

AFFIDAVIT

The attached summary is an accurate and true representation of my recollections and research, including conversations, with the parties named herein. The summary is dated February 24, 1992, entitled, "VORTEX."

Signed: *Cheri Seymour*

Dated: OCT 28 1992

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF MARIPOSA



On this 28TH day of OCTOBER, 1992, before me, *DIANA FORGA*, a Notary Public, State of California, duly commissioned and sworn, personally appeared *CHERI SEYMOUR* personally known to me (or proved to me on the basis of satisfactory evidence) to be the person whose name IS subscribed to this instrument, and acknowledged that she executed it. IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal in the TOWN OF MARIPOSA County of MARIPOSA on the date set forth above in this certificate.

Diana Forga
Notary Public, State of California
My commission expires 2-16-93

This document is only a general form which may be proper for use in simple transactions and in no way acts, or is intended to act, as a substitute for the advice of an attorney. The printer does not make any warranty, either express or implied as to the legal validity of any provision or the suitability of these forms in any specific transaction.

2
Vortex

CONFIDENTIAL

"VORTEX"

February 24, 1992

The following is a detailed account of an investigation which I began on December 1, 1991 and continue to work on intermittently as time allows. In all my years as an investigator and journalist, I have never encountered anything as bizarre or as alarming as the Michael Riconosciuto story.

The purpose of this diary is to document these occurrences for my own safety.

On November 30, 1991 I met with Ted Gunderson at his home in Manhattan Beach, California and apprised him of the corruption problem in Mariposa County. (Please see attached resume of Ted Gunderson).

I had recently been approached by a family of Indians residing in Mariposa who wanted methamphetamine dealers and marijuana growers removed from their reservation. The drug operations were not only sanctioned by the Mariposa Sheriff's department but two of the officers were allegedly conducting the operations. This had been occurring on the reservation for nearly ten years according to the Indians. (See attached synopsis).

Gunderson advised me to gather the needed evidence and he would conduct a citizens arrest on the deputies caught in the act of trafficking drugs.

The following morning, December 1st, at my home in Mariposa, I received a collect call from Michael Riconosciuto who was incarcerated at the Pierce County jail in Tacoma, Washington. Riconosciuto stated that he had been informed by Gunderson that I was investigating a corruption/drug problem in Mariposa County and he (Riconosciuto) could give me the names of those in charge of the methamphetamine operations in Mariposa, Madera and Fresno counties. Some of those names were Ben Kalka, Richard Knossi and Al Holbert, a former Israeli intelligence agent.

For nearly 45 minutes, Riconosciuto related the names of people involved in "The Company." The Company was written up in the San Francisco Chronicle on April 28, 1982 under the heading "Story of Spies, Stolen Arms and Drugs." According to reporter Bill Wallace, The Company consisted of (quote) "about 300 members, many of them former military men or ex-police officers with nearly \$30 million worth of assets, including planes, ships and real estate."

The article went on to say that "federal drug agents said the organization had imported billions of dollars worth of narcotics from Latin America, and was also involved in gunrunning and mercenary operations."

Twenty-nine members of the group were indicted by the Fresno federal grand jury in 1981. Amongst those indicted was Andrew "Drew" Carter Thornton, 40, a former narcotics officer.

On September 13, 1985, the Los Angeles Times published the story of Thornton's death, entitled, "Former Narcotics Officer Parachutes Out of Plane, Dies with 77 Pounds of Cocaine." The article said Thornton was indicted in 1981 for "allegedly flying a plane to South America for a reputed drug ring known as 'The Company.'" Thornton's mysterious death was discussed at length in a book written by Sally Denton entitled, "The Blue Grass Conspiracy."

In one of several conversations with Michael Riconosciuto, I learned that he had been operating within the framework of "The Company" in Fresno, California. When the arrests began, Riconosciuto went to the Los Angeles FBI with information which was subsequently turned over to the Fresno U.S. Attorney's office.

Brian Leighton, the Fresno assistant U.S. attorney who prosecuted 29 members of The Company, is now in private law practice and says he does not remember much about the case. In a transcript obtained from Michael Riconosciuto's January 15th, 1992 trial in Washington state, Leighton said the case in question involved the theft of military equipment from the China Lake Naval Weapons Center in California. "The FBI and Naval Intelligence Service began the investigation," he said, "and there were several people that were targets of the investigation. One of those targets began cooperating with us and then it became a DEA and FBI investigation."

The thefts occurred in 1979 and 1980, and the case continued on for a couple of years. Leighton testified that he "could not recall ever meeting personally with Mr. Riconosciuto and he didn't know if he spoke to him personally or spoke to him through a government agent."

Under cross-examination, Mr. Leighton testified that he thought Riconosciuto was brought to him by an agent Barnes from the Oakland or San Francisco office of the FBI, but he could not remember exactly.

Strangely, less than two weeks before Brian Leighton was subpoenaed by the prosecution to testify in Michael Riconosciuto's trial, he told two federal agents that he remembered Michael Riconosciuto well and gave specific details of Riconosciuto's cooperation with the U.S. attorney's office. To one agent he stated that he remembered a three hour face-to-face interview with Riconosciuto, and to the other agent who has no association with the first agent, Leighton said Michael led law enforcement officers to a marijuana cache belonging to members of The Company.

