

And God Laughs...

The Arthur Jones Autobiography

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“The great question . . . which I have not been able to answer, despite my thirty years of research into the feminine soul, is ‘what is it that women want?’”

Sigmund Freud, just before he died.

I cannot answer Freud’s last question; but, whatever it is, some men have it, and some do not. Black Africans and Arabs, even many Arabs now living in England, generally believe that they know, and take drastic steps in attempts to control it: female circumcision, the surgical removal of the clitoris. The theory being that women denied sexual pleasure will be more likely to stay at home and care for the children.

During the days of colonial Africa, female circumcision was prohibited throughout most of the continent, but continued to be practiced on a wide scale nevertheless; today, under Black rule, the practice is almost universal all over Africa and has even spread to European countries.

But I do know what most men want: sex, and many of the men that I have known apparently thought about little else. Some to a degree that is obviously pathological, some with almost nothing in the way of a return for their efforts, but at least a few who were successful almost beyond belief. The most successful man in that latter category that I ever met was C. C. McClung, a man who truly was a legend in his own time.

Sometime between 1948 and 1952, McClung established what he called the Snake Farm alongside the highway northwest of New Orleans, near the little town of La Place, Louisiana; but for more than forty years before he settled in Louisiana he operated a traveling snake show, sometimes with a carnival and sometimes on his own. When working by himself, he devoted most of his time to lecturing about snakes in schools. He had two trucks and two trailers, one trailer fitted out with living quarters and another that was a cage for several very large pythons; but the most striking thing about his operation was the girls, he always had several very attractive girls with him, young girls. He called these girls his ‘nieces.’

Under the provisions of the Mann Act, Interstate transportation of a female for immoral purposes was a Federal felony, was intended to stop so-called ‘white slavery,’ forced prostitution, but in practice was much more widely applied, and many men are probably still rotting in jail as a result of that law. A law that is generally being ignored today; if that law was still being enforced in line with the way it is worded, there would be very few men running loose in this country today. But during the period when that law was being enforced it was applied in many cases where it produced nothing short of an insane result: if, for example, you took your secretary on a business trip across a state line, and while in another state you had sex with her, then you were not guilty; because the out-of-state sex was a random occurrence and was not the purpose of the trip,

But if, upon returning to your home state, you told me about it, and I then took the same woman on a similar trip only for the purpose of having sex with her, but failed to do so, then I was guilty.

Throughout most of McClung’s life the Mann Act was in force, but it never slowed him down, he hauled literally thousands of young girls across both state lines and international borders, and never had any sort of problem until 1956.

And I mean young girls: when he was seventy-six years old he was living with a total of eleven girls simultaneously, all of them in their teens, most barely into their teens. On the subject of age, McClung told me . . . “Within reason, the age of a woman is irrelevant; anything between a well-developed thirteen and a well-preserved sixteen should be satisfactory for any reasonable man.” And he certainly practiced what he preached.

Just how he recruited all of these girls still remains a secret; while he would talk freely about anything else, that subject was not open for discussion. When questioned in that regard, he would smile and change the subject. Near the end of his long life, then somewhere in his eighties, McClung opened another snake exhibit near San Marcos, Texas, and moved there; and after McClung died, a man named Ray Olive, who was equally obsessed with sex but far less

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successful than McClung, told me . . . “I can understand why McClung would not tell anybody his secret while he was still alive and active; but it does look like he could have at least told a few of his old friends when he was about to die. But he did not; so now, every time I go through Texas, I stop and piss on his grave.”

I established a compound for imported animals and reptiles near Slidell, Louisiana, in 1952, which put me about fifty miles away from McClung’s place, and since he had expanded his activities into selling snakes and other reptiles that made us competitors; but unlike almost all of my other competitors, McClung was always very friendly and cooperative; would, it appeared, literally give you the shirt off his back. So, over the following years, I got to know him very well.

Not all of the girls that McClung recruited were world-class beauties, but there were never any ‘dogs,’ either; and a few of his girls were beautiful by anybody’s standards. Since McClung was then well into his seventies, was about five feet and six inches tall with a bodyweight in excess of two-hundred pounds and had almost no remaining hair, the contrast between him and his girls was striking, to say the least. He was never a truly rich man, and while he obviously supported these girls it did not appear that he provided them with much, if anything, apart from such support; so his secret did not appear to be based upon money.

