlock" is unclear.

#### **Parallels with Martin Luther's Predicament**

Martin Luther did not face the might of the Catholic Church unafraid, courageous, and alone as one might think. A powerful faction of German princes backed and protected him for their own reasons – reasons which may not have had much to do with his beliefs. Otherwise, he would likely have ended up at the stake, courtesy of the "secular arm" of the Church Militant. Same here.

#### Two Opposing Factions?

As far as I can make out, on one side, elements of the American security services attempted to turn me into a killer. On the other side, after they realized what was going on, some of those listed below sought to protect me, perhaps even forming a coalition to this end:

- Elements of various Jewish communities here in the United States
- The Zionist interest in America, as a whole

- The Los Angeles Police Department in conjunction with the Santa Monica Police Department and/or City government
- Elements of the State of California
- The State of Israel-Palestine
- Possible elements of other United States federal government agencies

That a paranoid schizophrenic was groomed over a period of years likely to be used against Jews and/or Jewish interests with an additional fillip of intoxication provided by a Jewish LAPD cop (with weapons made available by other parties for good measure) likely has parts of various Jewish communities on the warpath. It would also not surprise me if the LAPD, given the use made by this government of more than one of their personnel in this affair (I refer here SPECIFICALLY to that poor unfortunate officer – a captain, when last I heard – Dennis Ballas), were they to apply warpaint, as well.

## Expected Countermeasures of the Government

### Lawfare

- A possibility I greatly fear is that I have been placed on a (possibly secret) no-fly list. A possible scenario would then have me, unaware of this, leave the country for a routine vacation only to find, as I try to return, that I am not allowed to board my flight. Thus, I am left stranded overseas and at the mercies of whatever elements of the government find my presence here embarrassing.
- A second, more “muscular” option, one perhaps skirting the edge of legality, involves the chance, now more remote, I believe, of my being formally kidnapped while here in the United States. This is a process known as “extraordinary rendition,” in which I would be removed to a more “suitable” location for an indefinite period, without anyone being necessarily informed of my whereabouts. This procedure parallels similar methods in use in Germany during the Third Reich where this procedure was known as “*Nacht und Nebel*,” (in English, Night and Fog). I mention this seemingly far-fetched option, as it was, to my surprise, hinted at as a distinct possibility by a lawyer I once consulted. Once again, is history not replete with indecent parallels?
- Along more conventional lines, there is the chance that one or more people whose names appear in this book will be used to attempt to silence me by filing lawsuits alleging defamation of character or libel.

### Demonization

- Depiction of me as alienated from society
- Allegations of an unstable home life
- Representation of me as having felt mistreated or persecuted
- Someone with not much going on in his life
- Someone with little to lose
- Depiction of me as having extreme political ideas
- Attempted depiction of me as a hater

Additional, possible efforts on their part, actual or potential:

- Attempts to destabilize me psychologically, perhaps leading to a successful suicide as has happened in the past. This, in my opinion, is the most likely reaction to be expected over the long term, and the one I am the most apprehensive about.
- Repeated attempts and suggestions have been made for me to leave the country.
- Possible attempts to dissuade me from pursuing this confrontation with the government by using the threat of criminal charges as bargaining chips.
- Possible attempts to dissuade me by threatening Irene with criminal charges.
- Using undue influence on my lawyer(s). (See the case of General Flynn, former National Security Adviser of President Trump).
- Attempts to set me up for new criminal charges (possibly federal).
- The "death" of a thousand cuts (to wear me down by constant minor provocation and harassment).
- Portrayal of me as a mentally unstable and therefore unreliable witness with a criminal past.
- Depictions of me as a racist, homophobe, or anti-Semite. Along these lines, my sister, Irene, has recently mentioned the possibility that I could be pictured as an "Afro-American Archie Bunker," to use her (somewhat dated) phrase.
- Attempts to portray me as having predispositions for the kind of "work" the government seemed to intend for me.
- Creation of an "artificial environment" (as defined in the glossary) to sour my outlook on my surroundings, various people, or this country, and causing me to become resentful – thus coloring the tenor of my book and possible later testimony.
- Emails of some years ago (that I believe to be fakes), purported to be from my cousins in France, would point in this direction.
- Finally, echoing the words of Seymour Hersh: "They can't attack my book, so they attack me." In other words: "if you can't pound the facts, pound the law, if you can't pound the law, pound the table."

### **The American security services: Equal opportunity employers?**

From personal experience and, from what I have witnessed, United States security services are willing to target, victimize, use, and degrade anybody: Black, White, Asian, Jew, Mexican/Hispanic, children, the young, the elderly; people from the lower-middle class to upper-middle class, highly educated and otherwise. I have witnessed this kind of activity here and abroad.

The nigger in the woodpile here (that perhaps somewhat inelegant, though apposite, phrase used here with due respect to the memory of my grandfather, Booker Hawkins), however, is the singling out, decades ago, of me in Germany and my sister, Irene, in the United States. This issue deserves further investigation.

#### **Is this a case of tit-for-tat?**

What event, series of events, or atmosphere triggered this brutal and mad response by the American security services? Is there, in general, a moral equivalence between the American *Securitate* and the people I refer to as my Masters – that is, the Zionist interest, portions of various Jewish communities in the United States, the LAPD, and the State of Israel-Palestine? Is this a case of tit-for-tat? If so, what were the antecedents to this sad and dreadful story? Is it possible that the only difference between the two sides is that, this time, it was the Americans who got caught with their hand(s) in the cookie jar?

## Common Threads and Patterns in My Life Since I Came Here

### **Jews: a recurrent theme (since my time at Sound Solutions)**

Beginning with my employment at Sound Solutions, I seemed to enter a new phase – one with an emphasis on Jews as the source of my torments (which was really the work of the security services). This period lasted from 1991 until about 2012 (date of my Epiphany), after which the emphasis on Jews seemed to diminish – about twenty years, in all. Elsewhere in this book, I have detailed specific instances of this happening in Italy, as well. Interestingly, both the owner of Sound Solutions and my direct boss were either Jewish or had Jewish-sounding names.

### **Attempts to connect me with drugs and drug trafficking**

Reuven Levy commented to me sometime after June 1982 that "it would be easy to smuggle drugs." I either did not reply or said that I did not agree. That was the last I ever heard from him on the subject.

Even a cursory examination of the police report detailing the specifics of my arrest in Santa Monica in 1988 shows an emphasis on a drug-induced mental state contributing to my arrest. Something which I strongly deny.

Recall the customer in Northern California who gave me an envelope containing crack (?) cocaine to carry to his "friend," a student at Cal Poly Pomona, a story recounted in detail in chapter 9.

While I worked at Sound Solutions, the office manager commented disapprovingly that I knew Reuven was involved in drug trafficking. These two did not know each other, neither had I spoken of Reuven to him about this matter – or to anyone else, ever.

Lastly, you will recall the attempt by Colette Walczak to hide her bottle of Norco, a controlled substance she relied on to help ease her breathing in the last months of her life. A trick which put me in the unenviable position of having to call her oncologist at Kaiser Permanente Hospital, Dr. Cho, to ask for an unneeded additional prescription. Need I say more?

### **Attempts to establish control through heightened financial stress**

There may have been a concerted effort to deprive both Irene and me of secure sources of funds and income to increase our level of financial stress. To wit:

- The status of an investment I made in 2020 is unclear. The person I invested with behaved in ways uncharacteristic of him. As a result, I am not only deprived of expected income from this investment but the principal itself is in jeopardy.
- Also in 2020, a customer surprised me by asking for a full refund on a system I had sold him well over a year earlier. A refund larger, by far, than any I had been asked for previously.
- My sister, Irene, was induced to abandon a well-paid career and a paid-off apartment while neglecting to make arrangements to settle her considerable school debts, leaving her in a financially precarious position for, potentially, the rest of her life.

- I cannot help but think that my father's senseless move from the adequate apartment I had gone to some trouble to find him in my building may have been partly an attempt to deprive me of his support, both emotional and, potentially, financial.
- In the past, there have been several attempts, some successful, by friends, acquaintances and potential business associates to get me to commit myself to an increase in regular expenses without guaranteeing the financial means to satisfy them.
- Another case in point pertain to the events surrounding my award of Social Security benefits, clouded as it is by the false statement I signed at the time. As a result, there will always be a potential question mark over this crucial portion of my income.
- In 1994-5, as detailed in chapter 7, an elaborate series of events beginning with a staged car accident was put into motion to eliminate the limited financial cushion I had enjoyed up to that point, eventually leading to my departure for Italy.
- Finally, I speculate that the suggestion by my sister, Irene, tantamount to a plea to embezzle assets of our partly demented father in the late nineties, can only be explained by what must have been dire financial pressures on her.

### **Possible links to the extreme right (?)**

I had a strange moment in 1988 at the airport in Dallas, Texas, as I was on my way to my sister's place in New York. (See chapter 5, describing my first psychotic break.) The individual in question, in line behind me, spoke French in a peculiar tone – saying something regarding, “extreme right-wing, extreme left-wing.” It had a powerful effect on me.

My friend, Dennis Allard, threatened me with the embarrassing public revelation of the incident in which I raised my arm in the Nazi salute to a nurse at UCLA hospital, while I was recovering from a suicide attempt. Further comments and allusions of this nature were made by Janusz Hetman, another friend, apparently aware of this incident and not unwilling to bring it up. Additionally, he had been in the habit of occasionally using well-known Nazi verbal greetings with me. There have been others who, while less direct in their references, nevertheless have brought up the UCLA incident.

### **Homosexuality or "Dances with Pooves"**

My good college friend, Subhash Sharma, was either bisexual or homosexual – although, he was eventually to marry and have children. At one time, while a student, he was arrested in Hollywood for male prostitution and did not bother to hide his proclivities. Once, in the apartment I shared with a college roommate, Subhash, who had been staying with us, carelessly (?) left a book on a coffee table that had a compromising title and suggestive cover. My roommate soon noticed and ordered me to have him leave immediately.

One evening in the mid-seventies, a fellow student yelled "faggot" at me from across the street on campus. This was evidently part of my reputation there.

Around 1980, a woman I met in a "Meet Cute" in Santa Monica, Sherry Grogan, showed me pictures of a young homosexual man she said was a friend of hers. Some days later, I ran into him near where she and I had originally met.

At a laundromat in Echo Park, I met a young Black man from Texas, who said he was bisexual and was persistent in his attempts to get me to admit I was homosexual. We went to his apartment in Silver Lake, then had dinner together. I drove him home and never saw him again.

While or immediately after I worked at Sound Solutions, my close friend, Janusz, a closeted homosexual or possible bisexual, made a series of passes at me early in our friendship. At the time, Janusz lived in West Los Angeles with a girlfriend. I took notice of the advances, spoke of them with Colette Walczak, and promptly forgot. Decades later, another friend, Renee Chaba, mentioned that Janusz was homosexual. How she knew I never found out.

In the early nineties, before I began my period of employment at Sound Solutions, I met a young man, about my age, of Persian origin, at one of my usual coffee shops. We began a curious set of conversations whenever we happened to meet there. He owned, I think, a print shop. At our first meeting, he began persistently touching my foot with his. Ignoring the implications, I started a conversation with him. Eventually, though, he seemed to be offering money in exchange for sex. I made no reply and offered no encouragement. Eventually, he stopped dropping by. All this before the ordeal at Sound Solutions began. It is perhaps of interest to note that, unemployed at the time, I was then short of funds.

Around 1990, a couple attempted to pick me up at Norm's coffee shop on Pico Boulevard – with definite homosexual overtones. (I have written about this incident elsewhere in the book.)

In 1995, during the early days of my stay in Florence, quite out of the blue Irene intimated that if I were gay, it was not important. She also attempted to set me up with her upstairs neighbor, likely a lesbian.

During dinner in my apartment, a friend asked (also out of the blue), "Are you another Black man in denial about being gay?"

One day in the early 2000s, as I was leaving Toye Taylor's house, a customer, after completing some computer work, she said, "It's your fault if you're confused sexually." Then she added something unclear about a page or an usher. I concluded she might have been referring to Subhash Sharma, who worked as a page/usher as a college student. I did not reply to her comment, and she never brought it up again.

A customer who called me for PC repair lived in Koreatown. He was American, white, and about thirty or so. The second time we met, there was another man present, perhaps Asian, lying on a bed. At one point the customer, tossing some handcuffs at his friend, ordered him to put them on and go into a closet. Later, in silence, my customer briefly put his arm around my shoulder. I did not know how to react, and left quickly.

Gratuitous insults at a Malaysia Airlines office in Los Angeles. As an IT subcontractor in the years before 2010, I often visited the offices of Malaysia Airlines in El Segundo, where I sometimes ran into Lee Voon Seong who would, from time to time, refer to information he had concerning me. The negative information referred to: 1) my supposed homosexuality (he would give broad hints about this in front of the whole office), 2) my unsavory reputation regarding women, and 3) my supposed sexual relations with underage girls, as well as very mature women. He once made a play on words using the approximate ages of women, (i.e., 16, 32, 64) I was supposed to have been involved with. This man knew me slightly, and only as a result of the work I did there. I had never discussed anything of a personal nature with him. Additionally, early in my relationship with Malaysia Airlines, another incident of a highly disturbing nature occurred involving this man. (I discussed it elsewhere.)

Within a short time of my move to the bungalow I currently live in, a man in his thirties, sitting on the porch of the house directly across the street, yelled over at me. "Berg, are you gay?" I believe I flipped him off and said nothing. I had never seen him before, nor have I seen him since.

## **Underage girls**

Since my friendship with Subhash Sharma, there has been an infrequent connection between me and underage girls. While we were students, Subhash Sharma once showed me a picture of a Hispanic girl of about fourteen or so with whom he said he was having sexual relations. On another occasion, he told me that a mother, possibly Hispanic, offered him the use of her underage daughter.

In the mid-seventies, I indulged in a physical involvement with a thirteen-year-old girl, I.U.R. (See more details of this story in the section on my negatives.)

I believe an attempt was made around 1980, possibly by the police, to entrap me by using a young woman pretending to be sixteen. She gave her name as Blanca Gutierrez and claimed she had a boyfriend studying at USC. This happened on a bus as I was commuting from Pasadena to West LA. (As with the story on I.U.R., see more details in the section on my negatives.)

Over the last decade, several attempts have been made, some perhaps serious and others possibly less so, to destabilize me and/or to connect me with actual underage girls or adult women dressed and made up to look like them.

It was during a visit to Texas, in a small town, that Colette maneuvered me into going to a restaurant that turned out to be a trap. We sat down and, from the next table, I heard an animated conversation that used the word "pedophile." I became hopping mad, went to my car for my diary, and returned to our table to take closer notes, dated, for possible future use. I believe I still have them. It seems that, like a bad aftershave, my reputation sometimes precedes me.

Around August 15, 2020, a "skit" (see the glossary) involving employees and customers was run on me as I shopped at the Mitsuwa market on South Bundy Drive and Venice Boulevard. A young girl, about twelve – accompanied by what may have been her younger brother (both with bicycles) and her mother – made an effort to position herself in front of me in the entrance line. Later, inside the store, I had to squeeze by her, apologizing, to get to a neighboring aisle. On exit, as I was getting into my car, the woman with the children inquired, "Do you want another? Do you want another?" I said nothing. This incident seemed to be more of an attempt at psychological destabilization and harassment than entrapment.

### **Becoming a gigolo or *Im Freudenabteilung?* (in the Joy Detachment?)**

Mark Selko (deceased), a customer for PC repair around 2015, announced as I was working on his computer, "I will do anything I have to do to protect my wife." His wife was probably in her nineties, and gaga. Puzzling.