To clarify: On December 23, 1991, Michael Riconosciuto, at his request, was put in touch with an agent of the federal government in order to provide information pertinent to CIA drug operations in Lebanon, current drug operations of The Company in Fresno and Arizona, information relating to underworld banking transfers, and the murders of Paul Morasco and Mary Quick. (Please see attached December 30,

1991 San Francisco Chronicle article entitled, "Bizarre Murders Puzzle Cops" written by Jonathan Littman).

The name of the agent will be withheld as he is a friend of a reporter whom I contacted for this particular phone meeting. Michael Riconosciuto asked the agent to contact Brian Leighton in Fresno to corroborate his credibility as a C.I. (cooperating individual) in the 1981 indictments.

I tape recorded the conversation and gave a copy to the agent before he left my house. A few weeks later, I re-contacted the agent and asked him if he had called Brian Leighton. The agent noted that he had in fact contacted Leighton and Leighton had acknowledged Michael's cooperation in the case.

Michael had reportedly led investigators to a drug stash, but Michael's testimony was not used in court.

Another agent from an unrelated federal agency was being kept apprised of my investigation during this time span. I was unsure of what kind of intrigue I was stepping into, and because of the many deaths surrounding Michael Riconosciuto, I felt the need to keep in close touch with law enforcement and media people whom I trusted.

The second agent called Brian Leighton against my wishes and asked him about Michael Riconosciuto. When I later contacted this second agent, he related that Leighton admitted that he had interviewed Michael Riconosciuto for over three hours, but the information which Michael provided was not "germane to the case."

At that point I was satisfied that Michael was telling the truth about his association with Brian Leighton. I was also told that Michael had in fact been in Lebanon as he stated to the first agent. Whether or not he actually participated in a CIA/DEA drug smuggling/intelligence gathering operation outside of Beirut still remained to be proven as the agent did not know.

On tape, Michael discussed (with the agent) "controlled deliveries" of heroin out of Lebanon into the United States. The DEA proprietary company for this operation was Euromae Trading Company, Ltd., headquartered in Nicosia, Cyprus. (See attached affidavit of Lester K. Coleman obtained from Bill Hamilton at Inslaw). FIDCO Corporation, of which George Pender and Robert Booth Nichols are board members, was allegedly the parent or front company for Euromae. (See FIDCO documents attached).

(It is noteworthy that Robert Booth Nichols, Michael Riconosciuto and George Pender allegedly operated a 20,000 watt, short-wave radio system with an automatic transponder at Nichols' Marina Del Rey apartment. [See Boyak transcript]. At the Cyprus end, at DEA agent Michael T. Hurley's safe house, was a similar set-up in Nicosia. All of these operatives had permits for explosive devices and machine guns.)

The heroin, average shipment size about 22 tons, was then distributed to targeted cities and the intelligence that was gathered along the way was recorded by the CIA. To maintain the credibility of intelligence operations in Lebanon,

the heroin had to flow. The drug smuggling operations had to be real.

However, according to Michael, the operation was perverted at the U.S. end of the pipeline. Heroin shipments were doubled and tripled, and only one third of the heroin was returned to the CIA. (Transcript available).

In exchange for future details, names, etc., Michael asked that he and his family be placed in a witness protection program. While in the program, Riconosciuto volunteered to re-assemble his computer equipment in a secret location and provide FinCen (Financial Crimes Enforcement Network) with a day by day view of mob (and MCA Corporation) illegal banking transactions.

According to Michael, he had been handling gold transfers, money laundering, "virtual dead drops," ACH daily reconciliations and other transactions for various underworld factions.

After researching Michael's information, the agent noted to me that Michael Riconosciuto gave mostly valid information, but he had not been personally involved as he stated. "Michael is intelligent, has access to certain types of information and he reads a lot," said the agent.

In another attempt to prove his credibility, Michael asked me to give the following information to another government agent whom he had been put in touch with. I was instructed to call this (Treasury Department) agent and reiterate the following:

(Quote): "There are three dozen C130's down at the Firebird Lake airstrip on the Gila Indian Reservation in Arizona. Check out J & G Aviation, it's an FBO. The Fresno Company is alive and well down there.

"Don Devereau, an investigative journalist, took a camera crew and they have been surveillancing the airstrip for a month. They have pictures of the activities. Devereau's telephone number is (602) 995-8789.

"The real activity is not at Mirana, it's at Firebird Lake airstrip. Other airlines operating at Firebird are Beigert, Macavia International, Pacific Air Express, Evergreen and Southern Air."

Question to agent from M.R.: (Quote)
"How much cocaine or heroin can be transported in a C130? Do you want the C130, or do you want the guys who orchestrate it?"

"Do a matrix link analysis, then sit down and pick the targets. Otherwise, you will tip off the others and the proof will dry up."

Regarding Bob Nichols: (Quote) "Bob Nichols runs Glenn Shockley. Glen Shockley runs Jose Londono."

Mike said he sat with Bob Nichols and Mike Abel. Bob handed him \$50,000 cash to handle an internal affairs investigation that the Justice Department conducted which would have led to the extradition of Gilbert and Miguel Rodriguez (brothers) and Jose Londono.

Bob Nichols told Mike R. that it was necessary to "crowbar" the investigation because they were "intelligence people."

Mike said Brian Leighton made 29 arrests out of five hundred within the Fresno Company. He said all Leighton succeeded in doing was to "vaccinate" the Fresno Company against further penetration. Michael said he has a fragile window into this organization, but Leighton and others are causing the window to close by being too public about their investigation.