But aside from his secret ability to recruit so many attractive young girls, McClung apparently had another secret: as they say . . . “Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned.” So, the obvious question is: having recruited these girls, then how did he manage to get rid of them after they became too old to suit his fancy, while still keeping them happy?”

But he did. In 1956, one of these girls was bitten by a cobra and died; and, of course, there was enormous publicity both on television and in the newspapers. Then the FBI stepped in to investigate the situation, basing their case on obvious violations of the Mann Act; while the State Police launched an investigation alleging statutory rape. Both of these simultaneous investigations dragged on for years, and in the end produced absolutely nothing in the way of results.

At that time I had a commission on the State Police, and I had a pistol-shooting range behind my animal compound; a range that was used by the local police, the state police, several FBI agents from the New Orleans area and a few Customs agents. So I heard the story from all sides: heard McClung’s version of events directly from the horse’s mouth, read and saw all of the stories that appeared in the local media, and heard from the law-enforcement people who were investigating McClung. I was probably better informed on the situation than McClung himself was.

Throughout all of this McClung never appeared to be concerned; and, as things turned out, perhaps he had no reason to be concerned. During the following several years after the girl’s death, agents of the FBI managed to locate and interview literally thousands of women that McClung had hauled across state lines for many years; but they could never find a woman who would agree to testify against him. By the time these women were located, many of them were quite old; but even then, years after the fact, they still seemed to like McClung.

Among other things, these investigations uncovered the fact that McClung had never paid a cent of income taxes in his life, had never even filed a tax return. So he went to jail for that, right? Wrong, that case was never prosecuted either. Hundreds of thousands of people, perhaps millions of people, in this country have never paid taxes or filed a return, and very few of them are ever prosecuted by the IRS. As a matter of principle, Gypsies, carnival people, professional gamblers, drug dealers and a long list of other people never pay taxes.

How do I know? Because I have known thousands of such people apart from drug dealers, and because I never filed tax returns, or paid taxes, for more than forty years. And I was not hiding out in a cave during that period, either; the IRS was clearly aware of the situation; and while they came around in attempts to harass me on several occasions, it was never carried beyond that point. Not, at least, until much later.

Then, in the late 1970s, I made some very disparaging remarks about the IRS on a national television program, and that apparently pissed them off; so they sent a Criminal Investigator from the IRS, together with a revenue agent, around to investigate me. Then, for a period of more than four years, with my full cooperation, those two men, sometimes with help from other IRS agents, conducted a non-stop investigation of my activities.

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Throughout this investigation, the Criminal Investigator in charge, Steve Favis, repeatedly told me that he was not interested in prosecuting a 'failure to file' case, which is a misdemeanor in any case, not a felony. If I was not guilty of income tax evasion, which is a felony, and if I was not involved in drug smuggling or other criminal activities, he told me, then the case would not be prosecuted.

One lesson that I learned from that experience is that you should always tape record all conversations with such people, and in line with Federal law you do not have to inform them that such taping is being done. If I had taped my conversations with Favis, he would have gone to jail for perjury; because, later, in court, under oath, he lied like Hell, lies that could have easily been proven to be perjury if I had taped my conversations with him.

So, after nearly five years of investigation failed to uncover any slightest evidence of tax evasion, and in spite of his repeated reassurances that they were not at all concerned with a 'failure to file' prosecution, they indicted me in Federal Court in Orlando, Florida, for three cases of failure to file income tax returns. Then a special Federal prosecutor, a woman, was sent down from Washington, D. C., to handle the case; they were really after me.

The result? When the jury returned its verdict, I heard the happiest words in the English language . . . "Not guilty."

In the meantime, during the investigation, I had been forced to pay the IRS several hundred thousand dollars in claimed taxes; but, eventually, although it took my lawyer several years to produce this result, I got that money back. A result that still cost me quite a bit, since the lawyer took a large part of what he recovered from the government.

During the trial, the prosecutors pulled every dirty trick they could think of, perjured themselves on the witness stand repeatedly, and brought in a surprise witness at the last minute in an attempt to smear my character, a man named Gideon Ariel who had stolen many thousands of dollars from me and was then trying to steal credit for my scientific discoveries; under the regulations provided for such procedures, the so-called 'laws of discovery,' such surprise witnesses are not allowed; so, if I had been convicted, the case would almost certainly have been thrown out upon appeal on that basis if for no other reason.

