

# Hoffa Said Probably Most Investigated Man in U.S.

Editor's Note: Jimmy Hoffa, as head of the Teamsters union, probably is the most powerful single labor leader in the country. His union is the biggest one, and if he chose to do so he could tie the nation into knots by pulling the truckers off the highways. This is the first of five dispatches on Hoffa, his amazing rise to power and his incredible ability to survive investigation.

By HARRY FERGUSON  
Washington—(UPI)—Any list of the most powerful men in the United States wouldn't make sense unless it included James Riddle Hoffa. If he were so minded, he could make half a dozen phone calls and plunge the nation into chaos.

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Warehousemen and Helpers is the world's biggest union with a claimed membership of 1,720,000. As general president, Hoffa is the boss with a salary of \$75,000 a year and an unlimited expense account. He doesn't control all the drivers who roll trucks across America's highways, but he controls enough of them to make a shambles of the economy of the nation's

cities if he chooses to do so. A Teamsters strike in New York, for instance, would leave perishable foods rotting on the docks and at the rail terminals. Delivery of fuel and milk would almost cease. Garbage would pile up. The pinch would be felt in 12 hours. Within four or five days the big city would be beaten to its knees.

The thought that a nationwide strike could make the same thing happen all over the country is frightening enough to be a nightmare. It would not be correct to say it frightens Hoffa because he doesn't frighten easily. But it gives him pause and he has gone on record as follows: "There never will be, as long as I have anything to do with it, a national transportation strike."

**Move Toward Goal**  
Whatever Hoffa's enemies say about him—and there are plenty of them and they have spoken volumes—nobody ever accused him of being dumb. Any nationwide strike has the best chance of succeeding if all the local and regional contracts expire almost simultaneously. The Teamsters have been working toward that strategic position and will be close to their goal in 1964.

Hoffa's career is a study in survival. When it seems inevitable that prison doors will clank behind him, he somehow snatches victory out of defeat. He has been tried and acquitted on charges of bribing an attorney to spy on the Senate Rackets committee. He has been tried and acquitted of tapping the telephones of subordinates in the Detroit office of the Teamsters union. Samuel Baron, former field director of the union, accused Hoffa of slugging him and had some wounds to show, but the case has not been prosecuted for lack of corroborating evidence. Hoffa and his union were expelled by the AFL-CIO, but he went on picking up members and broadening the areas of his authority.

"Subpoenas are dropping around us like confetti at a country fair," George S. Fitzgerald, a Hoffa attorney, exclaimed when they had their backs to the wall and were fighting a half-dozen court actions at once.

**Faces Two Trials**  
Hoffa's powers of survival still are being tested in two pending legal actions. He must stand trial in the coming months on charges of misusing \$500,000 of Teamsters funds in a Florida real estate development. He also must stand trial on charges of receiving a share of \$1 million in illegal payments from Commercial Carriers, Inc., a trucking firm. It is doubtful whether any day has dawned in the last six years which didn't find Hoffa engaged in litigation.

He became a labor leader at the age of 19 when he was working for 32 cents an hour unloading freight cars for the Kroger Grocery Co. in Detroit. The men had to stay near the unloading platforms 12 hours a day although they were paid only for the hours they worked. Hoffa chose a time when a big shipment of strawberries had just arrived. Then he led a committee of six into the executive offices and gave management the alternative of raising pay or letting the strawberries rot. The raise was forthcoming.

From that day Hoffa began clawing and fighting his way to the top of the labor movement and he was not too particular about the men who boarded his bandwagon. The Senate Rackets committee had this to say about the men who rose with Hoffa:

"Hoffa employed persons as business agents and organizers despite the fact they had been accused of armed robbery, kidnaping, larceny, bookmaking, throwing stench bombs, impersonating government officers, felonious assault and carrying concealed weapons."

Hoffa doesn't bother to deny that some of his associates have unsavory records.