Michael wants to bring down The Company and Bob Nichols in exchange for entry into the Witness Protection Program.

The Treasury Department agent told Michael he already knew about the above mentioned airstrip. What else did Michael have to offer?

Much of what Michael Riconosciuto explained to me on the phone was complex and related to banking transactions and computer software. I tape recorded the conversations for future transcription. In one conversation Michael explained the "real" reason for the murders of Paul Morasco and Mary Quick. Both of these deaths are still unsolved and police do not have a clue.

Paul Morasco and Michael R. were involved in laundering money for various underworld figures. Bank account numbers were kept on computer cards which connected with the data banks of Tyme Shares. Mary Quick, a relative (aunt) of one of Michael's business partners (Brian Weiss) was asked to hold one of these cards. According to Michael, Paul Morasco and Michael R. intended to call Mrs. Quick periodically and obtain the numbers when needed. Michael R. never gave the cards to Mary Quick, but he told Paul Morasco that he did.

When Paul Morasco was tortured to death, he allegedly told the murderer that Mary Quick had the cards. Mary Quick was shot to death within a few days of Morasco's murder.

During one visit to Bobby Riconosciuto's living quarters in Southern California, I was invited to drive with her to a hidden mobile home in the desert near Death Valley. After a three hour drive, we arrived at the mobile home and Bobby and I packed all of Michael's documents from his file cabinet and desk into my van. This amounted to eight boxes of documents dating back to the 1960's.

When I arrived home in Mariposa, I sorted through the boxes and found seven bank cards which, according to Bobby R., were the same cards which Mary Quick was allegedly holding when she was shot in the face in Fresno, California. I took the cards to a professional photographer and had pictures taken of them. Both the cards and the pictures are in a safe location.

After three months of daily phone calls from Michael Riconosciuto and making notes on my computer (which are too lengthy and complex to reiterate here), I decided it was time to interview Robert Booth Nichols in person, Tony Patterson and Raymond Lavis. All three of these men were associated with Michael R. since the early 1980's. (I had spoken with Nichols on the phone, but needed a face to face interview.)

I called Jonathan Littman at the San Francisco Chronicle. Littman had written a series of in-depth articles about the Cabazon Indians, John Philip Nichols, and the unsolved murders of Paul Morasco and Mary Quick. I was told by Michael and Bobby Riconosciuto that Littman had daily contact with Robert Booth Nichols, and he had quantities of documents relating to Michael R.'s case.

The news room at the San Francisco Chronicle informed me that Jonathan Littman did not work at the Chronicle anymore, but the editor took my name and telephone number and said he would pass the message on to Jonathan at his home.

Shortly afterward, Littman called me. During our conversation, he noted that he had communicated with Danny Casolaro on a regular basis prior to Danny's death. Littman also noted that he had a close relationship with Robert Booth Nichols, Peter Zokosky and Ben Kalka, who, coincidentally happened to be Littman's cousin.

I explained to Littman that I had been put in touch with Michael Riconosciuto by Ted Gunderson, whom I had visited in an attempt to gain information about the drug/corruption problem in Mariposa County. I added that I had accumulated eight boxes of documents belonging to Michael R., but had not had time to xerox the pertinent data.

Littman announced he would come to my house immediately and analyze the material I had sorted and bring some of his own material. He arrived a few hours later and we spent several hours copying and exchanging data. At that time, Littman confided that he "could get anything he wanted from Ben Kalka." He stated that Kalka hated Michael Riconosciuto, because Riconosciuto had "put Kalka in jail."

I described how Brian Leighton appeared to have perjured himself at Riconosciuto's trial, and asked Littman's opinion of the situation. Littman stated simply that it didn't matter if Leighton had perjured himself, nothing should be done to get Michael out of jail. There should be no mistrial or acquittal or anything of that nature because Michael R. was certainly guilty of the crime for which he was jailed. I agreed that it appeared so.

Littman then provided me with a transcript of a three way interview between Robert Booth Nichols, Ted Gunderson and Michael Riconosciuto held in 1983 at Nichols' Marina Del Rey apartment. The U.P. on the transcript was "unidentified person," but both Michael R. and R.B. Nichols later stated that the U.P. was in fact Nichols.

Essentially, the transcript was a confession from Michael Riconosciuto about all of his drug activities with Timothy Leary, Al Holbert, Ben Kalka and others during a twenty-year time span. The transcript named Hells Angels drug dealers and numerous illegal and covert activities associated with Al Holbert and Michael R.

Littman and I agreed to do an investigative story for the San Francisco Chronicle on the Mariposa corruption scene. I wanted no pay, but agreed to share a by-line with him. Two days after Littman left my home I mailed him a three page synopsis, documentation and audio tapes pertaining to drug activities and other forms of corruption by sheriff's deputies in Mariposa County. Littman said he would submit the material to the Chronicle and let me know the results.

Meanwhile, Littman agreed to arrange an interview with Robert Booth Nichols and Peter Zokosky within the next week or two. In exchange for this, Littman wanted me to arrange an interview with Tony Patterson and Raymond Lavis. I said I would do the best I could. I did not disclose to Littman that I had been communicating with Nichols on the phone. (Nichols had called me as a result of conversations with Ted Gunderson).