Then, just before the case went to the jury, the judge made several statements that would certainly have resulted in a reversal upon appeal; he said, in front of the jury . . . "Ladies and gentlemen, at this point I do not even understand what this case is all about; I may be able to figure it out later."

In his efforts to convict me, Favis produced one witness for the prosecution that turned out to be very much in my favor; this witness was a senior Criminal Investigator for the IRS who had investigated me several years before Favis came upon the scene, and he perjured himself on the witness stand; but in this instance his perjury was to my advantage.

This man visited me repeatedly over a period of several months shortly after I established Nautilus Sports/Medical Industries, a company that was not then incorporated; he and I spent several days going over my books, and the last time he left he told me that he would be back; but, in fact, I never saw him again until more than ten years later, when he appeared on the witness stand during the trial. A few weeks after his last visit he called me on the phone and told me that my case had been assigned to another IRS agent, and told me that man's name, and that the other agent would contact me within a few days. But the other agent never showed up, apparently my case had dropped through the cracks until Favis arrived upon the scene.

By the time of the trial I had forgotten the name of the first IRS agent and could not have located him if my life depended upon it; but Favis did locate him and produced him as a witness, to his later regret

On the stand, this agent testified that he had carefully examined my books and that it was then obvious that I owed nothing in the way of unpaid taxes, and then went on to say that I was not even required to file a tax return; neither of which statements were ever made to me.

So, why did he lie on the witness stand? To cover his own ass; because, if I had owed any taxes at the time of his investigation, or if I had been required to file a tax return, then why was the case never pursued?

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The revenue agent who worked directly with Favis throughout the investigation refused to testify at the trial, came up to me in the courtroom after the jury returned the verdict and shook my hand with a big smile on his face. While I never heard the private conversations between him and Favis, it does not take much in the way of an imagination to know what was said . . . “Look, Steve, while I might be willing to lie on your behalf, and have, I am not going to get on that witness stand and perjure myself; when you go to jail I am not going to be sitting on your lap.” Or words to that effect.

Somewhat later, this agent quit the IRS and then applied to me for a job; but I never hired him.

During the trial, an agent of the FBI, Jack Martin, testified upon my behalf, and did so in spite of the fact that he had been strongly urged by the Justice department not to testify, and in spite of the fact that I told him not to testify. He told the jury that I had worked closely and directly with the FBI in the course of several criminal investigations over a period of several years, which was true. I was not a ‘snitch,’ an informer, since I was never involved in criminal activity of any kind I had no knowledge regarding the criminal activities of other people; instead, I worked as an undercover agent for the FBI.

In spite of my instructions to the contrary, my lawyer requested a copy of my files in the CIA under the Freedom of Information Act; but they wrote back requesting that this application be withdrawn and when that came to my attention the application was withdrawn. Apparently the CIA did not want my files to become public knowledge, and neither did I. As I said in an earlier chapter, this book does not contain ‘the whole truth.’ Some sleeping dogs should never be disturbed.

Or, as the Chinese say . . . “He who would arouse a sleeping tiger should use a long stick.”

And, as things turned out, McClung was not the only man I ever knew who had a rather strange sex life: Steve Favis was strongly attracted to his neighbor’s wife, an interest which was reciprocated, and was also interested in video taping his sexual exploits, but then was very careless with these tapes. Somebody obtained a copy of one of the tapes, duplicated it and sent copies to Steve’s wife, his parents, the Justice Department and the husband of the woman he was involved with. Only a dirty, rotten son of a bitch would do something like that; ain’t I?

During the course of his years-long investigation Steve made a trip to San Francisco, at government expense, ostensibly for the purpose of conducting an interview with my accountant; then later submitted a long, question and answer form, sworn statement recounting what he learned from my accountant on that trip. Which was interesting, to say the least: since my accountant was in Israel on the date that interview was supposedly conducted.

During a pre-trial appearance before a judge, where all of the evidence on both sides was supposed to be brought forth, when that phony interview with my accountant was presented as evidence by Favis, we proved that the interview could not have been conducted; produced airplane tickets, hotel bills and several witness statements to establish that the interview could not have been conducted when Favis stated it was.

And how did the judge respond to this? He said . . . “Well, Mr. Favis must have made a mistake in regard to the date.”