On our way back from a trip to Texas, Colette and I stopped in New Mexico. While in Santa Fe, Colette insisted on taking me to several art galleries. As odd things began happening, I belatedly realized she was up to something. I put my foot down and for the rest of her visits that day, I stayed in the car. It was at that point that I began hearing people walk by and, in a loud voice, question how I could not know what kind of activities were going on in some of these art galleries.

Several years ago in La Jolla, California, I attended a dinner hosted by Irene's boyfriend, Alberto Zucconi. Guests included a number of A-list people, including an Oscar winner in his seventies who offered me his also septuagenarian wife for the night. He made the offer openly, brazenly, and in front of her and several witnesses, some of whom have known me for decades. Irene, upon hearing this, insisted I return to Los Angeles that night. The man then insulted Irene and me, but she laughed it off. I was baffled by the dialogue, and sought safety in silence.



## **Becoming a killer, e.g., "I have some not-so-good folders for you"**

Guns, some possibly automatic, were made available to me on two occasions. Since I handled at least two of them – one, a pistol and the other one or more, much larger – I left my fingerprints behind on them. In all, there may have been three or more guns involved.

A passing suggestion from Colette Walczak, "I have some not-so-good folders for you." Colette uttered that line to me as she visited me in my bungalow, possibly during "The Year of Living Dangerously." Should you not immediately get the import, test your imagination.

While I wait in the checkout line at a Persian market, a single word – "Bundy" – was interjected in the middle of a conversation (in Farsi, I believe) between a checkout clerk and a customer. This could have been a reference to:

- Nothing in particular, although it is odd for an Iranian-American to use this word by itself while conversing in his native language.
- McGeorge Bundy, member of JFK's cabinet in the 1960s.
- Bundy Drive, demarcating West Los Angeles from Santa Monica.
- Ted Bundy, the highly intelligent serial killer from Florida, in the news some years ago.

## **Sabotage of technical projects**

Over the last twenty-plus years, I have consistently experienced interference from unknown quarters whenever I try to do a technical project involving software/hardware or solar energy systems.

A single example will suffice: Around 2017, I sold an attic fan cooling system that I was developing (involving software, hardware, microprocessors linked over a network, a solar panel, etc.) to a longtime PC repair customer. We quickly agreed on a price and installation details only for the customer to become uncommonly shy when I later attempted to get a deposit.

## **Miscellaneous**

This may be an incorrect guess on my part but I sense that the methods used to effect my arrest at the Santa Monica Public Library have become a constant theme of the attempted provocations I have experienced ever since. Recall that on that day in 1988, as I walked toward the two women involved, I heard them laughing loudly. Recall also that my path intersected theirs just at the place where I was to turn left to go up the library steps. That is the moment when I walked between them. I have often noticed similar behavior on the part of others in the years since. For example: laughter, startlingly loud, in my vicinity. This, at various locations, such as: Trader Joe's in Culver City; the street where I live; and, recently, most egregious of all, from new neighbors in other bungalows in my complex.

## **What We May be Dealing with (Including Some Parallels)**

### **A badly managed insane asylum? (and a tentative conclusion)**

Rereading this manuscript, I got a feeling, no longer of anger, but of having glimpsed something more fundamental, grave, and insidious. I dimly realize now that this may be a badly run insane asylum – maybe because my view is from the trenches, and, as such, limited. In addition, being a handyman by trade does not bring with it the sophistication necessary to grasp such problems. No blame attached.

From within the above perspective, I draw two conclusions: the weaker holds that I, and only I, am living in this badly run insane asylum. The stronger contends that this country \*as a whole\* is a badly run madhouse in which the American people are the inmates.

There have been those who, over the years, have suggested I do not "belong here." If the stronger statement is the case then, as a mentally ill individual and with the above realization in mind, I can now reply: on the contrary, there is something "altogether fitting and proper" (with deference to Lincoln) about a crazy person finding himself in a nut house. I really see no reason to leave, surrounded as I am by my fellow (mad)men.

### **A malfunctioning immune system? (and a consequence)**

If the security services of a country represent the immune system of a body (tasked as they both are with protecting it from foreign intrusion), could we be dealing here with the equivalent of a malfunction causing an autoimmune disorder? Where the body's defenses literally attack it in a sort of frenetic cannibalism?

Take the case of Colette Walczak – a woman I have described as my other sister – someone as important to me as my own biological sister. She was basically a munchkin, and yet more: a munchkin from a small town in Indiana. Colette was also neurotic, eccentric, often deeply unhappy. According to her brother-in-law, an MD, she may even have been schizoid. Sure, she was upper-middle class, which grants advantages. She was American-born and -bred, and a high-minded, delightful, decent person with good values – at least when I first met her. By the time she died, the American *Securitate* had turned her into a vile, loathsome, abject, terrified, cringing, and slavish creature – hated by some, and held in contempt by others. She had destroyed many lives here and, likely, abroad. Some of her victims may even have included members of her own family. She lied, connived, and manipulated people (some vulnerable to begin with), who had done her no harm. If this can happen to someone like her, it can happen to you, Gentle Reader.

Colette's case may be illustrative of what can happen when the ruthless mediocrities that sometimes staff the American *Securitate* (people who may not much believe in their mission, anyway) are given access to nearly limitless resources with only nominal supervision.

What Colette did to me is nothing compared to what they did to her. What they did to her is, in turn, nothing compared to what they are doing to this country. Colette Walczak died at fifty-eight – essentially a slave. Can there be anything sadder than the death of a slave?

### **Could the problem be more general and fundamental? A second thought**

In the last analysis, what is one to make of the salient fact that I, a citizen of a respectable, dominant, even illustrious, country, must likely depend, literally, for my very survival, on sub-state actors: (possibly the LAPD, the State of California, and others) as well as, also likely, another nation state with which I have no ties and for which I have no affection – namely the State of Israel-Palestine?

To even ask such a thing calls into question the very legitimacy of "the State." For not only has this particular state, America, of which I was born a citizen, failed to leave me free to provide for my own welfare (I refer you to the repeated attempts to deny me even the ability to

work, a pattern established for over two decades) and failed to provide even minimal security (witness the depredations of criminal elements, under control of this state, from which I have suffered), it even sought to make use of me as an unwitting tool – for its own designs, to its ultimate benefit, and probably my eventual destruction. I feel the ground shifting beneath my feet. I am in complete bewilderment.

The problem I and possibly many citizens here are faced with may therefore be more general and fundamental than I once thought. For further insights into this perspective and an elaborate and lengthy argument, see: *The Rise and Decline of the State* by van Creveld, listed in the bibliography.

## On the Likelihood of Success for this Endeavor (Mine and My Masters')

With the limited fund of information at my disposal, my complete lack of experience in these rarefied matters, and my inherent prejudices and biases, I can only reason by analogy. And the portends are not auspicious. Consider:

From the little I have gleaned over the years regarding the conflict in Northern Ireland, a conflict which pitted – if I may remind you – the Provos, British intelligence (MI5), and the Ulster Unionists against each other. The thing became so savage as to cause one to think such doings impossible among Christians.

During the Blair years, a commission of inquiry was set up to investigate the activities of MI5 in Northern Ireland, during what were known as "the Troubles." The commission spent an estimated several hundred million pounds in its vain efforts to uncover and expose the facts.

In response, elements of the very government that was investigating itself worked to block a successful conclusion to the proceedings. Witnesses recanted their testimony, a local office of the commission was firebombed, and the official responsible for British intelligence in Northern Ireland during those times, a man named Kerr, was promoted, given diplomatic immunity, and posted as military attaché to Beijing. As a result, the inquiry eventually petered out without reaching any final conclusions, although the commission did manage to issue a report of some sort.

Another, far more egregious, example of what may be in store for my Masters is the fate of the government of Raúl Alfonsín who, in 1983, replaced the Argentine military junta after the conclusion of the disastrous Falklands war. He too, though brought to power in a freely contested election, was ultimately unsuccessful in completely dislodging Jorge Videla and fellow impedimenta, resigning before completing his term.

Certainly food for thought for our own California Senator Dianne Feinstein, former chair (2009-2015) of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, herself victim of some of the dark arts which have been deployed against me (see her public complaints in 2014 about the computer hacking she and her intrepid crew were subjected to by the CIA).

## Conclusions

I do not consider myself a writer; I do not wish to be considered a writer. Although I will admit to momentary escapades in which I distract myself from the work of slogging through and fashioning this frightening sewage. I prefer to think of myself as a stenographer – a stenographer OF power rather than a stenographer TO power, of which there seem to be plenty.

A court reporter does not interpret what he hears, he merely sets it down accurately; that is my role as I see it. Remember, I am basically a handyman and "A man who only asked to walk, nameless and alone" – G.K. Chesterton. Unfortunately for me, it was not to be – this apparently not being the kind of world we live in.

A real writer or reporter, of necessity, engages in fiction; so complex, self-contradictory, filled with lies and confusion is the world around us. He must, in distilling the product of his observations and research, engage in the act of creation. Unlike him, I have tried to present the facts of my life exhaustively, clearly, and plainly – avoiding where possible attempts at synthesis, and seldom commenting or interpreting.

I have merely written down what I have seen and experienced and will let you, Gentle Reader, come to your own conclusions about the implications of my story. If you have found much of it humdrum, naive in style, more than a little stilted, at times florid, precious, and pedantic, I am not surprised; this is the kind of person I am.

What gives me some confidence in the validity of my understanding of the events I have experienced and described herein is, ultimately, the spectacle of the behavior of America's elites, here and abroad – since I came to this country and especially during the first two decades of this century. They leave me with the impression of being, among other things, often bereft of a moral compass. Some of them are irrational and desperate enough to be capable of the foul, demented acts I have witnessed, been a victim of, and of which I accuse them here in print. How much of what I have described can be ascribed to malice and how much to stupidity, one can only wonder. And let me alert you, government malice is so much more than the personal variety.

As I was editing this manuscript, I sometimes wondered if I should ever have come to America. A reasonable question, given what later happened. When I first asked myself, the obvious answer was, no, I should have steered well clear of your country. Perhaps remaining in Germany, a post-fascist state which has presumably learned to mind its Ps and Qs might have been preferable for me. On thinking further about it, though, I realized that, but for my experiences here, I never would have learned of the fate of my sister, Irene Hawkins (upon whose enemies, confusion), which, if possible, could ultimately be more sinister and tragic than my own. That would have been intolerable. As it was, with my own frequently repeated and often excruciating experiences under my belt, it only took me about four decades to understand what was happening. No question, I had to come here.

With a sometimes shaky grasp of reality, buffeted by forces beyond my comprehension, and with little or no sophistication to speak of or a shred of privacy, my prospects appear a bit dismal. For once one has lost this privacy, it is gone forever. And attempting to live a life without it is akin to copulating in a zoo.

Finally, let me add that I wrote this book to the best of my recollection. If anyone recalls a fact or two with more clarity than I express here, I invite them to speak up.



# POSTSCRIPT

## The “Gang of 4+1” and the Establishment’s Attitude Toward Them

The struggle of these five dissidents is *my* struggle. Their fates, potentially my fate (as has been gently suggested to me). It is therefore natural that I would attempt to connect what I call the “Gang of 4+1” to my own story. Below are thumbnail sketches which illustrate not only the stance of major elements of the American state, but also the consistent response of wide segments of the political and cultural elites of this country to the challenges posed by the five individuals whose stories I touch upon. Let me add that much of what I relate below happened on former President Obama’s watch.

The “Gang of 4+1” (brief biographies):

1. John Kiriakou: An employee, Kiriakou revealed the extent of the CIA’s practice of torture and was punished for it with thirty months in prison.
2. William Binney: After attempting to alert his superiors in the NSA to the existence of illegal eavesdropping practices, Binney, a decades-long veteran of that organization, went public with his information and suffered retaliation.
3. Edward Snowden: Snowden, a contractor for Booz Allen Hamilton, published proof of the existence and extent of extensive, illegal NSA domestic spying and was forced to flee to asylum in Russia where he resides today.
4. Thomas Drake: Drake, a CIA employee, after uncovering waste and mismanagement, made disclosures to the media, which led to articles exposing a billion-dollar NSA boondoggle. In retaliation, he was charged with five counts under the Espionage Act. (See the Government Accountability Project website.)
5. Julian Assange: Assange is an Australian computer programmer who founded the media organization WikiLeaks. Practicing what he called “scientific journalism,” “... Assange, through WikiLeaks, released thousands of internal or classified documents from an assortment of government and corporate entities.” (from Britannica). Currently in custody in the high-security Belmarsh prison in London, Assange faces possible extradition to the United States on charges that include espionage. From my point of view and given the contents of this book, there is no small irony in the spectacle of a British magistrate named Baraitser doing the bidding of the American *Securitate* regarding Assange.

Conclusions regarding Assange, apparently reached by a sample of our political leaders and other elites. (from the *Guardian*, April, 2019):

- Hillary Clinton: Said that Assange needs to “answer for what he has done.”
- Michael Weiss of the Atlantic: Said Assange “got what he deserved.”
- Charles Schumer: Said he hoped Assange “will soon be held to account for his meddling in our elections on behalf of Putin and the Russian government.”
- Frida Ghitis of CNN: Wrote that Assange “is not a journalist and therefore not entitled to the protections that the law – and democracy – demand for legitimate journalists.”
- Dianne Feinstein: Has been calling for Assange to be brought here and prosecuted since 2010.

- Joe Manchin, West Virginia Democratic senator: Went even further, with the truly disturbing comment that “now [Assange is] our property and we can get the facts and truth from him.”
- Bernie Sanders: Did not speak up to defend Assange, opting for the same shameful silence he has taken on the imprisonment of whistleblower Chelsea Manning.

My own conclusions: coming from what I imagine are people aligned with the "Coalition" backing me, these are not hopeful signs, and, given my own vulnerable position, more than a bit disquieting. CIA Democrats, anyone?

# APPENDIX I

## Facts

### For Which There is Incontrovertible Evidence

- I have been subjected by my own Government to techniques of a psychological nature (sometimes known collectively as *Zersetzung*). These were used by, among others, the former East German secret police (*Stasi*) and the KGB of the former Soviet Union against their own dissidents in order to “neutralize” them.
- I have physical evidence of repeated break-ins to the various apartments I have lived in, including while I am home, asleep.
- At age sixteen I was befriended by a man, Robert Seidenstein, who, I know for a fact, was, consciously or not, working for the American security services. At least some of our conversations at his apartment were recorded.
- During the course of a successful provocation, I was arrested in 1988 on felony charges, an arrest orchestrated by Government security services with the witting or unwitting cooperation of the Santa Monica Police Department, the cooperation of a close friend and members of her family, as well as the possible cooperation of a former employer.
- I was once drugged without my knowledge before appearing in public for an extended period of time.
- My fingerprints are to be found on two, possibly three or more, guns and a pistol, none of which have ever belonged to me, these were handed to me by Stenåke Larssen, one of two individuals involved in this particular business.
- A suicide attempt I made sometime around 2014 by means of gas was foiled by parties unknown when the gas in my immediate neighborhood was turned off during the attempt – else I would have been either gravely injured or succeeded in killing myself. Prior to this, I had spoken to no one of my wish to die.
- When, during my first psychotic break, I visited my sister in Manhattan, at least some of our conversations in her apartment were being listened to.
- *Nilüfer Çagatai*'s story: She and Irene were classmates and friends at Yale. After graduation, *Nilüfer* went on to study graduate-level economics and obtain a PhD before eventually becoming a professor herself. As I recall, one of her professors was a man named Harris, he hailed from Jamaica and taught economics at Stanford University. Decades ago, while discussing *Nilüfer* during a rambling phone conversation with Irene, then living on the East Coast, she mentioned that this man was in the peculiar habit of making frequent notes about what people said (of him, to him?). How Irene had learned of this is not clear to me. This trivial-seeming comment was to come back to me, decades later, as I, too, began taking such notes. Sometime in the last several years, during a Skype conversation with Irene, *Nilüfer*'s name again came up. *Nilüfer* is a Turkish first name sometimes pronounced by older, more traditional people as: “*nilufeh*.” Surprisingly, in our conversation, Irene also pronounced it this way: “*ni-lue-fê!*” – separating the syllables with additional emphasis added. To a French ear, it distinctly sounds like: “*ni l'eu fait*,” meaning: “would not have done so either.” By the way, *Nilüfer*, in English, means water lily. Poetic, no?
- A young man and, according to him, his mother – neighbors of my sister, Irene, in Manhattan – were somehow briefly allowed into a closed psychiatric ward of the St.



Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital for a day, soon after my suicide attempt in 1988. Neither showed obvious signs of mental illness.

- There has been repeated hacking into computers belonging to my customers, friends, and myself, resulting in occasional destruction of programs and data. In one such instance, a customer became victim of (unconsummated) financial fraud.
- I have been subjected to numerous instances of what I call “pointless felonies” including burglaries, where either nothing of value is taken or, indeed, items are actually placed in my bungalow!
- There is a pattern of the American *Securitate* making use of vulnerable, handicapped, or mentally unstable individuals. I can point to several such people in my immediate circle. With myself as a prime example.

## Suppositions

Supported by the Preponderance of Facts, Though not yet Wholly Proven

- In an operation similar to what was done to me and in roughly the same time frame, my sister, Irene Hawkins – about to pass her medical boards – was manipulated and/or pressured into ending her career as an MD, becoming instead an operative under the control of security services of this Government, here and abroad.
- I suspect that a fabricated felony arrest report was substituted for another report filed after I was arrested in 1988. This report, made up from whole cloth, is now among the files of the Santa Monica Police Department.
- The operation against me and my sister was uncovered, by parties unknown (though I believe Jews to have been “the firstest with the mostest”), sometime during or after my return from Italy in 1995. Countermeasures were then taken in an attempt to foil these government plots, plots which continue to this day and, indeed, have intensified, having long since taken the form of a classic cover-up – some twenty-five years later.
- Based on my thoughts and observations, both of which led to the making of the infrastructure block diagram included in this book (Figure 31), I strongly suspect that some individuals controlled by the *Securitate* have been made to occasionally sink to the level of being used as human transducers or computer input/output devices, monitored and controlled by software of a nature unknown by me, without a human necessarily being in the loop. With the methods used likely involving the cell phone of the individuals in question. I give you: *man as machine peripheral*.

## Opinions

May be Disregarded Without Harm to My Main Points

- Some thoughts about what I dimly perceive to be the various components involved in this business. A list:

### 1. **Myself**

- Perhaps best characterized as the spearhead and “poster child” of what I consider mysterious efforts by BOTH my current and would-be Masters.
- I refer to the two sides in this struggle as my Masters or would-be Masters since I have come to believe that I exist and function only at the sufferance of forces beyond my ken and control.

## 2. The “Masses” – i.e., my fellow men

- A salient characteristic here is the repeated use made of them by the *Securitate*, through the technique of “divide and conquer.”
- A single example (one among so many) will suffice. One morning as I approach a group of Mexican construction workers clustered together near my bungalow during a break, I say to them: “Top o’ the mornin’ to ye, and isn’t it a shame what *Sassenach* is doing to us?” The response was revealing. One of them immediately intimidated me successfully before turning to another workman who nodded in confirmation of my discomfiture.
- This crew had, in previous days, as they worked on a nearby construction site, been so loud that I considered reporting the repeated incidents to the City of Los Angeles. Examples of the, in my experience, all-too-frequent ritual humiliation of the powerless by the powerless.
- The possibility exists that what we are witnessing here is a “palace revolt,” of little relevance to me or the very same masses.

## 3. The American *Securitate* in its many institutions

- I refer to some of them as my would-be Masters.
- Some of these institutions trace their origins back to the immediate post-war era. Others may go back even further. Together they form the backbone of the National Security State.
- It cannot be assumed that these bureaucracies are all necessarily on the same page; one must allow here for inter-service rivalries.

## 4. The Elites of the United States – i.e., the owning classes, among others

- A crucial question: to what extent, if any, are they, due to their status and/or wealth, immune from the depredations of the *Securitate*, itself nominally at the service of these people, the State, and the general public?
- For example: Senator Dianne Feinstein, head of the Senate Intelligence Oversight Committee, was, not too long ago, not above having her committee’s computers ransacked by the CIA, something which also happens to me with an alarming regularity.
- Lastly, to what extent are these very same elites possibly responsible for the mayhem unleashed, which I describe here? A mayhem touching me, my family, my friends, the Jewish communities in this

country, and, potentially, anyone of use to the *Securitate* or who gets in their way.

## 5. The “Coalition”

- The small army supporting me, those I refer to as my Masters. Consisting of disparate factions, both domestic and, likely, foreign, possibly including parts of the *Securitate* itself, momentarily united, to achieve ends quite entirely unknown to me.
- I expect my ultimate fate will resemble that of *Doina Cornea*, the Romanian dissident of the Ceaușescu era. (Speaking of the Romanian revolution: talk about a “palace revolt”).
- In my opinion, ALL factions and individuals in this story (including your Friend and Humble Narrator) have similar characteristics or deep personal flaws. Like the subtitle of the novel *Vanity Fair* by Thackeray, hinting at an outlook I share with the author, this is “A book without a hero.”
- In addition to the advice I so freely dispensed in *Appendix III: A Guide for the Perplexed*, added to the implicit arrogance of a handyman such as I dispensing advice “*Urbi et Orbi*” (as it were) is my feeling that the words I spoke were characteristic of a narrow-gauge mind looking at what is in reality a broad-gauge problem. I limited myself to tactical advice when there is a larger, strategic viewpoint as well – one I am ill-equipped to think about, let alone comment on. I am speaking of the political sphere. It could be that my long-time, simple-minded refrain, “the more the merrier,” has another dimension, a very political one!
- Some years ago, after a cluster of encounters of a dubious nature on the roads, in the banks, at the post office, in police stations, etc., of Los Angeles, I unburdened myself to a customer I had known for some time; concluding with the opinion that the United States was turning into “Nigeria lite.” Those were my words. Unoffended, he immediately laughed, clearly understanding my meaning. The man, you see, was a recent immigrant from that country. Speaking of both countries, as the Chinese phrase goes: “Two thieves need no introduction, they recognize each other instantly.”
- As to the prospects for success of the “Coalition” which I am, willy-nilly, a part of, the outcome may be, as the Japanese Emperor Hirohito euphemistically said toward the end of WWII, “... not necessarily to our advantage.”
- Consider:
  1. Firstly, cops almost always have a significant advantage over crooks: they are smarter. However, if we consider the state of this country’s civil society, its judicial system and political institutions (i.e., those standing in for the cops in my analogy) as well as the various security services responsible for the outrages I have described in this book (representing the crooks), is the above assumption necessarily the case?
  2. Secondly, the run-of-the-mill crook is unlikely to have dirt on the cops chasing him. It may be time to wonder whether some of our better known three-letter agencies are not well-positioned for a struggle, should there eventually be one...
  3. Thirdly, in the event the above-mentioned obstacles are overcome, there remains the question of how to deal with a complex, unwieldy, refractory bureaucracy that may prove, as with so many such “organs” in the modern age,

to be irreplaceable. It is not merely a question of “who will guard the guardians,” but even more: “how to cope with the complexity inherent in the modern world.” Democracy, anyone?

4. And lastly, if I am not greatly overestimating my visibility and importance in this struggle, the situation I find myself caught up in contains elements of a black comedy. After all, it is passing strange – and frightening – that one such as I, a paranoid schizophrenic, should be the author of a book with the potential to influence public and elite opinion, and even, conceivably, the prospects of this Republic.
- This is bigger than me, this is bigger than Colette Walczak – my sister, this is bigger than Irene – my other sister, this is bigger than the “Zionist Question,” this is bigger than the “Jewish Question,” this is bigger than the Republic of the United States, even. For this scandal strikes at the very foundations of the West, one pillar of which is respect for the dignity of the individual. Without that, what is the West? What are we, then?
  - It is my opinion that the infrastructure needed to reliably influence everyone in my circle, intrude relentlessly into my private life, do so on at least two continents and display the level of technical wizardry I have been subjected to, is MASSIVE. This raises questions. In order to allocate funds for, build, staff and deploy this infrastructure, much effort had to be expended over an extended period of time. Many, including institutions, had to look the other way as this infernal machinery was assembled and put into action. Our complacency and cowardice have directly led to today’s pitiful state of affairs.
  - See my attempt at a sketch, included here in Figure 31 (distilled, one might say, from the pain I have experienced these last decades), of some of the infrastructure required to achieve what I have lived through. Almost every element of this diagram, every box, every arrow, every label, is the result of my reflections on concrete events I have experienced. Although it is not meant to be the final word on this subject as I do not have the competence to delve into this with any great confidence. Nevertheless, the very complexity of this diagram should hint at the size of the problem we face.
  - There is also the interesting, if ominous, possibility that this “Infrastructure of Oppression” as I call it, “scales.” That is, it may be inherently possible for its reach to be greatly expanded, covering many more people, without a commensurate increase in staff, expense or visibility.
  - And finally: “... But if we fail, then the whole world, including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new dark age made more sinister, and perhaps more protracted, by the lights of perverted science.” — Churchill (House of Commons, 18 June 1940)



# APPENDIX II

## My Mental Condition as Summarized by a Professional (Incomplete)

Stymied, so far, in my several attempts to find a psychiatrist to evaluate the files I have gathered, this appendix is to eventually be completed when conditions become more favorable. In the meantime it will serve as a placeholder.

There are four topics I would like commented on:

### **1. A summary of my mental condition, both past and present**

In layman's terms (perhaps one page) of my mental condition based on an evaluation of files accumulated over twenty years. An interview by phone is possible, if desirable. I will also be providing a part of my manuscript detailing my "negatives." These negatives, while quite serious in themselves, date back from over a decade to over four decades ago and have already been distributed to a group of several people as part of my efforts in safekeeping. There is therefore nothing confidential about them anymore. I would be providing this (formerly) very personal information (which, in future, will become even less personal as I publish it) for a mental health professional to build a more accurate picture of my personality. A brief summary of my life, including criminal record, will also be included.

### **2. The possible offenses committed against me by Oscar Revey and, by extension, elements of this Government**

A comment on the seriousness of the ethical and moral offenses possibly committed by Oscar Revey (deceased), "unfrocked" psychotherapist – actually a likely government informant, purported friend of mine for over twenty years. He was a practicing therapist without a full license and was therefore, as he told me, required to work under the supervision of another, fully licensed, therapist. Our relation was mostly one of friendship and non-professional, although, over the years, I told him some very personal things about myself.

### **3. An assessment of comments made by a psychiatrist in Manhattan in 1988**

In the fall of 1988, in New York City, my sister, Irene Hawkins, took me to see a psychiatrist for evaluation. He was a licensed professional I saw once, briefly, while descending into a severe psychosis. A day or so later, I did make a serious suicide attempt and spent the following six weeks in the closed ward of a mental hospital. This psychiatrist prescribed Haldol. I would like an opinion regarding a comment he made during our interview: "So, you attended Caltech?" He asked this question in a scornful, almost resentful tone, surprising me. When I spoke of it to my "friend," Oscar Revey, a few months later, he passed it off as a normal technique to bring me down from my "high horse." A surprising comment as I was then in a fragile state and indeed, soon after, did try to kill myself.

**4. Does what I have described here rise to the level of psychological torture?**

Finally, from the material provided here, what is the likelihood that what I have experienced at the hands of elements of the United States government over the last several decades rises (at least occasionally) to the level of psychological torture? East German author Jürgen Fuchs, a victim of *Zersetzung*, described the Stasi's actions as "psychosocial crime," and "an assault on the human soul." Is this also the case here?

## APPENDIX III

### Should You Find Yourself in a Similar Situation (A Guide for the Perplexed)

#### Forgive and Forget: The Best Strategy, and a Caution about Cynicism

The hallmark of the civilized man. Otherwise, you may find yourself shouting the likes of "*Kosovo Polje!*" 700 years after the event, as some still do. This battle in what is now the nation of Kosovo, in the Balkans, took place in 1389; yet today, it is still a rousing cry for a certain kind of person (and political leader, needless to say).

If you cannot forgive, then, by all means, forget. I have found this a useful balm in my peculiar world (this, my open-air madhouse) where I find myself the target of strange, random acts, frequent provocation, senseless minor sadism, malice, treachery and manipulation, where servility and open resentment abound. Else, as was the case with Colette Walczak, you risk poisoning your life and that of others with your perpetual bitterness, hatred and revanchism.

Enough!

However, for an opposing viewpoint regarding the matter of forgiveness see that of Varlam Shalamov (the author of *Kolyma Tales*, a survivor of Stalin's camps):

"I do not owe to the state; I have discharged my civic duty in the hardest conditions: never betraying, never forgetting, and never forgiving. I do not owe "progressive humanity" and its foreign agents as well. I'm bound neither by promises, nor by paroles of honor."

– Varlam T. Shalamov

On another note: to me, cynicism is a symptom, not a cure; furthermore, I would add that it can be a kind of anesthetic, where "He who makes a beast of himself gets rid of the pain of being a man." – Samuel Johnson. This cynicism may even make a person more susceptible to the technique known as "increasing the area of conscience" (see the glossary). I believe I have been able to foil at least some of the convoluted machinations of my would-be Masters (the American *Securitate*) in spite of my complete lack of sophistication and severe personal problems by taking the following stands:

- **Idealism:** even with a strong admixture of naiveté (it doesn't matter so long as the idealism is there).
- **Altruism:** i.e., some care for the commonwealth.
- **The humanities:** an abiding interest, if not necessarily with much depth, in the humanities; without which a person is defenseless against these *nekulturny*; i.e., my attendance at the play *Rhinoceros* seems to have done the trick for me.
- **Ahimsa:** Perhaps even a willingness to suffer (within limits, of course) in order that others might not (see the Buddhist principle of *Ahimsa* of which I have become an adherent – though to a limited extent).
- **Dignity of the human being:** A quality I consider not to be entirely inherent (except in some cases) in the individual, but partly bestowed on him (to whatever extent) by his society and culture.



Lastly, I wish to add the following caveat: according to Shalamov, the author I quoted above, the one human emotion left after all else (including much flesh) has been stripped away by hardship is the last true thing left to a man: Spite. By implication, says Shalamov, all else is luxury. I therefore consider myself favored beyond comprehension and wealthy beyond measure to have the luck of living in an environment making possible the five illusions listed above.

## If a Countervailing State Actor Were to Intervene on Your Behalf

### **(A Possible) Salvation**

My reason for thinking this: The only thing that can be of help is when the state actor working against one is opposed by another state actor; i.e., there may be some freedom for the individual in the interstices between power blocks. Only a state actor has the resources, the sophistication and, though not always, the independence/sovereignty, to act forcefully and effectively to counter the actions of another state.