Bobby Riconosciuto reluctantly agreed to set up interviews with Patterson and Lavis. She was concerned about Littman being present at the interviews because neither man trusted journalists. I assured her Littman would be OK. It is noteworthy that Littman had been talking to Bobby R. and Michael R. for several months prior to my phone introduction to them. I thought it was strange that they didn't completely trust him at this stage of their relationship.

Elizabeth Riconosciuto's fifth birthday party was scheduled to be celebrated at the La Mirada Gateway Holiday Inn on February 14th, 1992 at 11:00 a.m. Reportedly, Patrick Moriarty and Marshall Riconosciuto had a financial interest in the hotel. After lunch, the children and those adults who wanted to tag along would go to Disneyland.

Michael decided that he wanted his lawyer, Tom Olmstead, and his journalist, John Littman, to meet his family. The purpose of this meeting was to show these two men that Bobby Riconosciuto was not a drug addict as depicted in court and the four children were well taken care of.

Bobby hoped to convince Olmstead to represent her in her child custody case. (Bobby's oldest daughter had been raped and molested by her natural father, Steve Peterson). The three oldest children were terrified of their natural father and did not want to return to his custody. When Bobby R. took them out of Washington state without his permission, she became a fugitive. The fourth child, Elizabeth Riconosciuto, is Michael R.'s natural daughter.

Michael Riconosciuto also wanted to know "who" sent the above-mentioned 1983 transcript to the prosecutor at Michael's trial. Michael suspected it was Ben Kalka, but Littman denied this. Allegedly, Olmstead planned to ask Littman face to face who sent the incriminating transcript. (Littman confided to me that he obtained it from Peter Zokosky, but did not know who sent it to the prosecutor).

On Tuesday evening, February 11th, Jonathan Littman confirmed the Thursday appointment with Robert Booth Nichols. However, he stressed that Nichols had insisted that the meeting be kept absolutely confidential. No-one in media or Michael Riconosciuto's circle was to know of the interview.

I agreed, but explained to Littman that I had already mentioned to Michael that I "planned" to interview Nichols at some time in the future. I had even asked Michael to notify Tony Patterson and Raymond Lavis that Littman and I would be interviewing them during our trip to Los Angeles. I had explained to Michael that my future interview with Nichols hinged on the interviews with Patterson and Lavis. Michael said he understood the importance of interviewing Nichols and he would cooperate.

Littman said that was alright, but I was to tell no-one else associated with Michael. I noted to Jonathan that he might want to inform Nichols that I had already mentioned to Michael that I "intended" to interview Nichols at some time in the future. Littman said leave it at that. No problem.

Littman spent the night at my home in Mariposa on Wednesday night. The following morning, Thursday, February 13th at 7 a.m., we departed for Los Angeles. Strangely, Littman unexpectedly decided to follow us to Los Angeles in his own car. I rode intermittently with Littman, then with Roland, my husband.

In the early afternoon, we arrived at Robert Booth Nichols' apartment in Sherman Oaks. Littman would not allow Roland to attend the meeting, so Roland stayed in the van and napped. Nichols later invited him up for coffee and cake. Peter Zokosy and his wife and Robert Booth Nichols and his wife, Ellen, were present inside the apartment. We talked for three and a half hours.

At first, Peter Zokosky, a friendly, congenial man, did most of the talking. As the conversation warmed up, Nichols entered intermittently, then took over completely. A formal luncheon was served of curried soup, salmon and turkey sandwiches, wine and home-made strawberry cake. Ellen Nichols was the perfect hostess and rarely said a word. At one point, Nichols instructed her to snap a front and side picture of me,

which she carried out silently. There was no explanation given for the picture.

Nichols often stood or sat at the open window while he talked and smoked. It was cold and rainy, so I kept my coat on most of the time except when we sat down to lunch.

Referring to U.S. currency and gold transfers into swiss bank accounts (see attached copy of telex), Nichols admitted that he was contracted by the government to "handle" 40 Cobra helicopters which Michael said were were stored in Europe and sold secretly to North Korea and other countries. At first Nichols would not say what he did with the helicopters, then revealed the whole operation. (For national security reasons, I will not put that into writing at this time). I asked him why the government contracted "him" for the job, and he said a friend in the CIA recommended him for the job. He noted that Peter Zokosky is a "Colonel."

Nichols made a point of showing me his MK-Ultra book, "The Search for the Manchurian Candidate," when I asked him if he was familiar with MK-Ultra techniques. He would not elaborate on the subject. (See attached notes). He said he did not serve in the military service and had no military background.

Regarding Danny Casolaro, Nichols and Zokosky both insisted Danny was murdered. Danny's book research had progressed to a point where he was looking overseas for answers to the scandals he was investigating. Nichols had been privy on a regular basis to Danny's findings and was even directing him to certain connections.

I had heard that Danny was communicating with the Mayor of Chinatown in Washington D.C. regarding certain biological technology and asked Nichols if he knew of that connection. Nichols seemed surprised, but confirmed Danny's inquiry in Chinatown with the Mayor.

Nichols also discussed the military men who had attended Danny's funeral and left the medal on his coffin. He said that was a clue that no-one had picked up on yet. He also added that he knew why Danny died, but no journalist or investigator had done enough work to be deserving of that information yet.