Sure. And I suppose that the airline made the same mistake in regard to the date of Steve’s trip, and the car rental agency where he rented a car in San Francisco made the same mistake, and both his hotel in San Francisco and the restaurants where he ate on that trip made the same mistake. What a series of coincidences.

Oh, he went to San Francisco on the date he claimed all right, but did not go for the purpose of interviewing my accountant, did not even bother to phone to see if my accountant was in town at the time. Instead, he went for the purpose of buying illegal drugs, and we knew what he bought, who he bought them from and what he paid for them. Two can play at the game of investigation, and throughout the period of Steve’s investigation of me I was investigating him. I had a lot of friends in those days who were retired FBI agents, and most of these old-timers knew what they were doing; if Steve had bothered to look over his shoulder during that trip he might have noticed the two men who followed him everywhere he went, who sat behind him on the plane, who stood next to him when he was taking a piss, who were next in line when he was renting a car, who ate at the next table in all of the restaurants that he visited, and so on.

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These men practically walked lock-step with him throughout that trip, but apparently Steve was not very observant, he never ‘made them.’

To say that Steve was careless might well be the greatest understatement of all time; the smartest thing he ever did was when he checked into a hospital for minor surgery and then died on the operating table. Given the video tapes, that was probably the easy way out for him. If he had lived, he would have been in deep shit indeed.

But encounters with the Justice Department do not always turn out so well, in fact seldom do. I have been investigated so many times, and for such long periods, that I have no slightest doubt that the government has invested millions of dollars in attempts to put me in jail for things that I never did, so far without anything in the way of success for their efforts.

In 1954, while I was losing my ass as a result of having built an animal and reptile exhibit on a causeway just east of Mobile, Alabama, a Criminal Investigator from U. S. Customs roared up in a car in front of my office one day, and told me that he was there in order to investigate my parrot smuggling activities, something that I had never been involved in.

He had with him, and he let me read, a four-hundred-page confession by a man named Savage, a man who had been smuggling parrots and finally got caught. I met Savage in Veracruz, Mexico, several years earlier, but never had much to do with him, and my name was not mentioned in his confession; he didn’t even say anything about the time I hit him in the head with a hammer when I caught him stealing snakes from my compound.

So I asked the Customs agent . . . “Just what the Hell does any of this have to do with me?”

And he said . . . “Well, Savage did not mention you, but he did mention a good friend of yours in Miami, Ralph Demers, and we want you to go to Miami and testify against Ralph Demers. We will pay you six cents a mile for your travel and six dollars a day for living expenses during the trip; and, in return, if you testify on our behalf against Demers, we will not prosecute you. So you have two choices: you can be either a witness against Demers or a codefendant; the choice is yours.”

So I told him . . . “Well, the offer is tempting; since I’m starving to death here, at the moment six dollars a day sounds like big money. But I still have a few problems with the situation; to begin with, I don’t know anyplace in Miami where I can live on six dollars a day; secondly, since I always stay in Ralph’s house when I am in Miami, I don’t think it would be quite fair to stay in his house while telling lies about him in court in an attempt to get him thrown in jail.”

And he said . . . “Oh, but we don’t want you to lie; just tell the truth.”

So I said . . . “But the truth won’t do you any good, because I don’t know a damned thing about Ralph in regard to parrots; he may be a parrot smuggler, but you couldn’t prove it by me.” Which was true.

So he stormed out of the place, mouthing threats as he departed; according to his final statement, he would be back within a matter of hours to arrest me. But he must have got hung up in traffic or something, because, forty years later, he still has not returned.

For a period of several years, both before and after that encounter in Mobile, Customs agents went to great lengths in their attempts to prove that I was smuggling parrots; they lurked outside my house in the bushes, tapped my phones, opened my mail, followed me around as best they could all over this country and a large part of Mexico. On two occasions, while agents were lurking outside my house at night during very cold weather, I went outside and invited them to come into the kitchen for a cup of coffee, which they did. My wife served the coffee, and she was, at the time, a ‘wet back,’ an illegal immigrant from Mexico who could then speak only a few words of English; they could have arrested both of us because of her immigration status, but never questioned it.