In my case, it seems I have been under some protection for more than two decades. One finds that in those happy cases where dissidents are able to survive and operate in their own countries, it is almost always due to the support of another state. See for example the case of Doina Cornea, a Romanian dissident of the previous century. I nicknamed her "Our Lady of the Cracked Ribs" as, during a sustained political struggle carried out against the Ceaușescu regime for over a decade, that is the only serious physical injury she ever suffered. Her savior in this case was France; she had acquired some visibility there because of her work: teaching French and working as a translator, she thus had contacts at the embassy and was able to smuggle out political tracts. So serious was her predicament that at one time she was reduced to calling the embassy once a week to prove she was still alive.

I believe my own savior was essentially the State of Israel-Palestine, with assistance from the Los Angeles Police Department and others. That is what has kept me together, "body and soul."

## The Phenomenon of the Downward Spiral

### **Where it will Likely Lead You**

When approached by these confidence men (by which I mean the ruthless mediocrities filling these vast bureaucracies or their hapless minions) with an offer, formal or informal: what they may neglect to tell you is that your initial duties, perhaps innocuous enough, will eventually not do. Consider their offer to be the thin edge of the wedge. You are, without yet being aware of it, already caught in a downward spiral in which the more they have on you, the more leverage they will apply. And the more pressure they apply, the more they can get you to do. Service to the American *Securitate* will only end in your death by old age. I have literally witnessed it. In addition, I suspect that, should you accept the Government's kind offer of forbearance in certain matters, in return for your cooperation in others, you will by that very

fact have made yourself into, literally, an outlaw – that is, the police or anyone else, should you turn to them for any reason, will likely look at you with a jaundiced eye.

Furthermore, if you, by breaking your "covenant" with these vile creatures (elements of the Government) end up in prison anyway, you should know the treatment meted out to informants can be rather ferocious, thus, increasing the pressure on you to "behave." And don't think you can pacify them by feeding them "chickenfeed." This will eventually never do; Solzhenitsyn himself counseled against it.

In the case of Colette Walczak, whom I knew for over thirty-five years, she was, toward the end of her life, reduced to manipulating me, her closest and likely only friend, into trying to commit suicide (among other things). She, by that time having been reduced to a poor devil whose only concern was saving her skin.

You have been warned.

## On Family, Friends, and Institutions: Lessons Learned

Perhaps, "luxuriating" in your newfound status as dissident, you may be taking inventory of your "assets," i.e., friends, family and institutions you can depend on for truth, advice, financial support and as confidants. Let me disabuse you at once: YOU LIKELY HAVE NONE! And should you be lucky enough to have any, don't make the mistake of trusting them entirely.

While it is perhaps commonplace to have somewhat limited faith in one's fellow man ("wretched creatures that they are" – N. Machiavelli), the reality is, in my opinion, surprising. I have found to my dismay that no institution, I repeat, no institution, is to be taken at face value or trusted. For example, I suspect that some of the various psychiatric institutions I have dealt with during the course of my mental illness over the last several decades have not always been completely straight with me regarding my true predicament. This is even more so when I turn my attention to such minor pillars of society as the police, fire department, and hospitals. Reasons for this vary: from the fact that there may be long-standing, tacit alliances between power centers of which we in the public are wholly unaware, to the probability – nay certainty – that individual members of these organizations, unbeknownst to their formal hierarchies, have other loyalties (genuine or forced).

Gentle Reader, if this appears outlandish, consider that the only way my story can be plausible is if the above paragraph is a fair reflection of the "really existing reality." Paraphrasing Churchill, I consider my friends to be like my Latin quotations: "Few and not particularly faithful."

That is all.

## In the Cross-hairs of the State? You Have Two Options

I have read that it is almost impossible for the individual to come out ahead if the State one is up against is sufficiently dirty (and most ultimately are). In the words of Alexandr Solzhenitsyn, an interrogation is yours to lose, never yours to win. I think the same applies to any such interaction with the State. I can also say from what I have seen that brains, education, probity, street smarts, criminal sophistication, decency, or wealth are ABSOLUTELY no defenses.

Should you be placed in such a situation with regard to the state, you then have two options, neither good:

You can give in to their dictates. Your condition, already bad, will then get worse, let me assure you. You must be aware that you are then caught in an (accelerating) downward spiral for the rest of your life.

You can refuse to cooperate with them. In which case the state reserves the right to utterly destroy your life. If you are going to put up resistance (futile though it may be), it is best to do so IMMEDIATELY, before they have compromised and demoralized you fully. Fight, fight hard, but above all: FIGHT EARLY! To show an earnestness of intent, should the opportunity present itself, be sure to immediately blab about your experiences as freely as your fear and shame (natural enough reactions in this moment) will allow. Talk to your family, your friends, a lawyer (by all means, just don't rely on him), even the neighbor you may scarcely know. Talk to anyone and everyone. Prepare a brief document summarizing what happened to you (including especially the sins they are trying to leverage), hand it out to random people. Blab, blab, blab (that is what I did, not necessarily to my detriment – though at the time I did not know what I was talking about – a condition which has never deterred me from speaking). Here the watchword is: "the more the merrier." That is, the more people you make aware of your predicament, the better for you, the better for all of us, and the less you will be useful to these ghouls. Although I must frankly add that had I, early on, followed the advice I so freely dispense in this paragraph, an immeasurable amount of suffering, both mine and of so many others, might have been avoided.

You must also see that fleeing, though an understandable response, is absolutely the wrong reaction. Realize, first of all, where you, like all of us, are: in a goldfish bowl, rather bereft of privacy. Should you think of starting a new life somewhere else, understand that wherever you go, they too will eventually reappear. With the difference that, wherever you have moved to, no one but they are likely to know you. Stay put.

No matter how bleak your situation, understand that in the relatively benign environment of this country, you always have a choice (in spite of what they will suggest); read *The Choice* by Eger. I believe I have heard people, more than one in fact, now thoroughly compromised and cowed by decades of cooperation with these vile creatures (by which I mean members of the the American security services – any and all of them), regret having made the initial decision to cooperate.

And, should the thought of a stay in jail or even prison perhaps put you off, remember that with this option, you pay once. With the other option, the one they will dangle before you, you will never stop paying and worse – what you pay can only increase with time. Also, the burden and stigma of a drug conviction, a conviction for credit card fraud, prostitution or the like, is something you will eventually come to look back on wistfully should you accede to their deception. For deception it is. Never forget you are dealing here with practiced con artists.

Consider my case. I have been involved with, among other things, underage girls and child pornography. An individual does not get much more despicable than this! Yet, though admittedly with (I believe) considerable help from my Masters (see the definition in the glossary) and much hesitation, temporizing and trepidation on my part, I was able to resist. Given these circumstances, if I can, so can you. As I hope you have found, I am nothing special, believe me. Take heart!

Remember, though, that even Solzhenitsyn was unable to resist the pressure to become an informant for the Soviet state. He was on file as such with them – though it is true no informant's reports have credibly been attributed to him (else this would have been publicized

long ago). Even a certain Comrade Joseph Stalin was at one time an informant for the Tsarist secret police.

Let this be a lesson to you.

## Your Gadgets and Technologies are NOT Necessarily Your Friends

Don't fight them on their high ground.

Always assume, if you suspect you are dealing with the Government, that they are ALREADY in your computers and cell phones. Doesn't matter how smart you think you are. This from Ed Snowden, the NSA whistleblower, who would be in a position to know. And please, do not think you are smarter than them!

In addition, by some estimates, technologies today available to the Government are in some cases over thirty years ahead of what has been commercialized. I have, for example, read that in the 1960s, supercomputers available to the NSA (National Security Agency) ran at speeds of 650MHz or more – a performance not matched by Cray, Inc. (a well-known commercial supercomputer manufacturer) until the 1980s.

You have been warned.

## A Word on Encryption

I know nothing about encryption. William Binney, formerly of the NSA, does. If I understand correctly, he cautions against reliance on it. However, Ed Snowden speaks well of the possibility of end-to-end encryption to afford casual users more privacy than is currently available. This may be the case, especially if one takes these precautions BEFORE the intrusion into one's computer(s) has happened. Beware keyloggers.

I have an anecdote regarding this. A PC repair customer, call him Z., would come to me occasionally for help installing secure operating systems on his laptops. Some of the most abstruse instructions for installation I have ever seen were involved and I was not always successful in following them (at a price he could afford). Once, having informed him of the sort of attention I was getting from the Government, he elected to take me to a coffee shop near downtown LA to use the WiFi available there, thinking perhaps this would shield him from outside influence and making us more secure. To his dismay and mine (though not to my surprise), while I was working on his laptop using the coffee shop's WiFi, his operating system was penetrated and, perhaps to prove a point, his password was changed, making the installation unusable. Z. became visibly upset, excused himself, and left. I have yet to see him again.

Be prudent but don't assume it will help

## Do Try to Maintain Good "Privacy Hygiene"

(But Never Assume you Have it)

### **Make backups**

Make backups often, in case the Government becomes destructively malicious, which has happened to me numerous times. It may help, but is not guaranteed to.

### **Use paper first**

I was advised by Colette Walczak to initially commit this autobiography to paper. Either longhand or using a typewriter. If you do not do so, you may find that, at a crucial moment, ALL your work has disappeared in an instant, even from what you thought were secure backups, from computers, hard disks, USB sticks, cell phone, etc. Only when your work is done and backup copies have been distributed to others and placed in safe deposit boxes, should you consider transcribing it.

### **Use a safe deposit box**

Keep a copy of important papers and evidence, both electronic and hard, in a safe deposit box at a bank. Or better yet, at more than one bank. And keep the keys on your person at all times. Since I began this work, I have found that, due to my stupidity, possibly crucial evidence has disappeared from the hard copy files I keep at home. Neither should you assume that items kept at a bank or by city, state, or Federal agencies are sacrosanct or permanent.

## **Keep a Diary**

In a fanny pack with several pockets, I kept a diary in a set of small notebooks about 4"x6", bound, not spiral. Until recently, I always wore the fanny pack except when asleep. Entries are in the form of a date followed by the time the entry is made followed by a paragraph listing the event. Occasionally, I will xerox pages from it as an interim means of backup, putting the pages in safe deposit boxes. When a notebook is filled, I take it to my safe deposit box.

However, do not think that by following these precautions your diary is thereby made absolutely secure. For a preview of what you may be in store for, look up the phrase "Hot Prowl Burglary" in this glossary.

## **Your Computer Seen as Exfiltration Tool**

Keep in mind that your computer, when connected to the internet, is a gateway available to be used (with plausible deniability built-in) to exfiltrate sensitive information such as personal pictures. These exfiltrated documents can then be produced publicly at an "appropriate" time. The provenance being attributed to some unknown "hacker."

### **You have no privacy**

Computers, cell phones, tablets, search engines and web sites were developed with the convenience, needs and profit of their manufacturer in mind, NEVER with regard for your privacy. See S. Zuboff's massive book on the subject, listed in the bibliography, for an exhaustive treatment.

And all I've just said is valid BEFORE you become a target of the Government.

### **Do not think, for even one moment, of retaliating**

Do not, under any circumstances, yield to the temptation of retaliating by hacking into what you may be led to think are the computers used to intrude into yours. If you are targeted by Government, you have absolutely no way of determining, in a foolproof manner, the source of the intrusion. There is a plethora of tools available to mask the true source of an exploit while simulating provenance.

That way lies perdition. I mean it.

### **A final note**

Remember, if you cannot guarantee physical control over your computer(s), you CANNOT protect them. I once thought to acquire a hardware firewall made by a well-known company to foil frequent, brazen intrusions into my computers. I finally found one at a swap meet. Then, after some thought, since I had, by then, ample evidence my bungalow was constantly being broken into, I realized the firewall would only give me a false sense of security while protecting nothing.



# APPENDIX IV

## Glossary

**abatis** \ab•a•tis äb'ä-tē", -tīs\ n.: Rubbish in front of a fort, to prevent the rubbish outside from molesting the rubbish inside. – Ambrose Bierce (from *The Devil's Dictionary*)

**"affinity scam"** phrase: Inducing a member of one's own ethnic group to perform some action by virtue of a presumed inherent affinity. Yet another barefaced swindle. In other words, don't always "think with the blood."

**ahimsa**: n.: The Hindu and Buddhist doctrine of refraining from harming any living being. An important component of the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi (from *Merriam-Webster*).

**"artificial environment"** phrase: An "artificial environment" is a set of ongoing, consistent fabrications about a person's surroundings to mislead him and foster a mood or point of view which can later be exploited. See "Legend," a related topic.

In my case, having been subjected to what I perceive as years of this "artificial environment," a possible payoff came when a good friend in the middle of a heated discussion asked me the leading question: "You hate this country, don't you?" An affirmative answer might in future raise some questions about my biases. Very likely, partly the point of both the long-term effort (creation of the "artificial environment") as well as the sudden question. There have been other such leading questions. Some of even greater potential import.

The other obvious goal of this effort is the creation and maintenance of a constant atmosphere of tension lasting, in my case, for more than thirty years.

If average citizens of this country are imagined as a cast performing a play in which their scripted plot contrasts with what is really going on behind the scenes, then my situation should be seen as a play within this play – in that I have been living in a hothouse for the last thirty or more years, a hothouse custom-built for me based on what I imagine to be a detailed analysis of my character and the needs of the people writing my scripts. I am therefore the last person to be asked for an opinion on the activities of the cast – the average citizens mentioned above. No more than those very same citizens can, in turn, be expected to have a realistic opinion of what is going on behind the scenes of THEIR play. One could say I have been living in a simulation.

Whatever the reasons for this effort, I and especially the many anonymous actors I constantly run into have become caricatures in this drama, where everything has been simplified or had its features grossly exaggerated, leaving little room for subtlety or shades of meaning. Just about everyone involved seems to come straight from central casting; e.g., the (seemingly) underage girls with the exaggerated "Lolita look" brought on for their star turn; the older Jewish man (with an accent straight outta some *shtetl*) who backs into my car and feigns surprise when I point this out to him; the American who, after witnessing a car accident of mine (also of dubious antecedents), begins speaking with an Israeli accent (which, however, fails to convince) before giving up on the attempt altogether, and reverting to a broad American speech pattern. Amateur Hour, perhaps? Question: could the engineers of this particular farce not find a real Israeli for the occasion? Surely there must be quite a few in their stable by now. Verisimilitude, please.

The few examples mentioned above should suffice to illustrate the approach: the American *Securitate* seems to deal in gross caricatures of humanity. And I, fool that I am, fell for it.



Mine is a cartoonish life in a play written by second-rate talent, with the thing flogged by increasingly desperate, equally second-rate impresarios. And what of the audience, the presumed market for this play?

**askari** n.: One entrusted with guard duties. Originating in East Africa during World War I (if not before), the term was used by the Germans, among others, to designate native troops fighting under their colors. Nowadays, it is more often used to refer to hotel security guards in places like Kenya. Surprisingly, I have run into them here in Los Angeles. Generally during some verbal assault on my person, they are present for the peace of mind of the miscreant entrusted with my harassment; nearby, often very visible and, I presume, ready to spring into action at a moment's notice should my behavior warrant it. In this country, they are usually Black, although in my case, in at least one instance, they were not. For me, at least, a somewhat pejorative term.