Nichols briefly discussed FIDCO (First Intercontinental Development Corporation) of which he is a board member. Other members of the Board of Directors of FIDCO are George Pender, Robert Maheu, Clint Murchison, Michael McManus and Glenn Shockley. (See attached documents).

FIDCO is a construction firm which specializes in secret projects for the American government in Lebanon, Saudia Arabia and Nigeria. Nichols maintained that he worked in Lebanon under FIDCO for the purpose of rebuilding the infrastructure of cities such a Beirut.

Nichols said he believes Michael Riconosciuto was contracted by the government to "derail" Bill Hamilton at Inslaw. According to Nichols, Michael R. had the PROMIS codes. Allegedly Peter Zokosky's brother sold copies of the software to Israel. Nichols said Michael HAD to know he was going to be arrested for operating a Meth lab, but he thought the FBI would bail him out again. Someone named Al Rankin allegedly covered Michael's drug act.

Peter Viedenicks is an associate of Earl Brian, according to Nichols. Other names were tossed around such as Vanderwerker (CIA) in connection with the shipment of the Cobra helicopters, and Sanford, a family friend of Earl Brian. Sanford is Nichols' link with Dr. Brian. I choose not to elaborate on this until I know who's going to read this. Allegedly, all of these fellows had met at Nichols' apartment in Playa Del Rey at one time or another, including Viednicks.

Philip Arthur Thompson worked under the code name of "Jason," according to Nichols. He worked for the FBI in some capacity which Nichols would not define.

Nichols reacted violently when I asked him if he had any business dealings with Brunswick Corporation in New Jersey. He yelled, "No, absolutely not!" I explained that I had looked up Sir Denis Kendall in "Who's Who in America" and learned that he had once been associated with Brunswick. Nichols said he did not know Denis Kendall.

I noted that that was strange since Michael Riconosciuto seemed to know him well. Bobby Riconosciuto had been to Kendall's home on Doheny Drive with her children once. She had often called Kendall when she was trying to locate Michael and Michael always called her within hours. Nichols and Zokosky seemed surprised by that statement.

I had obtained all of the documents pertaining to Nichols' current lawsuit against Tom Gates of the Los Angeles FBI, his corporate activities and his weapons permits. Nichols had been investigated by agent Gates for allegedly turning over sensitive information to organized crime figures in America and the "Yacuzza" crime syndicate in Japan.

Nichols' corporation, Meridian International Logistics, Inc., the parent company to Meridian Arms, also headed by Robert Booth Nichols, filed a lawsuit against Gates for contacting Nichols' European and Japanese business associates. Not only were Nichols' weapons permits cancelled, but his associates were allegedly intimidated by the investigation, thus damaging Nichols' ability to transact business. In the December issue of "Vanity Fair" magazine (article attached), Nichols was accused of being a member of the "Yakuza" and having ties to the New York mob. (Check out the name Harold Okimoto in attached document marked, "Steinberg.")

I interviewed Nichols about his lawsuit and the bio-technology he turned over to the Japanese in a signed agreement which I had obtained a copy of. I was curious how far he would take the lawsuit - and exactly what the nature of the research was that Nichols was fronting to the Japanese.

I started out by asking Nichols if he had provided a "grant" to a Japanese facility for biological research. (Nichols' corporation minutes, dated August 26, 1988, had referred to a grant being made available to a Japanese medical school). Nichols said he had provided no grant to any Japanese facility and looked very upset. (Nichols is very dramatic).

Michael Riconosciuto had commented during a recent conversation that the biological technology which Nichols was involved in was "Hitler's wet-dream." According to Michael, bio-technology is the weapon of the future, it makes conventional weaponry obsolete. Specific T-cells can be targeted for destruction in selected human beings and the person with the antidote is king of the mountain.

Essentially, the technology in question centers around genetic research, viruses and immunology - Cytotoxic T-Lymphocytes as Nichols called it. I wondered realistically why arms dealers such as Peter Zokosky and Robert Booth Nichols would be interested in genetic research?

The Board of Directors of Meridian Arms consisted of Robert B. Nichols, Peter Zokosky, Harold Okimoto, Glenn Shockley and others. These names may have meaning to anyone familiar with organized crime or the CIA. Of interest and concern to me was the fact that when Meridian Arms was associated with Wackenhut Corporation, the principles, including Michael Riconosciuto who had once been V.P. of Meridian Arms, had attempted to sell "biological warfare viruses" to the U.S. government to be used against small countries bordering Albania or large countries bordering the Soviet Union. (See attached documents).

On the Board of Directors of Meridian International Logistics was Gene F. Giaquinto, president of MCA Corporation Home Entertainment Division. After the FBI investigation became known to Nichols, Giaquinto formally resigned from Meridian Logistics and returned his 10,000 shares of stock. (Documentation attached).

I did not openly confront Nichols at his apartment about the above documents, but asked him if he had sold or facilitated the research of specific bio-technology to the Japanese? Nichols adamantly denied any involvement in any such research. When I re-phrased the question, and he realized I knew about the agreements, he admitted that he had in fact facilitated the research of methodology and induction of cytotoxic T-Lymphocytes through five offshore (out of country) research institutes. But, he added that the research was "classified" by the sponsoring governments and "secret" and he could not discuss it. (I wondered if Dr. Bryan's corporation was producing the same technology).