For a long time I considered the whole thing a joke, knew that I was guilty of nothing and thus was not worried; and having been a bit of a practical joker for most of my life, I decided to amuse myself at their expense. Afterwards, as they followed us almost everywhere we went, we would situate ourselves in such a manner that they could overhear

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our conversations; always appearing not to notice them. Then, in great detail, we would cover our personal involvement in the most recent unsolved crimes; giving careful directions to guide them to where the body, or the loot, was buried. All of which was pure bullshit, of course; but apparently they swallowed it hook, line and sinker. If so, they probably dug up half of southern Texas and a good part of northern Mexico looking for the 'evidence;' none of which existed apart from our imagination.

But, later, when they started following us into Mexico, I began to get a bit irritated; figured enough was enough, already. So things started happening to these agents when they followed us into Mexico, rather bad things; I had a lot of friends in Mexico in those days, and the 'mordida' (bribe) was a way of life with almost all Mexican officials. And still is.

On one trip in pursuit of us, two American agents followed us into the country on a deserted dirt road; then about forty miles away from the nearest village they ran into some 'bandits.' There are a lot of bandits in Mexico, and not all of them are Mexicans. Having had all four of their tires and their engine shot full of holes, and having been relieved of their guns, their identification and their shoes, they were then forced to walk barefoot back to the nearest village, a Hell of a long walk. Then, upon arriving in the village, they were arrested and thrown into jail since they had no identification and looked 'suspicious' to the local police.

I never saw either of those two guys again, but am rather sure they still remember me. Another Customs agent who probably still remembers me was a man from Brownsville named Bobo. I returned from Mexico driving a station wagon and cleared Customs and Immigration in Brownsville, Texas; declared the few reptiles that I had with me and paid the small amount of duty that was required, then set out for San Antonio, about 280 miles away.

I always drove very fast in those days, far above the posted speed limit, and when driving at night had a system that prevented speeding tickets; so long as no lights were gaining on me I knew I was safe, there being no highway radar in those days, but if I saw lights coming up behind me I would slow down to just under the speed limit, let the other car pass me, and then if it was not a cop car I would speed up again, pass the car that had just passed me and repeat the process.

But that night, when the car behind me pulled up in sight and I slowed down he slowed down as well; when I speeded up he would speed up, but would never pass me. Which made me suspicious. So, passing through a small town, I pulled into a restaurant parking lot, got out of my car and went into the restaurant. The car that had been following me circled the block, parked, and the driver came into the restaurant.

So I went back to my car, roared off in the direction of San Antonio at high speed, went around a curve and then turned off behind a parked truck in a dark spot, turned off my lights and waited. Sure enough, a minute or so later, the car that had been following me came around the curve at high speed and continued towards San Antonio. Then I tried to catch him, intending to run him off the road and force him to identify himself; but his car was faster than mine and I couldn't catch him.

But, apparently, he eventually realized what I had done and tried to pull the same trick on me; upon entering the outskirts of San Antonio I again saw his lights behind me, keeping up but not trying to catch me. But I had a bit of an advantage, I knew the town better than he did; so, just past a short dead-end street, I suddenly applied my brakes, assuming that he would turn into the dead-end street in order to avoid passing me. Which he did.

But as soon as he turned off into the side street I performed a high-speed move called a 'bootlegger's turn,' reversed my direction and roared into the side street in pursuit of him. But he had done almost exactly the same thing, so as I turned into the side street I almost ran head-on into him as he was coming out; in order to avoid me he had to run up onto the lawn of a house, and almost ran into the house. I stopped, and then he jumped out of his car and came running towards my car; whereupon I opened my door, stepped out of the car, stuck my pistol in his face and told him . . . "STOP."

And he stopped, and slowly raised his hands; things were not going exactly the way he had planned. So then I made him get into my car, got in myself and asked him to identify himself . . . "With no sudden moves of any kind if you want to see tomorrow."

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So he produced his identification as a Customs agent, I examined it and then returned it to him; and asked him . . . “Why have you been following me? I am carrying large sums of money, and you have been acting very suspiciously.”

So he told me that he wanted to see what I was carrying in the station wagon. And I told him that I had offered to open all of the boxes at the border, an offer that was refused; they appeared to take my word for what I was carrying.

Then he asked me where I was going with the boxes, and I told him I had an appointment at the San Antonio Zoo at 10:00 O’clock the following morning. Then he said he wanted to be there when I opened the boxes.

So I told him . . . “No way; you are not going to embarrass me in front of one of my customers; if you want to see inside those boxes then get in your car and follow me, and I will lead you to the police department headquarters. When we get there, you can open the boxes in front of witnesses, tear the car apart if you want to, or do anything else within reason; then, having done so, you will have to put the car back together, or pay for having it done, give me a written apology and publish another apology in the newspaper. Additionally, I want to be paid for my time; and I don’t come cheap.”