WOULD MAKE LIST—Any list of the most powerful men in the United States wouldn't make sense unless it included James Riddle Hoffa, above. If he were so minded, he could make half a dozen telephone calls and plunge the nation into chaos. He is shown here as he testified before a Senate committee in 1958. (UPI)



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## Court Records

**MEDFORD MUNICIPAL COURT**  
Monroe Marvin McGonagle, disobeyed traffic signal, \$10.  
David Hart Collins, driving wrong way on one-way street, \$10.  
Kenneth Wayne Piazza, failure to obtain Oregon operator's license, \$25.  
Michael Jeanne Lentz, no operator's license, \$5, suspended.  
Glen Green George, failure to display vehicle license tags, \$5 suspended.  
Adelaide Peters Longmore, violation of basic rule, \$10.  
Zelma Esther Hays, violation of basic rule, \$10.  
Bernie Elizabeth Field, violation of basic rule, \$25.  
Emma Castleman, defective equipment, \$10 suspended.  
Donald Lee Nelson, violation of basic rule, \$50.  
George Cronk Van Gilder, violation of basic rule, \$10.  
Christine Verdel McGinnis, disobeyed stop sign, \$10.  
Carole Mae Moore, violation of basic rule, \$10.  
James Marvin Williams, violation of basic rule, \$25.  
Alfred Coles Barney, disobeyed traffic signal, \$10.  
Clyde Timothy Latta, disobeyed traffic signal, \$10.  
Donna Marie Edington, driving wrong way on one-way street, \$10.  
Janet Adelaide Kilbourn, violation of basic rule, \$25.  
Ronald Ernest Cushman, disobeyed traffic signal, \$10.  
Maggie Mae Cushman, expired vehicle license, \$5.  
Betty Lou Cline, violation of basic rule, \$10.  
Lester Lee Lewis, disobeyed traffic signal, \$10.

**JUSTICE COURT**  
Gold Hill District  
Norman Dale Crippen, no horn, \$5.  
Dennis Ralph Mooney, no headlight, \$5.  
Francis George Victor Gordon, disobeyed stop sign, \$7.30.  
Lathaniel Swinford, driving while intoxicated, \$15.  
Henry Allen Gammel, excessive speeding, \$15.  
Mary Donovan Moser, no operator's license, \$5.  
Thomas Edward McCarvel, overhauled, \$60.  
June Larson Driven, no operator's license, \$5.  
Lester Earl Gurgei Jr., improper passing, \$7.30.  
Charles Norman Gail, failure to dim head lights, \$5.  
Tom Albert Tison, disobeyed stop sign, \$7.30.  
Edward Lyle Woodcock, violation of basic rule, \$15.  
Sally Ann Ward, no operator's license, \$5.  
Raymond Silvester Powers Jr., no vehicle license, \$5.  
James Joseph Calhoun, disobeyed stop sign, \$7.30.  
Howard Ronald Thorhill, no tail light, \$5.  
Milton Earl Yeoman, obstructed vision, \$10.  
Charles Ludwig Gardner, no operator's license, 10-day jail sentence in Jackson county jail and \$75 fine.

**PHOENIX MUNICIPAL COURT**  
Darrel Dean Shackles, violation of basic rule, \$20.  
Kenneth D. Teery, violation of basic rule, \$20.  
Irving Seaburg Thomas, disobeyed stop sign, \$10.  
Bob Vernon Wright, wrong way on one-way street, \$10.  
John Gregory Hall, disobeyed stop sign, \$10.  
Mary Allen, no operator's license, \$10.

but merely says, "I never turn my back on anybody."  
His appearance before the Senate Rackets committee made Hoffa known to persons outside the labor movement and it was there that he encountered a young man named Robert F. Kennedy, counsel for the committee. They first met when a mutual acquaintance invited them to

dinner. The dislike was intense and mutual. Hoffa was quoted as having described Kennedy as "a spoiled little jerk" after they parted. Kennedy was confident he had the goods on Hoffa and predicted he would send him to prison. It was a roaring feud from the start and it still goes on. Kennedy, because of his position as attorney general,

makes no public comments about Hoffa these days, but it is significant that federal grand juries in 14 cities are digging into the affairs of the Teamsters union. There isn't much doubt that over the last six years Hoffa has been the most investigated man in the United States.

Next: Bobby and Hoffa fight it out.

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