This subject was touchy because Peter Zokosky had been involved in a proposal to sell biological warfare viruses to Dr. Harry Fair in Arlington, Virginia. (See attached documents). The proposed technology centered around the ability to reorganize and synthesize genetic structures, thus modifying lymphocytes to produce proteins with specific homogenous ligands.

Hybrid cells could be cloned and frozen or grown in cultures. Gene-splicing technology would provide the ability to produce pathogenic (harmful) agents for use in military applications. Peter Zokosky discussed the use of cow uterus and udders to incubate the virus. When Michael Riconosciuto allegedly worked on the same technology at Hercules Research in the early 1980's, he reportedly used fish for incubation purposes. Both men were becoming agitated and I decided to drop the subject.

Regarding Thomas Gates, Nichols expressed real anger and noted that he would take the lawsuit against Gates as far as it would go. He said he didn't care if he was awarded any money (he is suing for \$11 million), but he would ruin Tom Gates, no matter what it took. I asked him how much the

lawsuit had cost him so far. He said not a dime, but would not elaborate. I assumed the lawyer expected to gain his fees from the court award, though Nichols was not specific about that.

There was a great deal of conversation about Ted Gunderson and Michael Riconosciuto individually. Nichols and Zokosky could not understand why Ted Gunderson testified for Michael Riconosciuto at his trial in Washington state. At a previous dinner party at Nichols' apartment, Ted reportedly told the two men that Michael Riconosciuto had loaned him (Gunderson) \$60,000 for a joint business venture. Ted still owed Michael the money.

One statement which Nichols said in the presence of Jonathan Littman surprised me. Littman kept leaving the room and returning and I asked Nichols to reiterate (for Jonathan's benefit) the following statement: "Michael Riconosciuto would kill me if he learned that I had obtained certain documents which he had hidden out."

Ellen Nichols had noted during lunch that Michael often "buried" secret documents and equipment. I had not uncovered any "buried" documents, but I had obtained his private files from the secret trailer in the southern California desert. I did not note this to Nichols, but asked him why he believed Michael would kill me.

Nichols said Michael had killed Paul Morasco. Peter Zokosky corroborated that information. Both men said the torture of Paul Morasco was "Michael's style" - that Michael had discussed torture techniques of that nature to Nichols prior to Morasco's death. They added that "Jason" (Philip Arthur Thompson) was not so creative in his killing style. Thompson had allegedly killed many people in his career, according to Nichols and Zokosky, but Thompson chose to use a gun and get the job done quickly.

Nichols also said at lunch, with Ellen listening, that he knew who killed Mary Quick. Ellen rolled her eyes at her husband and beseeched him to shut up. I asked Nichols to name the killer or at least give me a clue. Nichols said the killer of Mary Quick had been arrested and released. That is all he would say.)

Nichols and Zokosky both agreed in a conversation between themselves that Michael Riconosciuto had caused the death of other people also. Nichols repeated at least three times to my face that he believed Michael Riconosciuto would kill me. He said Michael was a patient man and would wait as long as necessary to accomplish this. I did not respond because I had become somewhat immuned to the threat at that point. Littman and others had made similar statements.

However, I did ask Nichols how Michael would kill me if he was in jail? Nichols said it would be done by one of Michael's "drug flunkies."

At one point during the conversation, Nichols played a video tape of the Zapruder film. The film depicted the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. In slow motion the film repeatedly showed the final shot to Kennedy's head coming

from the front seat of the car. It was a gruesome picture of smoke from what appeared to be a gun, Kennedy's head being thrown back against the seat, his brain tissue blowing out the back of his head, Jacqueline Kennedy looking at the driver then trying to climb over the back seat of the car.

Littman and I and Zokosky stared at the scene over and over again, unable to believe what we were seeing. I wondered if the video tape had been tampered with. Nichols commented that the government can cover up anything it wants, even a president's murder. "Nothing is as it appears to be." I asked him where he had obtained the film but he would not say.

He then pointed out that Michael Riconosciuto had in fact worked for the government at one time and had been "rescued" by the FBI for years. He said Michael could also get away with murder.

There was other information offered by Nichols regarding MCA corporation, but I am limited for time and will not elaborate. Essentially, Nichols said MCA corporation was going broke and the only division of MCA which was profiting was the home entertainment division which Giaquento headed.

Interestingly, Michael Riconosciuto had previously told the FBI agent that MCA was currently facilitating the largest leveraging scam ever conceived of in this country.

As I was preparing to leave, Nichols pointed his finger at me and reminded me of the agreement I had made with him. I asked him what agreement? He said the agreement that I would tell no-one about this meeting. I again assured him that I would mention it to no-one. He said I had better not or I would end up like the rest.

When we finally left Nichols' apartment around five p.m., Littman and I agreed to meet at 11:00 a.m. at the La Mirada Gateway Holiday Inn in La Mirada the following day. We had both been told by Michael that Tom Olmstead would be flying in for the meeting, Ted Gunderson would be there, Patrick Moriarty would be picking Olmstead up at the airport, Raymond Lavas would be there and possibly Tony Patterson, if Bobby could arrange it. Also expected was Janice W., the Australian reporter who produced the news story on Inslaw for Australian T.V.

At 7:30 a.m. the following morning, Bobby Riconosciuto called the hotel where we were staying (the La Mirada Gateway Holiday Inn) and informed me that the luncheon meeting had been changed to a new location and Jonathan Littman was not allowed to attend.