He looked at me for a moment or two and then said . . . “I can’t make up me mind; you are one of only two possible things, you are either innocent or you have more guts than anybody I ever met before.” Then added that it appeared that he had made a mistake and that I would never see him again; and I never did see him again.

In fact, I was innocent; at least innocent of what he suspected. But I was still concerned; because my wife was waiting in a motel room and she was a wet back, so I damned sure did not want to lead anybody to her.

So I was not about to go to the motel where she was staying; instead, checked into a different motel and went to sleep. About eight the next morning, when I woke up, I looked across the street and saw a 1947 Buick sedan with a very distinctive license plate, it had four sevens in the numbers on the plate. Sitting in the front seat, wrapped up in an overcoat was a man who was obviously watching my car. It was cold as Hell, below freezing, which is unusual for San Antonio; so I let him sit there and freeze for about four hours while I stayed in the warm room.

When I left, about noon, he followed me; followed me all over town, through alleys, the wrong way up one-way streets, in circles; then, finally, by accident, I lost him; going north on North Broadway street I intended to turn off to the left onto a narrow street that would take me to the zoo, but I was watching him in my rearview mirror and almost missed my turnoff; then turned so suddenly that he was taken by surprise and could not follow me.

He did not show up at the zoo; but as I was leaving the zoo I saw him following me again, so just before getting back to Broadway I turned left into a street that runs parallel to Broadway, turned off just past the Witte Museum and continued to a place called the Alligator Gardens. He followed, and as I got out of my car and started towards the entrance to the Alligator Gardens, he pulled into a parking space, parked, and pretended to start reading a newspaper.

Whereupon I turned around and started running directly towards his car; but he saw me coming, jumped out of his car and raced off across Broadway in the midst of heavy traffic. I caught him in the middle of Broadway, grabbed him by the shoulder and whirled him around to face me; and asked him . . . “Why are you following me?”

He was about ready to shit in his pants, but things were about to get much worse from his standpoint. He denied that he had been following me, an obvious lie. So I told him . . . “Well, if not, then that certainly leaves us with a very strange set of circumstances; personally, I have never before seen anything anywhere close to the number of coincidences involved in this situation: first, is it merely a coincidence that a car exactly like yours and with the same license number has followed me all over town? And if so, secondly, is it also a coincidence that both cars are being driven by a stupid looking jerk like you?”

So he said . . . “You’re crazy.”

And I said . . . “Maybe, but that’s better than being dead; and that’s what you are going to be if I ever see you following me again.” And I whipped out my gun.

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Whereupon he turned around and dashed off through heavy, high-speed traffic; it appeared to be a miracle that he wasn't hit and killed.

So then I went straight to a telephone booth in front of the Alligator Gardens and called the local office of the FBI; told them who I was, where I was, and asked them if they had anybody following me. To which they replied that they did not give out that sort of information.

So I said . . . "Well, I just thought that you might be interested, because somebody sure as Hell has been following me, and if I catch him doing it again I'm going to kill him."

And that got their attention; but if they actually did send somebody to investigate I never saw them, at least not to identify them.

Later that day, after dark, having made damned sure that nobody else was following me, I finally joined my wife in her motel room; spent part of the night and departed about four in the morning in an almost blind fog; the fog was so thick that it would have been all but impossible for anybody to follow me, but I don't think they tried.

Over the following years, several somewhat similar situations occurred, but only one other came anywhere close to a shoot-out, and that was avoided when I jerked a Thompson sub-machinegun out of an agent's hands on the Miami airport during the middle of a hurricane; but that's another story.

Strangely enough, years later I became very friendly with many of these same agents; some of them remain close friends to this day. In 1984, the Chief of Customs in this area of Florida declared my private airport an 'international port of entry' so that I could land my personal big jet there with 63 African elephants on board, following a direct flight from an island off the coast of Africa. Another Customs agent, on leave because of an injured leg, made a long trip to Thailand and Hong Kong with me; but that, too, comes later.

Most of the Federal agents that I got to know over the years were 'hard cases,' so we had a lot in common; and when they got to know me, and realized that I was not involved in criminal activity of any kind, they both liked and respected me.