For an example of this type, I refer you to the peculiar situation I once found myself in while having my teeth cleaned at the USC School of Dentistry some years ago. The poor woman cleaning my teeth, possibly head of that department, evidently felt it was her bound duty to comment on my lamentable life as I lay helpless in her dentist's chair while she worked. Occasionally, she interrupted her monologue to point out to a student some interesting feature of my teeth. As a parting shot, she gently suggested one such as I, keeping my deplorable past firmly in mind, should perhaps exile himself to some remote island. And, all the while, lurking, not far away, within my field of view was – you guessed it – the inevitable "Askari." Black, of course – one fights fire with fire, does one not? Coming out of this session, my head spinning, out of curiosity and for a little something for my files, I asked some of the young students milling around the entrance what the woman's name was. Seems to me, the poor things, in their eagerness to protect her, forgot not only her name but theirs, as well.

**automaton** n.: Idea taken from the novel *The Grand Emperor and his Automaton* by Jean Lévi. Today I use this word to refer to – one can scarcely think of them as people anymore – "units" in the service of the State. This includes, of course, the many individuals who have worked against me as I mention in this book. I too, was to be one of them – if only for a brief period; mine might not have been a long term, permanent position. I suspect the term can also be used with equal accuracy for the staffs of these vast, unaccountable bureaucracies which make up our security services. And if you don't believe me, just try becoming a whistleblower or look at the fates of those among them who have done so.

As an aside, a pattern I seem to have noticed is that every Automaton I have encountered has a controller. This controller is, from what I can see, always of a lower social status than the person being controlled.

One of the building blocks of EVERY security service is the demolished man. They take what is left, throw away what they don't need, and use up the rest.

They are: "Automata inconvenienced with a soul."

– A. de Custine

Another synonym I use is "half-breed." (See the parallels with H.G. Wells's novel, *The Time Machine*.) As an alternative to the above, I was thinking of a word I once made up: FedCats (stands for Federal Catamites) while casting about for a description of the poor devils who work (involuntarily) for the Government, but "myrmidons" is just as appropriate, and more family-friendly. (Adapted from one of my emails)

**car** n.: A slang term possibly first used by policemen or correction officers working in prisons. It means: a clique of several people who cover for each other, and protect and back up one another's stories. In the context of my own life, I have heard it used to mean something less specific. Perhaps a faction or one's "friends," people one can to some extent count on in this Hobbesian war of all against all. Not necessarily a good thing since not only is it rumored to be hard to leave a gang, but these people eventually tend to extract their pound of flesh.

**“the Clark load”** phrase: During the Korean War, after General Mark Clark became commander, he instituted the practice of firing or dropping three to five times the prescribed tonnage on a target before the infantry went in, making their job a bit easier. The rule became known as the "Clark load." It was, apparently, most appreciated in certain circles. In this book, I, too, use the phrase in the sense of overkill – to ensure that certain parties are clear about my response to the legal, social, and emotional blackmail I have been subjected to.

**deception** n.: Should you be so unfortunate as to encounter some of these *Securitate* types, you must keep in mind, above all, that they are practiced confidence men. All of them, and I do not single out the Americans here. A hint regarding the general unscrupulousness of this sort can be found in the motto of the Israeli Mossad: "By way of deception, you shall make war." Do not, under any circumstances, believe ANYTHING they tell you privately; neither should you heed ANYTHING you might hear in public. Else, you may find yourself involved in a swindle on the grand scale.

You have been warned.

**“declaration against interest” or “evidence against interest”** phrase: Declarations against interest are an exception to the rule on hearsay in which a person's statement may be used, where generally the content of the statement is so prejudicial to the person making it that he would not have made it unless he believed it was true. The Federal Rules of evidence limit the bases of prejudices to the declarant to tort and criminal liability. Some states, such as California, extend the prejudice to "hatred, ridicule, or social disgrace in the community." (from Wikipedia)

I believe I made use of this principle when, among other admissions on my part, I freely admitted to having signed a statement resulting in my being granted Social Security benefits (due to my mental disability), a statement I knew to be false. I then wrote of the conditions under which I made the statement. From what I understand, "Declaration against Interest/Evidence against Interest" is some of the strongest evidence a person can give in court.

**“demonstrative surveillance”** phrase: Sometimes, in a parallel to some people's attitudes toward wealth, one must not only be followed but must be made aware of being followed. A sort of Thorstein Veblen approach to surveillance, akin to his notion of "conspicuous consumption." It can, especially when carried out for long stretches, be quite upsetting and intimidating to the recipient of this attention.

**“divide and conquer” or “fishing in troubled waters”** phrase: It is natural that where there are people of even slightly different backgrounds rubbing shoulders, tensions should inevitably develop. This happens the world over. It is unfortunate, but to be expected in this vale of tears. What is truly dangerous is that there are those who would fish in these troubled waters – a practice known as “divide and conquer.” I leave it to you, Gentle Reader, to divine

who benefits from such exercises and to come up with some illustrative pairs of ethnic groups in this country.

**“expanding the area of conscience”** phrase: A nasty idea, brought to you by the good people of the security services (yours or otherwise). A method whereby an individual, initially in possession of a normal reticence to committing illegal acts, betrayal or treason, is gradually made to shed these inhibitions until he becomes comfortable; i.e., "ego syntonic" with committing the grossest violations of his (former) moral code. To get the ball rolling, he is often induced to perpetrate initial act(s) of little or no value to those manipulating him but violating, even if in some small way, his moral code.

“Upon such meat has this, our Caesar, fed.”

– E. Friedenberg (Adapted)

**“false flag operation”** phrase: A false flag operation is defined as person or organization “A” doing something to person or entity “B” while pretending to be person or entity “C.” In this case, it is the United States Government that attempted to manipulate me, Bergendahl Hawkins, into performing acts that I, on my own, would never have entertained, in order to use me as a cutout to shield themselves from responsibility for acts against elements of various Jewish communities (and perhaps others) to be committed by me.

A false flag operation is an act committed with the intent of disguising the actual source of responsibility, and pinning blame on a second party. The term is popular among conspiracy theory promoters in referring to covert operations of various governments and cabals. (from Wikipedia)

**folder** n.: My guess, and not being privy to the dark arts of the informant/provocateur, it is only a guess, is that the word refers to some poor wretch who has just had the misfortune of being inducted into the ranks of what the East German (DDR) Stasi security services primly called IMs – *inoffizielle Mitarbeiter* or informal collaborators. This term was used from time to time by Colette Walczak, i.e.: "I have some not-so-good folders for you," or "You are not a good folder (said once as she patted me on the back)." A slave of the security apparatus of this country. In fact, French slang refers to these people with the Greek word for slave, “*Doulos*.” (See the definition for "Automaton.")

**gaslighting** n.: Gaslighting is a form of psychological manipulation in which a person or a group covertly sows seeds of doubt in a targeted individual or group, making them question their own memory, perception, or judgment, often evoking in them cognitive dissonance and other changes, including low self-esteem. Using denial, misdirection, contradiction, and misinformation, gaslighting involves attempts to destabilize the victim and delegitimize the victim's beliefs.

Instances can range from the denial by an abuser that previous abusive incidents occurred, to belittling the victim's emotions and feelings, to the staging of bizarre events by the abuser with the intention of disorienting the victim. The goal of gaslighting is to gradually undermine the victim's confidence in their own ability to distinguish truth from falsehood, right from wrong, or reality from delusion, thereby rendering the individual or group pathologically dependent on the gaslighter for their thinking and feelings. (from Wikipedia)

Gaslighting involves a person, or a group of persons, the mental abuser or the victimizer, and a second person, the victim. It can be either conscious or unconscious, and is carried out

covertly in such a way that the resulting emotional abuse is not overtly abusive. (from Wikipedia)

Columnist Maureen Dowd was one of the first to use the term in the political context. She described the Bill Clinton administration's use of the technique in subjecting Newt Gingrich to small indignities intended to provoke him to make public complaints that "came across as hysterical." (from Wikipedia) This paragraph well illustrates the atmosphere I have been marinated in, to varying degrees, for years.

When everyone around you, especially people whose opinions you respect, and this for perhaps decades, denies your interpretations of wide swaths of your own experiences – the resulting doubts and confusion can lead you to seriously question your interpretations of events, and even your sanity.

**"Glomar response"** phrase: A response by an agency of the Government that neither confirms nor denies the existence or nonexistence of a fact or document. I sent off three FOIA requests to the FBI, Department of Homeland Security, and the Army requesting any information they might have about me. Glomar responses were all I got in return. In addition, my name on the reply from the FBI was misspelled.

**"grand central station"** phrase: My bungalow, at peak hours, can be so well frequented that, several years ago, I took the liberty of placing a sign on my front door reminding my "official visitor(s)" (minions of the American *Securitate*, those shy and mysterious creatures who prefer not to make their presence obvious) to do a bit of tidying-up (nothing onerous – perhaps some dishes and the like) while on my premises. A picture of this sign on my front door can be found among the other pictures in this book.

**granfalloon** n.: A granfalloon, in the fictional religion of Bokononism (created by Kurt Vonnegut in his 1963 novel *Cat's Cradle*), is defined as a "false karass." That is, it is a group of people who affect a shared identity or purpose, but whose mutual association is meaningless... Vonnegut writes ... that a "granfalloon is a proud and meaningless collection of human beings" ... The most commonly purported granfalloons are associations and societies based on a shared but ultimately fabricated premise. Examples from *Cat's Cradle* include: "the Communist Party, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the General Electric Company—and any nation, anytime, anywhere." A more general and oft-cited quote defines a granfalloon as "a proud and meaningless association of human beings"... The granfalloon technique is a method of persuasion in which individuals are encouraged to identify with a particular granfalloon or social group... The pressure to identify with a group is meant as a method of securing the individual's loyalty and commitment through adoption of the group's symbols, rituals, and beliefs. (from Wikipedia)

**"half-breed"** phrase: See "Automaton."

**"hot prowl burglary"** phrase: One of the "*spécialités maison*" of the American *Securitate* on my case, lo these many years. This technical term, used by the police, refers to the practice of intruding into a residence to muck about while the occupants are home. I believe I (and likely my sister as well as, possibly, Colette Walczak) have been subjected to this – on two continents, no less. Considered fraught with danger by the police, for obvious reasons, I have physical evidence strongly suggesting I have been subjected to this in my bungalow here in Los Angeles more than once.

**intoxication** n.: The middle name of those in the intelligence business either detecting it or employing it. Success in an operation has been achieved once the target has drunk deep of this brew. Resulting in a condition akin to having abused alcohol, often with similarly disastrous effects. A specialty of the house, any house.

“**just-world fallacy**” phrase:

*“The just-world phenomenon is the tendency to believe that the world is just and that people get what they deserve. Because people want to believe that the world is fair, they will look for ways to explain or rationalize away injustice, often blaming the person in a situation who is actually the victim. The just-world phenomenon helps explain why people sometimes blame victims for their own misfortune, even in situations where the victims had no control over the events that have befallen them.” (from www.verywellmind.com)*

*“The just-world fallacy or just-world hypothesis is the cognitive bias that a person's actions are inherently inclined to bring morally fair and fitting consequences to that person; thus, it is the assumption that all noble actions are eventually rewarded and all evil actions eventually punished. In other words, the just-world hypothesis is the tendency to attribute consequences to — or expect consequences as the result of — a universal force that restores moral balance. This belief generally implies the existence of cosmic justice, destiny, divine providence, desert, stability, and/or order, and is often associated with a variety of fundamental fallacies, especially in regard to rationalizing people's suffering on the grounds that they “deserve” it.*

*The hypothesis popularly appears in the English language in various figures of speech that imply guaranteed negative reprisal, such as: “you got what was coming to you”, “what goes around comes around”, “chickens come home to roost”, “everything happens for a reason”, and “you reap what you sow”. This hypothesis has been widely studied by social psychologists since Melvin J. Lerner conducted seminal work on the belief in a just world in the early 1960s. Research has continued since then, examining the predictive capacity of the hypothesis in various situations and across cultures, and clarifying and expanding the theoretical understandings of just-world beliefs.” (from Wikipedia)*

**lawfare** n.: The misuse of legal systems and principles against an enemy, such as by damaging or delegitimizing them, wasting their time and money (e.g., strategic lawsuits against public participation, SLAPP suits), or winning a public relations victory. (from Wikipedia)

**legend** n.: A “Legend” I define as a set of fabrications about a person's past to mislead OTHERS. See “Artificial Environment,” a related topic where a person is misled about HIS present. In my case, the whole business at the Santa Monica Public Library in 1988, among many other events, was, I believe, part of an attempt to paint me in colors more suitable to the purposes of my would-be Masters: the American *Securitate*.

**“Martha Mitchell effect”** phrase: The Martha Mitchell effect refers to the process by which a psychiatrist, psychologist, mental health clinician, or other medical professional labels a patient's accurate perception of real events as delusional, resulting in misdiagnosis.

According to Bell et al., "Sometimes, improbable reports are erroneously assumed to be symptoms of mental illness (Maher, 1998)," due to a "failure or inability to verify whether the events have actually taken place, no matter how improbable intuitively they might appear to the busy clinician." (from Wikipedia)

**manipulation** n.: Speaking from personal experience, I can vouch for the effectiveness of the following method to which I have been subjected time and time again. It is simply this: one or more suggestions, quietly made, without emphasis or force, perhaps apropos nothing, made in the course of a conversation. It is frightening how effective this has been with me. I can, of course, only speak for myself. Perhaps the method used varies, depending on the target's psychology.

Examples #1: I am told cheap vegetables can be found at a market I am familiar with, a market I have not been to in some time, located very near where I live, by someone I have known several years. For some reason, a few days later, I proceed to that same market to do some shopping. Example #2: I overhear a conversation over the phone in the office of a customer. During the call, reference is made to an apartment for rent. A price may be mentioned. I inquire, visit the apartment in question and, days later find myself moving in. It was, of course, a trap. As a result of this decision of mine, I had to endure some rather ugly and potentially dangerous situations for years thereafter.

**“meet cute”** phrase: A cinematic term I have re-purposed. In the spooky world I find myself enmeshed in, I use the term, not without an attempt at heavy-handed irony, to refer to a completely false, engineered meeting, without a shred of spontaneity to it – possibly meant to entrap the other party in some awful way.

**“my Masters”** phrase: I use this term imprecisely but objectively to hint at my predicament. Wishing to escape the hot embrace of the American *Securitate*, I was forced to turn to others, likely cut from the same cloth as the Americans, for protection. Ironic, no? For I have few illusions concerning what I am, my status, or the kind of people I am dealing with. I don't believe they, any of them – American or other – are running charity organizations.

A phrase from Noam Chomsky comes to mind, a phrase which summarizes the feelings of Brazilian dissidents and/or average citizens. He once quoted several of them, trying to characterize their struggles, as saying something like: "We are trying to expand the size of the cage."

Indeed.

**NQOCD** acronym: NQOCD stands for "Not Quite Our Class, Dear," a British acronym, of course. They take their class system as seriously as we do ours – perhaps being just a bit more open, obvious, and less servile about it. From an anecdote told by Lewis Lapham, the well-known writer, satirist, editor, and card-carrying member of the owning classes of this country, I gather this attitude was prevalent over at the CIA when he, cautiously, inquired about a position in the 1950s. According to a joke of the British intelligence services in WWII, the acronym O.S.S. (the predecessor of the CIA) was said to stand for: Oh! So Social. The NQOCD stance may no longer be of much use to the Brits for, as Friedenbergs so memorably put it in the mid-seventies: "Britain is in a state of *Uttar Pradesh* because she has no *Lucknow*." This country's eventual fate, as well?