I explained that I had not heard from Jonathan, did not know where he was staying, and could not get in touch with him to tell him about the change. Bobby and I argued about this. I told her Jonathan and I were not puppets to be manipulated by she and Michael. Bobby argued back that Olmstead had not shown up at the airport, Jackie and Ted Gunderson were in a fight, and she did not trust Littman because of his relationship with Bob Nichols. She did not want her daughter's birthday turned into a "circus."

I agreed with that aspect of the meeting, however, Bobby still had not arranged an interview with Raymond Lavis or Tony Patterson. Bobby argued that she did not think Lavis or

Patterson would talk to Littman. I pleaded with her to arrange the appointments, for Littman's sake, since he had driven from San Rafael for that purpose. I explained to her that it was important that Littman be present at the interviews because I was working on the Mariposa story with him and we had made an agreement.

Bobby asked me directly if I had interviewed Robert Booth Nichols? I said I had not. However, I qualified that by saying that I expected to interview Nichols after I had made it possible for Littman to interview Patterson and Lavis. I explained that any interview with Nichols hinged on interviews with Patterson and Lavis. Bobby said she understood and would make the arrangements for the following day, Sunday.

She told me to arrange a dinner meeting with Littman that evening (Saturday) and she would show up to be interviewed, then if Littman agreed to provide her with certain documents which Michael wanted, she would call Patterson and Lavis for interviews on the following day.

I was becoming stressed at that point. I told Bobby that I would wait for Littman to show up at the La Mirada Gateway Holiday Inn and tell him the meeting had been changed to a new location, but he was not invited. I would then give him the new meeting time - 7:00 p.m. at the Belle Isles restaurant in Anaheim. Bobby agreed to that arrangement.

Roland and I waited until after 11:30 a.m., but Littman never showed. He also never called to say he would be late. At 11:40 a.m., I left a message for Littman at the front desk apologizing for the unexpected change of plans, and said we would meet him at the Belle Isles at 7:00 p.m.

Bobby had changed the luncheon to the hotel where she was staying in order to be able to sign the tab on Patrick Moriarty's bill. Janice W. was present along with Ted Gunderson, Jackie and her two children. Elizabeth opened her presents, we ate lunch and cake and caravanned over to Disneyland. We had a good time with the kids until six p.m.

Ted, Jackie, Bobby and all the kids went back to Bobby's hotel suite. Roland and I drove directly to Belle Isles. At seven p.m., neither Bobby nor Littman had shown for dinner. It turned out that Littman had left a message at the restaurant that he was sorry he missed us at the La Mirada hotel. I called Sheri Littman and she said Jonathan was on his way home.

Bobby Riconosciuto sat with Ted Gunderson and Jackie in her hotel suite and ate pizza. Roland and I finished our dinner and drove to San Diego to see my mother. I never spoke to Bobby or Michael R. again until one week later when I learned Bobby had requested the return of her eight boxes of documents.

Roland had dropped me off at my mother's home and returned to Mariposa. For days he had been receiving urgent messages from Bobby R. requesting that I call her. He simply told her that I was tired and needed a rest. My mother was ill and she and I were getting her income taxes straightened out. Michael Riconosciuto called and asked Roland if we had obtained an interview with Robert Booth Nichols? Roland said "No."

When I returned home, I called Bobby and learned that Littman had told Michael R. all about the meeting with Robert Booth Nichols. Bobby wanted to know why I had lied to her about the Nichols meeting. Littman had also told Michael R. that he had dug through Michael R.'s personal boxes (at my home) which I had obtained from Michael's trailer in the desert. (Bobby had never told Michael about this because Michael had told her to stay away from the trailer.)

I told Bobby that I did not believe that Littman would tell Michael such a thing. I added that if I HAD interviewed Nichols, and he requested confidentiality, I would keep my word to him. There was no reason to discuss such an interview with Bobby or Michael. Bobby said she accepted that.

However, to convince me that Littman had in fact told Michael about the meeting, she recounted that Michael had told her the meeting took place on Thursday, it lasted three and one half hours, and I would not take my coat off during the meeting, which allegedly made Nichols nervous. Bobby also stated that I had been seated in a location where I could be scanned for electronic devices, and since I was not "bugged," Nichols could not understand why I didn't take off my coat.

I immediately hung up from Bobby and called Littman. There was no answer at his home, so I called Robert Booth Nichols. Upon answering the phone, Nichols immediately accused me of "breaking my word to him." I explained to him that, to date, I had not spoken to Michael Riconosciuto since two days prior to the Sherman Oaks meeting on February 13th.

Nichols countered that Littman had called him and told him that I had immediately told Michael all about the secret interview because Michael knew all about it. I told Nichols that I would have Bobby R. call him and repeat to him what she had said to me. He said why should he believe her? I said I would get to the bottom of this and I would let him know the results.

Nichols stated that he was preparing to leave the country and would not be back for three months. He wanted me to keep Peter Zokosky apprised of the results of my inquiry - he said he was very interested, then he hung up.

I called Jonathan Littman and asked him what was going on. Littman said a lot of nasty things, but ultimately admitted that he HAD told Michael R. about the Nichols interview. I asked him WHY? He said in a robot tone of voice, "Nobody lies to Michael Riconosciuto. You can't fool Michael Riconosciuto." (I was taping the conversation).

