

Here is a veteran reporter's analysis of the two

tough men engaged in a knock-down, drag-out fight

in which one of them is bound to get hurt

By **QUENTIN REYNOLDS**

Author of "London Diary," "Dress Rehearsal," "Courtroom,"
"Known But to God," and the forthcoming autobiography, "By Quentin Reynolds"

JIMMY HOFFA FEUD

in this real Battle of the Century. When I was a sports writer 100 years or so ago, I was taught that the only way to judge the merits of two heavyweights was to maintain a high degree of objectivity. Suppose we use the same yardstick in trying to evaluate these two fighters battling in the judicial ring.

Physically and mentally they are well matched, and both have great staying power. Jimmy Hoffa weighs just under 180 pounds and stands five feet, five-and-a-half inches. He is barrel-chested and has strong hands—heritages of his early years of unloading heavy boxes from freight cars.

Physical fitness is a fetish with him; he spends half an hour each morning doing push-ups, and he neither smokes nor drinks. When he laughs, which is often, his dimples show, his white teeth gleam, and his hazel eyes laugh, too. His hair is coal black, and it is hard to believe that he is 50.

When you hear him make public speeches to his "boys" at a Teamsters' convention, he gives the impression of being an angry man, a self-appointed prophet, and a rabble rouser. But have lunch with him in the magnificent fourth-floor cafeteria in the Teamsters building (workers in the building call it, with considerable validity, the best restaurant in Washington), and you'll find Jimmy Hoffa a relaxed man of considerable charm, warmth, and humor.

His conversation is not limited to union matters. He reads all kinds of books; and when he discusses some recent serious novel articulately and intelligently, it is difficult to accept the fact that his formal education ended in the seventh grade. Immaculately and quietly dressed, impeccably barbered, he doesn't seem to have a trace left of the tough, snarling youngster who declared war on employers after his father coughed himself into an early grave, his lungs coated with coal dust.

The Family Men

Hoffa's home life is not unlike that of his opponent. He was married in 1936 to Josephine Poszywak, and they have two children, Barbara Ann, 24, now married, and Jimmy, Jr., 20. In 1939 Hoffa built a \$6,800 brick residence in Detroit. Today, although his salary is \$50,000 a year (plus the kind of expense account any important business executive is given), he still lives in that modest house. He travels a great deal, but whenever he can get away from Teamster affairs, he hurries home to his family. Like Bobby Kennedy, he is devoted to them and, like Kennedy, no breath of scandal has ever clouded his family relationship. Hoffa is known as a one-girl man, and "Jo" is his girl. She often accompanies him to conventions, not because she is interested in



union affairs, but because she likes to be with her husband.

If this picture of Hoffa seems too flattering, let me emphasize that it is the picture most of his close associates have of him; it is also the impression any reasonably objective observer gets. I am not trying to fit a halo on Hoffa's head—the thing wouldn't fit. I have no idea what goes on behind the bright, charming façade which he shows the world. Neither the Senate Rackets Committee nor the judicial charges leveled against him the past two years have been able to shatter his confidence—or his apparent contempt for the Attorney General.

Hoffa's confidence is bolstered by the fact that Kennedy has hauled him into court three times, and each time he has walked out a free man. He had a close call in a Nashville, Tenn., Federal Court, where he was accused of taking a round-about payoff from a trucking firm. The case ended in a "hung" jury, which was castigated by the presiding justice.

If at First You Don't Succeed . . .

Another test is imminent in the so-called Sun Valley case. Hoffa was indicted by a Florida grand jury for allegedly misusing a half-million dollars in Teamster money to develop a model city for retired persons in Sun Valley, Fla. The indictment was thrown out on the technicality that Negroes had been excluded from the grand jury. Kennedy has reinstated the indictment, this time carefully avoiding legal pitfalls. This trial will have far-reaching significance for both men.

Despite his pleasant private image, there is no doubt that Hoffa is the toughest, most ruthless labor leader of his time. He lacks the broader social vision which characterizes a man like Walter Reuther, head of the United Automobile Workers. Some of Hoffa's officers and many others with whom he does business would be more at home on "The Untouchables" television show than in any legitimate business. But the rank and file of the Teamsters' membership seem to have the happy faculty of ignoring the company Hoffa keeps; after all, they say, he negotiates better contracts for them than any of his counterparts in the union movement.

Hoffa is bitter toward Kennedy and his lawyers because he feels that, although unable to convict him in a court of law, they have convicted him in the public mind through legislative investigation. Union lawyers charge that the Senate Committee did in effect damn scores of men, including Hoffa, without giving them an opportunity to present their case. Edward Bennett Williams, Hoffa's brilliant attorney, has insisted that Hoffa and other officials of the Teamsters Union were ac-

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