**one-upmanship** n: Literally: to try to be above a person one is dealing with. In my personal experience, interlocutors, during verbal interactions, frequently insist on scoring last – even if not decisively. An ephemeral, transitory status symbol. To never leave an interaction with another person without having gained the upper hand. The ethos of the knuckle-dragger. Should the use of this slang shock, consider that I have had two instances where people; in one case an elderly woman in her seventies hit me so hard it hurt, in another case a man in a queue backed into me at speed from several feet away, hitting me with both his back and arm or elbow.

**O.S.S.** acronym: Oh! So Sorry (Another version of the above joke; also, circa WWII), alluding to the manifest incompetence of this newly created agency.

**patzer** n.: My handy and concise definition of patzer: someone who thinks you can make furniture with an ax.

**“plausible deniability”** phrase: A term invented by a member of the CIA, from what I have heard. It refers to the quality of an operation, present from its inception, making it difficult if not impossible to point the finger at a culprit, were the operation to eventually be uncovered.

**provocation** n: A provocation is an aggression, small or large, in which there is more going on than meets the eye, one where there are ulterior motives at work. Specifically, the intent is to provoke the target into overreacting and thus be placed at a disadvantage. An example of this can be someone pretending not to notice you as they almost bump into you. Something which, at times, happens to me every few seconds when shopping at my usual markets. Here, the “payoff” is not inherent in the act but in the target’s (possible) response.

**“sabotaging the mission”** phrase: People working as Automatons of the *Securitate*, do not always do so willingly. At times, they will appear to carry out the mission assigned them while subtly undermining it. This can take the form of giving misleading directions to the targeted individual so a meeting is aborted, making things sufficiently unpleasant for him so he, on his own and not knowing this is happening, breaks off contact. Often, therefore, the Automaton given a task is accompanied by someone who monitors his behavior. This can be a giveaway; individuals working of their own free will are more likely to work alone, whereas Automatons typically work either in pairs or speak into a cell phone for monitoring purposes as well as to provide some cover for what they are saying.

**sayanim, sayan** n.: *Sayan* means helper in Hebrew, with *sayanim* as the plural. According to Victor Ostrovsky in his book *By Way of Deception*, the Israeli Mossad is able to operate with less personnel because it can count on the help of individual Jews in other countries. An example of this would be the services rendered to Israel by the British publisher, Robert Maxwell. He and his newspaper people were instrumental in noticing the presence of *Mordechai Vanunu* in Britain and alerting Israel to his activities.

**securitate** \say-koo-ree-tah-tay\ n.: My purposefully imprecise but colorful and evocative term for the congeries of security services that pullulate in this fair land. Taken from the name of the Romanian secret police under Nicolae "the Danube of Thought," "the *Conducator*," "the Genius of the Carpathians" Ceaușescu. I use the word as a memorable stand-in for the alphabet soup of American security services.

It was said the *Securitate* recruited its higher-level cadres from among the best students at the best universities. However, the “field hands,” or lower-level members, were often people who had been raised in orphanages; barren places where children were typically deprived of emotional sustenance during their formative years.

**SEXINT** portmanteau: SEXINT is the practice of monitoring and/or indexing the pornographic preferences of internet users in an effort to later use the information for blackmail. The term is a portmanteau of sexual intelligence retrieved on an intelligence service target and was first used by Jennifer Granick, Director of Civil Liberties at the Stanford Center for Internet and Society. (from Wikipedia)

**skit** n.: A skit is an event lasting anywhere from a second to hours, depending on time available. It is as contrived a situation as one would find in a theater with the target playing the part of the audience and one or more Automaton acting out a more or less elaborate charade. The purpose is to send a message, create a mood, or act as a provocation.

**"the sound code"** phrase: Now, here is something new to me. Problem is, I am just not sure I have it quite right. And even if I do, there are likely variations I am completely unaware of – just as you, Gentle Reader, are likely entirely unaware of this interesting phenomenon. I have the impression, developed over the last decade, that a kind of meaning, very simple, can be assigned to sequences of innocuous sounds heard in public. These sounds can come from car horns (a common occurrence for me), someone repeatedly slamming shut a file cabinet door in an office (an actual case, it happened at a local police station), a series of coughs (ditto), etc. The code is this: an odd sequence of sounds made in rapid succession means “no” or “negative” (i.e., a single car horn beep). Whereas an even sequence of sounds means “yes” or “positive” (as in two consecutive car horn beeps). As in the case of a car horn, these codes can be transmitted, heard, and deciphered from as far as the next block.

**"sound therapy"** phrase: Example: I am home in my bungalow one afternoon, when I begin hearing a curious series of sounds coming from the street. A sonorous hammering, somewhat irregular, which has been going on for some time. Curious and a bit disturbed, I go out to the sidewalk to check. After walking a few feet, I notice a man, Black, stout, come across the street as I approach the source of the discordant noise: a woman, Hispanic, sitting on the ground, banging away – to no discernible purpose – on the wheel rim of a car with a hammer. As the man passes me, the woman stops and they fist bump. No words are exchanged between them. After the sound stops, I return to the bungalow.

**SPIV** acronym: British acronym which stands for "Suspicious Person and Itinerant Vagrant."

**"a starter Jew"** phrase: A phrase encapsulating some of the horror of what was perhaps to be in store for me had I fallen for the manipulations of the Government. It refers to my theory that, possibly, the emphasis on the Jewish angle in the psychological operation mounted against me may only have been to get the "ball rolling." After all, likely perceived as a Black, it would be a normal thing for these *Securitate* types to presume anti-Semitism on my part – given that most Blacks are, in fact, rather so. (See the piece by Baldwin cited in the bibliography.)

**"Stockholm syndrome"** phrase: This supposed psychological effect, a contested illness, occurs when a victim begins to adopt the point of view of his oppressor. I have seen people



make comments ranging from "I'm all right with it" (meaning: I have made my peace with my status as Automaton) to "Have fun with it" (which can mean making the best of one's current task or, more cruelly, the "it" could refer to the victim one is currently working.)

The phrase comes from an actual bank holdup gone wrong in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1973. As the siege wore on, some of the hostages began taking the side of their hostage-takers against the police outside, and even raised money for their legal defense after it was over. I saw hints of this phenomenon in Colette Walczak's conversation and opinions during the last years of her life. Some believe the so-called "dirty bomber," Jose Padilla, currently serving out a long sentence in federal prison, suffers from this syndrome.

**"the taillight show"** phrase: Cars ahead of me sometimes on surface streets, but mostly on freeways, will, either singly or in clusters, tap their brake pedals so as to turn on their taillights without the car slowing. You have to experience it to feel its power of frustration.

**"talk therapy"** phrase: Either one person making "speech output" on a cell phone or two people making such "output" with each other. In either case, the nearby target overhears words, phrases, or sentences strangely connected to him. The intended effect is to make the person uneasy or send an explicit message. The "speech output," I hesitate to call it conversation, is always evocative (to varying degrees) but usually not informative. That is, it is mostly for emotional effect, and is rarely worth listening to.

The "speech output" can be of three sorts:

1. In the first kind, there is a theme uniting the utterances, making the sentences coherent. The theme may even be continued by other people who follow each other in time, perhaps even over a period of several days. (I have experienced this.)
2. In the second kind, there is no discernible theme for the output; it merely consists of keywords or verbal hot buttons spoken with little or no attempt at coherence.
3. In some cases, the volume can even be so faint as to make it impossible for even the target to discern ANY words at all. I call this "dark noise," as what is disturbing here is the somewhat random, discordant "output," which cannot be classified as speech of any kind.

In addition, as with propaganda, an important part of "talk therapy" is repetition. Themes can vary enormously. For me, there was the "Go back to work" theme, the "It's the Jews" theme, the "Go home" theme, the "Apology" theme, the frequent putdowns, the usual racial epithets, and so on. In every case, the theme of the moment is sustained; sometimes a particular campaign will continue for years.

The *forme fruste* of this behavior would then be the simple laugh, possibly repeated until the desired effect is obtained. Particularly effective with me, possibly, because of my mental condition. See my description of the scene immediately prior to my arrest in 1988, at the Santa Monica Public Library.

**tells** n.: An involuntary reaction to something heard or seen. It suggests there is guilt, familiarity, and/or knowledge concerning what has just been heard. An example, negative, will perhaps suffice: I was in Café 50s on Santa Monica Boulevard sometime during the early nineties when, from a nearby table, there came an insistent whisper – perhaps only perceptible to me – about some kind of bank trouble in San Diego. An irregularity of some sort was hinted at. I, presumably the target of this insinuation, did not react in the least; thus, proving my innocence (at least to the satisfaction of my would-be Masters, since this particular accusation

was never repeated). However, had I reacted involuntarily in some way, it would have been a tell-tale sign of some knowledge of the deed on my part – or even guilt. It might then have become part of the repertoire of the *Securitate's* operation against me.

“**useful idiot**” phrase: "There is a phrase in Russian intelligence circles for clueless people that are ruthlessly used without their knowledge in covert operations, which is ‘a useful idiot.’"

– Simon Watkins

It seems the intelligence services of the former Soviet Union and of the current regime in power there have much in common with this country’s intelligence community.

**vaginismus** n.: A rather rare medical-physical-psychological condition (prevalence below 1%) supposedly suffered by, among others, Imelda Marcos, former first lady of the Philippines. I am deeply sorry to be dragging you, Gentle Reader, and another I care deeply for, through this sewage. But I will not be deterred by my shame. These things **MUST** be known so that the depths reached by this nation's security services can be plumbed.

**violence** n.: According to the CIA, "Amateurs use physical violence; professionals exploit existing social tensions." See, for example, the uses to which were put the *Montagnard* tribesmen of the central highlands of South Vietnam during that war. Those people were held in low esteem by ethnic Vietnamese; they called them "*Moi*" or savages. The reader may feel free to substitute other examples of social tensions to be found and exploited in a certain, well-known, free-world country. It is not enough that there be troubled waters in this world; some feel a need to fish in them, as well.

“**Virginia nigger**” phrase: Before I went off to college, Father sat me down for a brief bit of advice-giving: I was to never let the Blacks at school know that he or we were from Virginia. No explanation given. This pearl of wisdom was, by the way, the only bit of advice I ever got from him about America. Advice which, woe is me, I promptly forgot. For once I got to these fabled shores, I breezily let the secret out when prompted by a fellow who, curious about my antecedents, asked forthrightly. I, with equal forthrightness, replied with the truth. Whereupon, with delighted peals of laughter accompanied by veritable shrieks, he exclaimed to the assembly: "A Virginia nigger!" Needless to be more specific about the nationality of said interlocutor.

You see, Gentle Reader, when the ships which brought some of my ancestors to these fair shores arrived, the first stop was Virginia. At which point the material was disembarked, whereupon the specimens judged to be of the first quality were sold, with the rest returned to ship. The next stop was North Carolina where the process was repeated. Thence to South Carolina, followed by Georgia then Mississippi. The procedure ended in Louisiana where the remnants were remaindered. In some quarters, this is apparently a source of conceit (or resentment). Whence the curious characterization of myself in the introduction.

“(to) walk” phrase: I think this means: you are caught by the authorities doing something illegal. You are then faced with two choices, either to face the music and go to prison or jail or to cooperate and begin to serve their purpose by becoming a tool (if tool is not too weak a word) in exchange for charges being held in abeyance. If you accept their offer, you are then considered to have "walked." (For a description on the position such a person finds themselves in, see the entry for "Work.")

**“walking the cat backward”** phrase: Reassessing past facts in light of current knowledge. Sometimes leading to a reinterpretation of whole swaths of what was previously considered well understood. I, myself, have done more than a bit of this in the last few years.

**wife, “paper bag”** phrase: It appears to me that Automatons often work in pairs, frequently consisting of a man and woman. Very possibly a marriage of convenience, which may be the origin of the common phrase: "paper bag," i.e., derived from the vulgar expression for a woman. I believe I have seen more than one of them and may have been tested to see if I were part of such a couple. Once with Colette Walczak at a police station, another time with my sister when, visiting professor Richard Farson (deceased) in La Jolla where a visiting corporate executive, board member of a company Richard was attempting to raise money from for what was, perhaps, a non-profit, quizzed us on this topic. Looking, perhaps, to ascertain our provenance and maybe satisfy his curiosity. It is revealing and ironic that, aware as he seemed to be (as his probing of my sister implied: he actually asked us if we were married!) of some of the more peculiar practices of this place, he seemed to immerse himself in minutiae related to the ongoing Republican convention then being held in Los Angeles.

**working, “to work”** phrase: The actions of a Folder or Automaton when in thrall to the security services. For example, I believe that both Colette Walczak and my sister Irene Hawkins have "worked" for the American *Securitate* since the mid-eighties; that is, since they both were in their twenties.

**"working both sides of the street"** phrase: A real puzzler for my simple peasant mind. I have noticed that people who seem to be working for one side can be found to work, temporarily at least, for the other side while apparently remaining loyal to their initial Masters. I have witnessed this on more than one occasion.

**zersetzung** (the Definition Short) n.: A German word meaning to degrade, corrupt, cause to fall apart, decompose. A technique used by the East German (DDR) Stasi security services. It seems that once they had progressed beyond the "bad old days" of fingernail pulling (more prevalent in the Fifties) and the like, the secret police hit upon the novel idea of resorting to psychological methods, applied relentlessly, to dissidents and enemies of the regime. This involved playing games with the targeted individual or organization to cause strife leading, perhaps, to dissolution of the organization – or, in the case of an individual, mental instability, insanity, even suicide. A key feature of these techniques, which may individually appear innocent enough, is the cumulative effects on the target's psyche or, on the perception of that person's mental health by others close to him. See the experiences related by Luke Harding, Moscow-based reporter for *The Guardian* newspaper in his book, *Expelled*.

Actual examples. A woman leaves her bicycle in front of a store, and when she returns a few minutes later, both of her tires are flat. A husband comes home one night to find next to his bed a sex manual, which he had not placed there.

Imagine my surprise when, a few years ago, I came across mention of this word and technique. There was instant recognition on my part, as well as a certain relief at the thought I was not the only one to have experienced this. I have had these methods applied to me for over a decade, their use intensifying since I moved to the bungalow that I currently live in. There have been people entering while I am away, usually leaving signs of their presence for me to discover. Seldom is anything of value taken or damaged, making this a political/psychological act and not a purely criminal one.

Vladimir Putin, in his previous incarnation as *Osobist* (member of the KGB) was known as a high practitioner of this art. His nickname: “the Moth,” due to the subtle yet relentless way he nibbled at his victims to their destruction and sometimes death.

The most insidious aspect of *Zersetzung* is that its victims are almost invariably held in doubt.