I asked him why he broke his word to Robert Booth Nichols? He again repeated that I was a fool to think I could fool or lie to Michael Riconosciuto about the Nichols meeting. He said Michael already knew about the meeting because I had told him I was going to get an interview.

I was shocked. I asked Littman why he told Michael I had his secret documents. Littman denied telling Michael this, but then hissed at me that I "was a fly caught in a spiders web, and I would never get away from Michael Riconosciuto."

I was horrified. I explained to Littman that I had not even spoken to Riconosciuto since the Nichols meeting. In fact, I reminded Littman that I had told him immediately after the meeting that I would not be accepting any more calls from Riconosciuto and might even wrap up the whole investigation after talking to Nichols. At that point, I had more than enough material for a story or a book.

Littman was irate because I had unexpectedly called Bobby when I returned home. He wanted nothing more to do with me.

I asked him pointedly why he had set me up? He called me a fool and again said, "I could not fool Michael Riconosciuto". I asked him if he had sent the Mariposa synopsis and back-up documents to the San Francisco Chronicle? Littman said, "No." I asked him what he had done with the Mariposa stuff? The Indians who had confided in me were at risk. I again demanded to know what he had done with the synopsis and why he requested the information in the first place? He hung up on me.

I walked around the house for a moment, then panicked. What if he took the Mariposa synopsis and sent it to the Mariposa sheriff's department. Two deputies were implicated in growing marijuana and distributing methamphetamine on the Indian reservation in Mariposa. I had given names and detailed information from the Indians in the synopsis.

I called Littman back and talked to his message recording machine. I knew he was standing at the machine listening to my message. I told him that I was going to go to the U.S. Attorney's office in Fresno on Monday morning and file criminal charges against him for conspiring with dangerous characters against me. I added that I would write a letter to his editor at the San Francisco Chronicle and expose him for the most unethical behavior I had ever encountered by a journalist.

On Sunday, February 23rd, I again talked to Bobby Riconosciuto. We again discussed what Littman had done. All of a sudden Bobby said she believed I was being set up for a hit. I said I thought Michael was being set up with Robert Booth Nichols. Someone, whoever was controlling Littman, was trying to cause friction between Michael R. and Nichols and attempting to use me to do it. My friendship with Bobby had unexpectedly thrown a monkey-wrench into their plans.

Bobby confessed that Michael R. had tape recorded the conversation in which Littman told Michael about the Nichols meeting. Michael had called a "friend," and had the friend patch Michael through (collect) to Littman. The conversation had then been monitored and tape recorded by the third party. Bobby agreed to send me a copy of the tape-recording.

I asked Bobby why Littman would try to turn both Nichols and Michael against me. Bobby said the same thing happened to Danny Casolaro. Littman had been talking to Danny Casolaro regularly, as well as Nichols and Riconosciuto at the time of Danny's death. Yet, Littman had never written a single word about Danny Casolaro.

We both agreed that someone was being set up, but Bobby insisted that it was me. She said if I died, Michael would be held responsible. I had received calls daily from Michael for three months, then cut off all communication with him after talking to Robert Booth Nichols. Nichols then leaves the country. I have copies of all of Michael's personal documents, including drug documents, and the same cards containing the bank account numbers which Paul Morasco died for and which Mary Quick was allegedly holding when she died.

It was a perfect set-up, noted Bobby. Everyone, including my own husband, would believe Michael contracted the hit. Robert Booth Nichols himself had said as much in front of Jonathan Littman.

Bobby advised me to get out of the house immediately, then call the FBI, the U.S. Attorney, the police and everyone else I could think of immediately.

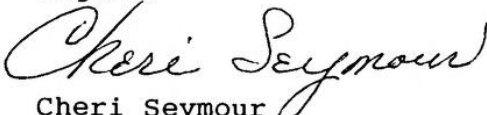
I became somewhat alarmed because of the various deaths surrounding Michael Riconosciuto. To name a few: Mary Quick, Paul Morasco, Michael's former partner, Dennis Eismann, a lawyer Michael tried to hire, Michael May who had visited Michael in jail two weeks before his death, and of course, Danny Casolaro. There were others with less direct connections.

I cannot fathom why an alleged reporter (Littman) would deliberately come to my home, gather up as many documents about Michael Riconosciuto's drug operations and the Mariposa drug operations as he can, set up an interview with a man under investigation by the FBI for mob connections, then betray me to both men, one of whom is in jail and suspected of murdering his partner and putting a hit on the prosecutor at his trial. It is even less understandable since that reporter says he has no intention of writing about Robert Booth Nichols or Michael Riconosciuto, but is only interested in John P. Nichols and the Cabazon Indians ????

Because I cannot understand this, and because all the details of this case are so bizarre, I am taking this letter to the nearest U.S. Attorney. I am also considering contacting Mr. Yamamoto, John Littman's editor at the San Francisco Chronicle. (I have "proof" of the conversation between John Littman and myself as related in this letter.)

If I did not feel so threatened by Jon Littman's behavior, I would not have broken my word to Robert Booth Nichols by writing this letter. Since 1964 when I entered into the newspaper business, I have never experienced any form of betrayal by another journalist. This is a first. I keep asking myself, "Who does Jon Littman really work for?" His cousin, Ben Kalka? Al Holbert? Robert Booth Nichols? The CIA? Michael Riconosciuto?

Signed:



Cheri Seymour
4859 Morningstar Lane
Mariposa, Calif. 95338
(209) 742-6997