***zersetzung*** (the Definition Long) n.: Keeping in mind that the techniques outlined in the following definition have been applied to me for the better part of three decades, this definition from Wikipedia is worth quoting at length in order that you, Gentle Reader, may come to appreciate some aspects of the country we live in:

*The Stasi used Zersetzung essentially as a means of psychological oppression and persecution. Findings of operational psychology were formulated into method at the Stasi's College of Law (Juristische Hochschule der Staatssicherheit, or JHS), and applied to political opponents in an effort to undermine their self-confidence and self-esteem. Operations were designed to intimidate and destabilize them by subjecting them to repeated disappointment, and to socially alienate them by interfering with and disrupting their relationships with others as in social undermining. The aim was to induce personal crises in victims, leaving them too unnerved and psychologically distressed to have the time and energy for anti-government activism. The Stasi intentionally concealed their role as mastermind of the operations. Author Jürgen Fuchs was a victim of Zersetzung and wrote about his experience, describing the Stasi's actions as "psychosocial crime", and "an assault on the human soul."*

*Although its techniques had been established effectively by the late 1950s, Zersetzung was not rigorously defined until the mid-1970s, and only then began to be carried out in a systematic manner in the 1970s and 1980s. It is difficult to determine how many people were targeted, since the sources have been deliberately and considerably redacted; it is known, however, that tactics varied in scope, and that a number of different departments implemented them. Overall there was a ratio of four or five authorized Zersetzung operators for each targeted group, and three for each individual. Some sources indicate that around 5,000 people were "persistently victimized" by Zersetzung. At the College of Legal Studies, the number of dissertations submitted on the subject of Zersetzung was in double figures. It also had a comprehensive 50-page Zersetzung teaching manual, which included numerous examples of its practice.*

#### *Against individuals*

*The Stasi applied Zersetzung before, during, after, or instead of incarcerating the targeted individual. The implementation of Zersetzung — euphemistically called Operativer Vorgang ("operational procedure") — generally did not aim to gather evidence against the target in order to initiate criminal proceedings. Rather, the Stasi considered Zersetzung as a separate measure to be used when official judiciary procedures were undesirable for political reasons, such as the international image of the GDR. However, in certain cases, the Stasi did*

*attempt to entrap individuals, as for example in the case of Wolf Biermann: The Stasi set him up with minors, hoping that they could then pursue criminal charges. The crimes targeted for such entrapment were non-political, such as drug possession, trafficking, theft, financial fraud, and rape.*

*...the Stasi often used a method which was really diabolic. It was called Zersetzung, and it's described in another guideline. The word is difficult to translate because it means originally "biodegradation." But actually, it's a quite accurate description. The goal was to destroy secretly the self-confidence of people, for example by damaging their reputation, by organizing failures in their work, and by destroying their personal relationships. Considering this, East Germany was a very modern dictatorship. The Stasi didn't try to arrest every dissident. It preferred to paralyze them, and it could do so because it had access to so much personal information and to so many institutions.*

*—Hubertus Knabe, German historian*

*Directive 1/76 lists the following as tried and tested forms of Zersetzung, among others:*

*A systematic degradation of reputation, image, and prestige on the basis of true, verifiable and discrediting information together with untrue, credible, irrefutable, and thus also discrediting information; a systematic engineering of social and professional failures to undermine the self-confidence of individuals; ... engendering of doubts regarding future prospects; engendering of mistrust and mutual suspicion within groups ...; interrupting respectively impeding the mutual relations within a group in space or time ..., for example by ... assigning geographically distant workplaces.*

*— Directive No. 1/76 of January 1976 for the development of "operational procedures".*

*Beginning with intelligence obtained by espionage, the Stasi established "sociograms" and "psychograms" which it applied for the psychological forms of Zersetzung. They exploited personal traits, such as homosexuality, as well as supposed character weaknesses of the targeted individual — for example a professional failure, negligence of parental duties, pornographic interests, divorce, alcoholism, dependence on medications, criminal tendencies, passion for a collection or a game, or contacts with circles of the extreme right — or even the veil of shame from the rumors poured out upon one's circle of acquaintances. From the point of view of the Stasi, the measures were the most fruitful when they were applied in connection with a personality; all "schematism" had to be avoided.*

*Moreover, methods of Zersetzung included espionage, overt, hidden, and feigned; opening letters and listening to telephone calls; encroachments on private property; manipulation of vehicles; and even poisoning food and using false medications. Certain collaborators of the Stasi tacitly took into account the suicide of victims of Zersetzung.*

*It has not been definitely established that the Stasi used X-rays to provoke long-term health problems in its opponents. That said, Rudolf Bahro, Gerulf Pannach, and Jürgen Fuchs, three important dissidents who had been imprisoned at the same time, died of cancer within an interval of two years. A study by the Federal Commissioner for the Records of the State Security Service of the former GDR (Bundesbeauftragte für die Unterlagen des Staatssicherheitsdienstes der ehemaligen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik or BStU) has meanwhile rejected on the basis of extant documents such as fraudulent use of X-rays, and only mentions isolated and unintentional cases of the harmful use of sources of radiation, for example to mark documents.*

*In the name of the target, the Stasi made little announcements, ordered products, and made emergency calls, to terrorize them. To threaten or intimidate or cause psychoses the Stasi assured itself of access to the target's living quarters and left visible traces of its presence, by adding, removing, and modifying objects such as the socks in one's drawer, or by altering the time that an alarm clock was set to go off.*

#### *Against groups and social relations*

*The Stasi manipulated relations of friendship, love, marriage, and family by anonymous letters, telegrams and telephone calls as well as compromising photos, often altered. In this manner, parents and children were supposed to systematically become strangers to one another. To provoke conflicts and extramarital relations the Stasi put in place targeted seductions by Romeo agents.*

*For the Zersetzung of groups, it infiltrated them with unofficial collaborators, sometimes minors. The work of opposition groups was hindered by permanent counter-propositions and discord on the part of unofficial collaborators when making decisions. To sow mistrust within the group, the Stasi made believe that certain members were unofficial collaborators; moreover by spreading rumors and manipulated photos, the Stasi feigned indiscretions with unofficial collaborators, or placed members of targeted groups in administrative posts to make believe that this was a reward for the activity of an unofficial collaborator. They even aroused suspicions regarding certain members of the group by assigning privileges, such as housing or a personal car. Moreover, the imprisonment of only certain members of the group gave birth to suspicions.*

#### *Methods*

*Tactics employed under Zersetzung generally involved the disruption of the victim's private or family life. This often included psychological attacks, in a form of gaslighting. Other practices included property damage, sabotage of cars, purposely incorrect medical treatment, smear campaigns including sending falsified compromising photos or documents to the victim's family, denunciation, provocation, psychological warfare, psychological subversion, wiretapping, and bugging.*

I apologize for the overlong definition. As you can imagine, this is a subject near and dear to my heart.

# APPENDIX V

## Selected Hot Spots

Advance Food Market (on Adams Boulevard in Los Angeles)

Albertson's (on Venice Boulevard and Culver Boulevard; no longer there)

Best Buy (on Washington Boulevard in Culver City)

Best Buy (on Pico Boulevard in West Los Angeles)

Broadway Federal Bank /City First Bank (on Wilshire Boulevard)

Broadway Federal Bank/ City First Bank (in Inglewood)

Café 50s (on Lincoln Boulevard in Venice; no longer there)

Café 50s (on Santa Monica Boulevard in West Los Angeles)

Costco (on Washington Boulevard, Culver City-Marina del Rey)

Culver City Julian Dixon Library, County of Los Angeles (on Overland Boulevard)

Denny's (in San Gabriel, near 10 freeway)

Denny's (on Lincoln Boulevard in Santa Monica; no longer there)

Edelman Mental Health Center (on Olympic Boulevard)

Fry's Electronics (in Manhattan Beach)

Home Depot (on Slauson Avenue, Ladera Heights)

Home Depot (on Jefferson Boulevard, Marina del Rey)

Hop Li Restaurant (on Pico Boulevard in West Los Angeles)

Jon's Market (on Vermont Boulevard in Hollywood)

Jon's Market (in Hollywood, exact location unknown; possibly closed)

Kaiser Permanente Hospital (on Cadillac Avenue in West Los Angeles)

Kaiser Permanente Wateridge Medical Offices, Psychiatry Offices (West Los Angeles, near Slauson Boulevard)

Koreatown Plaza Grocery Store (on Western Boulevard and San Marino Street)



Launderland Coin-Op Laundry (on Adams Boulevard and South Redondo Boulevard)

Los Angeles Public Library (on Robertson Boulevard)

Mitsuwa Market (on Venice Boulevard)

Norm's Restaurant (on La Brea Avenue in West Hollywood)

Norm's Restaurant (on Lincoln Boulevard in Santa Monica; no longer there)

Norm's Restaurant (on Pico Boulevard in West Los Angeles)

Norm's Restaurant (on Valley Boulevard in Monterey Park)

P.F. Chang's China Bistro (on La Cienega Boulevard in West Hollywood)

P.F. Chang's China Bistro (in Santa Monica on Wilshire Boulevard)

PI Manufacturing Corp. (on Currier Road in Walnut, California; an electronics distributor)

Santa Monica Beach (at Bicknell Avenue)

Shamshiri Restaurant (on Westwood Boulevard in Westwood)

Staples (on La Cienega Boulevard; closed)

Star Market (on Santa Monica Boulevard, near South Bundy Drive in Santa Monica)

Superior Grocers (on La Brea Avenue, south of Adams Boulevard)

Tehran Market (on Wilshire Boulevard in Santa Monica)

T-Mobile Store (on Venice Boulevard, near Culver Boulevard)

Trader Joe's (on Culver Boulevard in Culver City)

Trader Joe's (on La Brea Avenue)

Trader Joe's (on National Boulevard)

Trader Joe's (on Pico Boulevard in Santa Monica)

TRW swap meet (in El Segundo; no longer there)

UCLA Research Library

USC School of Dentistry

US Post Office (Ray Charles branch, on Washington Boulevard). Of particular note: crimes committed within these premises may automatically be treated at the federal level with consequent serious implications.

Vons Market (on Fairfax Avenue and West Pico Boulevard)

Vons Market (on Lincoln Boulevard in Santa Monica)

Vons Market (on National Boulevard)

Wells Fargo (on La Brea Avenue in Superior Market)

Wells Fargo (in Marina del Rey, on Washington Boulevard)

Wells Fargo (on Palms Boulevard)

Western Mixers Produce and Nuts, Inc. (in Glendale, on San Fernando Road)



# APPENDIX VI

## An Approximate Timeline

(May 25, 1955) Birth in Paris

(1955-1967) Living in Orléans, France

(1964-1965) I attend the *École Publique de Garçons* in Orléans

(1967-1972) Living in West Germany

(1971) I meet Robert Seidenstein in Bremerhaven, Germany

(Summer 1972) I start college in the United States

(Summer 1973) Jailed for one month for car theft

(1976) I drop out of college for the last time

(1976-1980) My years living in north Pasadena

(1978) Working at JPL as a contractor for two years

(While living in north Pasadena) Sexually involved with an underage girl

(While working at Teledyne Controls in West Los Angeles and commuting from Pasadena by bus) Attempted sting by a woman claiming to be sixteen, calling herself “Blanca Gutierrez”

(1982) FBI given jurisdiction over drug crimes

(June 14, 1982) Falklands war ends. I meet Reuven Levy at Terminal Data around that time

(1983) I watch the movie “The Day After” on TV, at Alexander Ureche’s apartment in Palms

(July 26, 1983) I am employed at Xentel Corp. in Burbank, California

(Around March 6, 1987) Working on code at company owner by Ray Wynn, in Burbank

(Sometime during the summer to fall of 1988) Working on code at Rigel Instrumentation in Oxnard, California

(September 18, 1988) I am arrested at the Santa Monica Public Library on felony charges

(Before, during and after December 7, 1988) Held in a closed psychiatric ward in Manhattan for six weeks

(December 6, 1989) Living in Westwood in a single at 1441 Veteran Avenue, #423

(December, 1989) Working at Signum Systems

(February 2, 1990) Still living in Westwood

(While living in Westwood) Employed at Signum Systems, Irene comes for a visit with her then-boyfriend, Persio Dello Sbarba (they were to marry later), before leaving for Italy with him, abandoning her residency months before passing her boards

(While living in Westwood) A couple tries to pick me up in a Norm's coffee shop

(While living in Westwood) At Café 50s, after several innocuous meetings, a small business owner of Persian descent in his thirties suggests an exchange of sex for money. I ignore his offer, he soon ends his visits to the café

(1991-1992) Employed at Sound Solutions for about one year

(April 24, 1992) I quit Sound Solutions, signing an agreement with David Epstein regarding a cable labeling device

(Early 1993) I share a townhouse in Monterey Park, California, with four people

(July, 1993) I am living in Monterey Park, California, receiving a letter there

(October 25, 1993) Colette is in China; see Figure 11 for a picture of her at the Great Wall with timestamp visible

(1994) During the Northridge earthquake, I live in San Gabriel

(March 25, 1994) Colette Walczak is living in Shanghai, writing me a letter from there

(Unknown date) Colette puts my name on her bank account

(Unknown date) Sten Larssen offers me a logic analyzer which I buy with Colette's money (neglecting to ask her permission)

(Some days before September 6, 1994) I have a car accident with Maria Z. Rojas of Norwalk

(Sometime in 1994-5) A friend, James Lazell, asks me the leading question: "Do I want to see David Epstein dead?"

(Around winter 1995) Business dries up unexpectedly. I make no sales for two consecutive months and must leave my apartment in San Gabriel

(Spring to fall, 1995) in Florence, Italy

(Fall 1995) I return to Los Angeles

(While I lived in my walk-up single) Irene tells me of meeting a Jewish-American woman in Florence

(Unknown date, likely after my return from Italy) Colette Walczak runs into an old (Jewish) college friend, Beth Wolfson

(After my return from Italy, during a visit to Oregon) Tom Ellsberg offers the help of a lawyer

(Late 1990s) Working at Santa Monica Studios for over a year

(January 9, 1998) I receive a letter from my father in his new apartment in Los Angeles

(June 1998) I make a serious suicide attempt

(From about June 25, 1998, to July 15, 1998 to September 23, 1998) Seen by a psychiatrist at Harbor-UCLA Hospital while recovering from injuries sustained in a suicide attempt

(From December 9, 1998, to February 11, 2010) Seen at Edelman Mental Health Center in Los Angeles

(May 7, 1999) Father dies

(June 15, 2001) Oscar Revey dies at County USC Hospital in Los Angeles

(October 4, 2001) I am seen at Harbor-UCLA Hospital for chest pains

(February 28, 2003) I receive a letter from an old high school friend. After a brief exchange of emails, communication is broken off (by him)

(March 20, 2003) Antiwar demonstration in Los Angeles. Colette, back from Dune Acres, Indiana, becomes hysterical. I call police

(Unknown date) I am told Tom Ellsberg has died (while I am still living in my two-bedroom apartment)

(Unknown date, though while living in my two-bedroom apartment) Fake car accident with Caroline Stroh

(Unknown date, just before I move from apt #3, a two-bedroom, to apt #1, a first-floor single) I start fixing PCs and teaching French

(August 14, 2004) I move into a single in the same complex as my previous two-bedroom apartment

(April 4, 2007) Working as contractor at Malaysia Airlines (occasionally, for a total of 2.5 years, approximately)

(During the mid-2000s) Colette begins seeing Jon Howard

(March 1, 2010) I move into the bungalow where I now live

(Summer 2011) I am informed by the USC School of Dentistry that due to sexual misconduct on my part, I will no longer be allowed to receive dental care there

(December 2011) My car is stolen for three weeks before it is found abandoned in LA

(2012) Beginning of what I call "The Year of Living Dangerously"

(After 2012) Colette's mental state worsens visibly

(In 2012) I lose a backpack at a swap meet. Go to bank to close accounts; this is the start of a three-ring circus at Wells Fargo which went on for years

(During 2012–2013) I experienced odd effects while conversing with Irene in Florence, Colette, and Katsumasa Kozono in Osaka with Skype

(2012) Computer sabotage while I work at Nekter Juice

(2012) One or two checkbooks stolen from my car parked at Albertson's supermarket. I discover the theft as I try to make a purchase on Amazon

(February 27, 2012, approximately) A PC repair customer is victim of attempted computer fraud (not consummated). The attempt is reported, by me, to the FBI

(March 21, 2012) The beginning of many Craigslist ads canceled

(April 20, 2012) First car accident, a hit-and-run, on the 10 freeway; my car is totaled

(September 22, 2012) My Epiphany. It happens at a performance of the play "Rhinoceros" at UCLA

(Summer 2012) Attempted sting involving underage girl, at the house of Gretchen Davidson in South Pasadena

(May 5, 2013) More Craigslist ads mysteriously canceled

(Before June 3, 2013) I start writing my autobiography

(June 2013) Looking for assistance, I contact the ACLU, without success

(June 2013) Using a notary, I make three FOIA requests before Irene's "marching orders"

(Summer or fall 2013) "Marching orders" from Irene

(July 20, 2013) I start to receive fake emails purported to be from French cousins

(Before August 10, 2013) Bribery attempt. An offer of a house is made

(Before August 10, 2013) My "Mr. Government Man" sign goes up just outside my door

(August 10, 2013) 200 pages of autobiography completed

(November 3, 2013) I receive the last of the emails purported to be from two French cousins

(November 20, 2013) First of three requests to Santa Monica Police Department for police report of my arrest in 1988. All unsuccessful

(November 27, 2013) Sent one of three postcards or letters to cousin in France. Received emails purported to be from her. I never answered

(Around December 5, 2013) After contacting a lawyer, I obtain a copy of the police report detailing my arrest in September 1988

(December 2013) Mysterious apologies at Costco

(December 21, 2013) The first of a dozen emails called "Laundry Lists" goes out to a select group of people

(End of 2013) Not leaving the country has become an obsession

(December 2013-January 2014) A tense, chaotic time, "*Walpurgisnacht*" during which time I make a suicide attempt

(Sometime in 2014) Senate Intelligence Oversight Committee hearings held by senator Dianne Feinstein

(January 2, 2014) Drugged without my knowledge before a medical appointment at Kaiser Permanente Hospital

(January 4, 2014) Wrote out an attempt at a living will. Under much stress

(January 7, 2014) T-Mobile transfer for payment of phone bill failed. I am told my Wells Fargo account is frozen

(January 8, 2014) I am at a Wells Fargo branch in the Superior Grocers supermarket on La Brea Avenue, to change business checking account. During this visit, someone moves my car a short distance in the parking lot

(January 9, 2014) See Dr. Kozlowski at Kaiser Permanente Hospital about burns on my fingers

(January 14, 2014) Repeated carburetor problems. Repairs made at KS Carburetor by Brigido Gomez. At times, I am unable to drive

(January 20, 2014) More Craigslist ads canceled (not by me)

(January 21, 2014) Outpatient hospital visit to psychiatrist

(January 21, 2014) Noticed a few days earlier a missing spiral notebook with approximately one year of accumulated notes



(Sometime before February 2014) I contact the FBI office in Los Angeles by phone, regarding what I (at that time) feel are crimes committed by Epstein/Dubrow and company

(February 14, 2014) Open a safe deposit box at Wells Fargo branch on Fairfax Avenue, one of two

(February 14, 2014) I give a talk at a local library about my life and the Government's involvement: "My Dealings with the Government or It Takes a Schizophrenic: an Ugly Story"

(March 18, 2014) The FBI evaluates complaints made by the Senate Intelligence Oversight Committee headed by Senator Dianne Feinstein

(April 10, 2014) Start of my diary devoted to this business. As of 2021, I have filled two small notebooks

(May 23, 2014) I uploaded the edited video of my talk to YouTube

(Spring to summer, 2014) Pressure on me to speed up by Irene

(August 14, 2014) Problem with account on Logmein, someone else using my account. Also speak with Avira about computer-related problems

(September 3, 2014, to the 6<sup>th</sup>) Peculiar sounds heard in bungalow. Cortisol level measured at 36.2

(Fall 2014) Several negative comments about Colette, from people I don't know, including an employee of the Washington Boulevard branch of the US Post Office, urging me to stop seeing her

(21 October, 2014) Scene at a laundromat in Venice. Colette travels to Dune Acres, Indiana soon thereafter

(Unknown date) At beach, extended "skits" with message suggesting Irene has been killed (by Alberto (?)). The phrase "You betrayed me!" is heard once. Intent was perhaps for me to pass on to her as a threat and form of (second-hand) manipulation?

(October 21, 2014) I prepare a summary of damages found in my bungalow

(Between September and November 2014) The Manzanar comment heard by me. First at Costco, repeated some days later in front of my bungalow

(October 30 or 31, 2014) Burglary of my bungalow, incident reported to police

(November 2, 2014) Police make extended visit to my bungalow, investigating my complaint of numerous break-ins. Police officers Jimenez and Slaviansky are sent to investigate, doing what I believe to be a thorough job

(November 11, 2014) The police want to talk to me about a crime and my possible involvement (?)

(November 25, 2014) Spoke with CHP officer Bolon about a letter from them regarding an item, belonging to me, found in a stolen car

(December 17, 2014) Car accident with Ida Odell Watson. She eventually reverses herself and states that no accident happened

(February 27, 2015) Around this time, Colette and I make a trip to Texas, visiting her brother on our way back

(May 10, 2015) During a Skype conversation, Irene uses the acronym CIA. A non sequitur

(August 10, 2015) Mother dies as a result of head injuries sustained in a fall from bed, in Florence, Italy

(August 13, 2015) After what I believe are more intrusions in my bungalow, I ask neighbors to report any further break-ins to police

(October 7, 2015) Aftermath (?) of Colette's visit to Dune Acres, Indiana

(October 9, 2015) USB music stick damaged in my car, will only play one song

(January 9, 2017) Ninth car accident, with a Steven J. Weitz

(Sometime around February, 2017) My neighbor, a woman I only knew as "Baba Outrom," dies

(March 11, 2017) Called LAPD, spoke with officer Evans, reported several break-ins, she suggested I install cameras, and would not send officers out

(July 5, 2017) I mail about two dozen offers to speak publicly. There is only one email reply, curt, in the negative, from a synagogue

(July 24, 2017) Irene's last visit to the US

(Summer 2017) Colette Walczak and I visit her father in Idaho; she begins showing symptoms of her returning cancer

(June 13, 2018) I order speech recognition software to transcribe my autobiography

(June 18, 2018) A break-in to my bungalow while I am home, asleep

(June 23, 2018) I hand-carry packet of information about my predicament to the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, speaking with a receptionist upstairs who tells me an Aaron Breitbart will be handed the information. There is no response

(September 12, 2018 at 1:56 p.m.) Colette Walczak dies in Santa Monica of stage four breast cancer

(Starting on April 1, 2019) Got some emotional help from Kaiser Permanente. Also made three visits to therapist at Kaiser, to discuss my concerns about Irene's mental health

(Summer 2020) I begin work to finish this manuscript in earnest

(January 18, 2021) A minor car accident in which I am rear-ended, no damages to either car. Accident reported to my insurance company.

(June 20, 2021) The listing for this book goes live on eBay

(July 2, 2021) In a car accident on surface streets, I rear-end another vehicle, causing medium-level damages to both cars. The accident was reported to my insurance company. I believe I am at fault

# APPENDIX VII

## Contents of CD

### Laundry List emails

These 12 emails (initially called "Laundry Lists," title later changed to "*Lunaya Pravda*"), were sent out about twice a year. They are unedited, included just as they were broadcast except for some trivial reformatting with redactions when necessary. I would draw your attention to #7, titled: "Berg's *Lunaya Pravda* #7 Technical Edition"; in it you will find a thorough list and description of some of the various methods used against me of late as well as an attempt at explaining how this is possible. The emails consist of descriptions of events in my life along with dates, reflections, images, as well as occasional comments.

1. Laundry List #1 (December 21, 2013)
2. Laundry List #2 (Started on 8-10-2013, mailed ?)
3. Laundry List #3 (March 6, 2014)
4. Laundry List #4 (August 16, 2014)
5. Laundry List #5 (Sept 14, 2014)
6. *Lunaya Pravda* #6 (November 12, 2014)
7. *Lunaya Pravda* #7 (July 1, 2015)
8. *Lunaya Pravda* #8 (July 26, 2015)
9. *Lunaya Pravda* #9 (July 23, 2016)
10. *Lunaya Pravda* #10 (March 9, 2017)
11. *Lunaya Pravda* #11 (December 27, 2017)
12. *Lunaya Pravda* #12 (December 16, 2018)

### Diary Entries

All Diary Entries from 4-10-2014 until 3-4-2021

Diary #1, Scanned and Transcribed

Diary #2, Scanned but not Transcribed

### Book Excerpts (In the Public Domain, Distribute Freely)

Table of Contents

"*J'Accuse*"

Chapter 1: About Myself, About the Book

Figure 1: Family portrait, Orléans, France; 1959

Figure 31: Infrastructure of Oppression Diagram

Appendix II: My Mental Condition as Summarized by a Professional (Incomplete)

Appendix III: Should You Find Yourself in a Similar Situation (A Guide for the Perplexed)

Appendix V: Selected Hot Spots

Appendix VI: An Approximate Timeline

Selected Bibliography

### Damages or *Les Casses de L'Oncle Sam*

Partial List of the Depredations of Elements of the Government.

## Cast of Characters

Descriptions of Individuals.

Dictionary of initials used throughout the book.

Types of “Automatons” I have encountered

## Additional Pictures & Documents

Emails

SMPD report of a felony arrest, September 18, 1988

USC letter barring me from dental school, Aug 17, 2011

CHP letter informing me of an item belonging to me found in a stolen car, November 25, 2014

LAPD report regarding complaints (by me) of multiple break-ins

## Psychiatry Files

Incomplete. Evaluation of my file by a professional now pending

## Online and Other Resources

## SOME ADDITIONAL QUOTATIONS AND A THANK YOU NOTE

*"Не в силе Бог, а в правде."*

— Александр Ярославич Невский

*"[Da] ... mein Gewissen in den Worten Gottes gefangen ist, ich kann und will nichts widerrufen, weil es gefährlich und unmöglich ist, etwas gegen das Gewissen zu tun. Gott helfe mir. Amen."*

— Martin Luther

"My conclusion is that most power structures are deeply incompetent, staffed by people who don't really believe in their institutions, and that most power is the projection of the perception of power. And the more secretly it works, the more incompetent it is, because secrecy breeds incompetence, while openness breeds competence, because one can see and can compare actions and see which one is more competent."

— Julian Assange (from an interview)

"Physics is like sex: sure, it may give some practical results, but that's not why we do it."

— Richard P. Feynman

"Not bad for a Black."

(Quote from an acquaintance, made at our first meeting)

"Don't believe what you see; it's an enthralling — [and] destructive, evil snare. Under it is a totally different world..."

— Philip K. Dick

"Don't ask what sort of country you prefer, ask instead what sort of police state you like."

— Emil M. Cioran (Possibly paraphrased)

"You take on the intelligence community, they have six ways from Sunday at getting back at you."

— Senator Charles Schumer

(To Rachel Maddow, January 2017) (This is, according to Glenn Greenwald, "one of the most important and most candid admissions of how the government actually works that has ever been broadcast...")

"Don't believe them, don't fear them, don't ask anything of them."

— Alexandr Solzhenitsyn

"Congress would never hear me because then they'd lose plausible deniability."

— William Binney (NSA whistleblower)

*"Ja, das mußt Du tun. Wer in einem solchen Moment versagt, wird nie wieder froh im Leben."*

— Ewald von Kleist-Schmenzin (To his son, Ewald-Heinrich)

"*Pour être libre, il faut savoir supporter n'importe quelle humiliation.*"

— Emil M. Cioran

"*Quel beau pays d'Apaches que le vôtre!*"

(Quote of unknown origin, possibly taken from Somerset Maugham)

"I have discharged my civic duty ... never betraying, never forgetting ..."

— Varlam T. Shalamov

"*Cet animal est très méchant. Quand on l'attaque, il se défend.*"

(Quote of unknown origin)

"*On a souvent besoin d'un plus petit que soi.*"

— Jean de la Fontaine

"Give me my bread, *cafone!*"

— Irene Hawkins

(In a possibly unguarded moment, as she and I were tussling over a piece of naan in an Indian restaurant)

*Κύριε, ἐλέησον*

(Quote possibly from the Bible)

Gentle Reader: I hope you have found this tale entertaining, and, as Richard Nixon once said, "It has the additional merit of being true."

I wish to extend my gratitude to S.G. – related, I believe, to a well-known politician. I was contacted by you for some computer work (we played phone tag for a few days and never actually spoke) soon after my Epiphany. This act may have ensured my temporary safety at a critical juncture. As I said, we never spoke, but I, and possibly others, got the message.

Colette, my dear Colette, I wish you could have lived to see the publication of this book in which, at times, you seemed to place such hopes. On your deathbed, in answer to your purposely ambiguous question, I replied that I would write. I have. Were you aware of the impetus your predicament gave me?

And a final note to all my Masters:

“If I have played my part well, clap your hands, and dismiss me with applause from the stage.”  
— Emperor Augustus

“While this America settles in the mould of its vulgarity, heavily thickening to empire  
And protest, only a bubble in the molten mass, pops and sighs out, and the mass hardens,  
I sadly smiling remember that the flower fades to make fruit, the fruit rots to make earth.  
Out of the mother; and through the spring exultances, ripeness and decadence; and home to the  
mother.

You making haste haste on decay: not blameworthy; life is good, be it stubbornly long or  
suddenly

A mortal splendor: meteors are not needed less than mountains: shine, perishing republic.

But for my children, I would have them keep their distance from the thickening center;  
corruption

Never has been compulsory, when the cities lie at the monster's feet there are left the  
mountains.

And boys, be in nothing so moderate as in love of man, a clever servant, insufferable master.

There is the trap that catches noblest spirits, that caught – they say – God, when he walked on  
earth.”

— *Shine, Perishing Republic*, (John) Robinson Jeffers

And so, a paranoid schizophrenic to the rescue of the Republic.

(signed)

Bergendahl Hawkins,

“Your Friend and Humble Narrator”

(Quote from *A Clockwork Orange*, Anthony Burgess)





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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

A customer once curiously told Bergendahl Hawkins: "My friends have your number." Well, he, too, believes he has "his number." And that number is 976. To explain: over a decade ago, after a months-long bout of unexplained symptoms and increasing tiredness, he finally dragged himself to the hospital for a routine blood test. A day later, he received a call telling him to immediately go to the emergency room. That obscure number, you see, was his blood sugar level, he had developed full-blown type 2 diabetes. A level only reached, presumably, by skid row Sterno bums ("*Vlaamsluecker*," as they are interestingly and elegantly known in South African slang — spelling approximate) off their meds.

Numbers such as these properly belong to someone with the perseverance of a water buffalo. A person who, like the buffalo plowing a muddy field, will slowly slog through, knee-deep in mud, to the end of his furrow.

When he's not terribly, terribly busy attempting to restore the Republic to its former glory, Bergendahl, a handyman living in Los Angeles, enjoys tipping the velvet of an evening.

And, as can be readily discerned from the uncertain quality of this tome, he is almost wholly innocent of advanced, formal education and, indeed, has seldom been successfully menaced by it.

For him, writing this book was an easy, almost purely selfish decision. As von Kleist-Schmenzin once said to his son, Ewald-Heinrich: "... *Wer in einem solchen Moment versagt, wird nie wieder froh im Leben.*" He, Bergendahl, simply couldn't face the prospect of a lifetime of unhappiness (to put it mildly) and didn't have the courage to leave (not that that would have helped; on the contrary); finding it less troublesome, really, to cross the Rubicon than to cross the Atlantic.

Cowardly, cowardly custard.