

1

00:00:00,502 --> 00:00:07,499

This series presents information based in part on theory and conjecture.

2

00:00:07,499 --> 00:00:18,494

The producer's purpose is to suggest some possible explanations, but not necessarily the only ones to the mysteries we will examine.

3

00:00:18,494 --> 00:00:25,491

In 1967, Jimmy Hoffa began serving a 13-year prison sentence.

4

00:00:25,491 --> 00:00:32,488

It was the beginning of the end for the man who was called America's most powerful labor leader.

5

00:00:32,488 --> 00:00:38,485

Hoffa was pardoned four years later, but his troubles were far from over.

6

00:00:38,485 --> 00:00:47,481

On July 30th, 1975, he left home and disappeared without a trace.

7

00:00:47,481 --> 00:00:51,479

Was Jimmy Hoffa kidnapped or murdered?

8

00:00:51,479 --> 00:00:54,478

If so, why and by whom?

9

00:00:54,478 --> 00:00:57,477

Did he flee to a distant country?

10

00:00:57,477 --> 00:01:05,473

Why did Jimmy Hoffa disappear?

11

00:01:05,473 --> 00:01:14,469

Be firm, but return to work and wait for the government of the United States to be able to make the decision,

12

00:01:14,469 --> 00:01:18,468

don't take the law in your own hands or you're going to hurt me.

13

00:01:18,468 --> 00:01:23,465

Don't do it, please.

14

00:01:23,465 --> 00:01:32,461

As president of the Teamsters Union, Jimmy Hoffa commanded a workforce larger than the United States Army.

15

00:01:32,461 --> 00:01:39,458

Hoffa was a leader gifted with great charisma, one of America's working-class heroes.

16

00:01:39,458 --> 00:01:46,455

One day in 1975, Hoffa went to a meeting at a suburban Detroit restaurant.

17

00:01:46,455 --> 00:01:49,454

He has not been seen since.

18

00:01:49,454 --> 00:01:55,451

My father, James R. Hoffa, has been missing for some 32 hours.

19

00:01:55,451 --> 00:02:04,447

He left for an appointment at Max's Red Fox restaurant at approximately 1.30 p.m. Wednesday, July 30, 1975.

20

00:02:04,447 --> 00:02:09,445

He called home at approximately 2.15 p.m. We have not heard from him since.

21

00:02:09,445 --> 00:02:11,444

Down in this lot here.

22

00:02:12,444 --> 00:02:24,438

Acting on anonymous tips, local authorities searched the Detroit suburbs for a body.

23

00:02:24,438 --> 00:02:32,435

Jimmy Hoffa is still missing. He was a powerful man, president of the world's largest labor union.

24

00:02:32,435 --> 00:02:38,432

But powerful men make enemies. Who might have wanted Hoffa out of the way and why?

25

00:02:38,432 --> 00:02:43,430

Is it conceivable that he was kidnapped for ransom or that he deliberately dropped out of sight?

26

00:02:43,430 --> 00:02:51,427

The answer to the mystery of Jimmy Hoffa's disappearance might be found by tracing his spectacular rise to power.

27

00:02:54,425 --> 00:03:00,423

Violence was commonplace in the working world Jimmy Hoffa entered during the late 1920s.

28

00:03:01,422 --> 00:03:10,418

Police and strike breakers battled fiercely with union workers as the labor movement gained momentum.

29

00:03:16,416 --> 00:03:23,412

In his teens, Hoffa joined a small Detroit local in the Teamsters Union of Truckers and Warehousemen.

30

00:03:23,412 --> 00:03:30,409

As a fearless young organizer, he helped engineer dozens of strikes to improve working conditions.

31

00:03:30,409 --> 00:03:37,406

Truckers began hauling more and more of the nation's freight as our highway system expanded.

32

00:03:37,406 --> 00:03:41,404

The Teamsters grew into a powerful union.

33

00:03:42,404 --> 00:03:54,399

Hoffa moved quickly up the Union Executive ladder. By the age of 33, he headed local 299 in Detroit.

34

00:03:56,398 --> 00:04:02,395

Eleven years later, in 1957, Hoffa ran for international president of the Teamsters.

35

00:04:02,395 --> 00:04:07,393

He gained support in locals all over the country by brilliant politicking.

36

00:04:11,391 --> 00:04:16,389

When the delegates were pulled, Hoffa triumphed by a 3-1 margin.

37

00:04:19,388 --> 00:04:23,386

Pete Camarada is Co-Chairman of Teamsters for a Democratic Union.

38

00:04:23,386 --> 00:04:29,383

Well, when Hoffa spoke to the rank and file, he was always able to reach them.

39

00:04:29,383 --> 00:04:34,381

And even though Jimmy Hoffa was a little man, he had a certain amount of charisma about him.

40

00:04:34,381 --> 00:04:40,378

When you shook hands with Jimmy Hoffa, even though Hoffa was a little fella, 5'5" or something like that,

41

00:04:40,378 --> 00:04:43,377

you thought you were shaking hands with somebody much bigger.

42

00:04:43,377 --> 00:04:48,375

Hoffa was willing to get right down in the street with the brothers and win what they had to win.

43

00:04:48,375 --> 00:04:50,374

That's what people loved him for.

44

00:04:53,373 --> 00:05:00,370

In 1967, the master freight agreement gave Hoffa more power than any union leader before him.

45

00:05:01,369 --> 00:05:05,367

Now, truckers nationwide would be bound by the same contract.

46

00:05:05,367 --> 00:05:10,365

To many businessmen and politicians, this was a frightening prospect.

47

00:05:11,365 --> 00:05:22,360

What scared them is the fact that Jimmy Hoffa could say to 400,000 Teamsters or 450,000 Teamsters at the time to park the trucks in Nate Parkwell.

48

00:05:24,359 --> 00:05:30,356

If Teamster truckers carried most of America's food, fuel and clothing for the marketplace,

49

00:05:30,356 --> 00:05:33,355

is it possible that Jimmy Hoffa had too much power?

50

00:05:34,355 --> 00:05:37,353

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Clark Mullenhoff.

51

00:05:37,353 --> 00:05:45,350

Jimmy Hoffa had more uncontrolled power than any other person in the United States, including the president.

52

00:05:45,350 --> 00:05:48,348

He was not accountable to anyone.

53

00:05:48,348 --> 00:05:59,344

He controlled employers, he controlled politicians through his gifts of union funds and cash,

54

00:05:59,344 --> 00:06:06,341

or through his use of anti-labor charges against the political figures.

55

00:06:06,341 --> 00:06:10,339

He controlled everything that moved on a truck.

56

00:06:13,337 --> 00:06:17,336

Hoffa never used his power to shut down the nation's commerce.

57

00:06:17,336 --> 00:06:20,334

Publicly, he played the part of a labor statesman.

58

00:06:20,334 --> 00:06:24,333

We're asking for language-dealing with safety of equipment.

59

00:06:24,333 --> 00:06:25,332

I don't have to.

60

00:06:25,332 --> 00:06:28,331

We're asking for wage increases.

61

00:06:28,331 --> 00:06:33,329

People who knew Hoffa said that privately, he was a hot-tempered and ruthless man.

62

00:06:33,329 --> 00:06:41,325

Well, from the first time I met Jimmy Hoffa throughout his whole life,

63

00:06:41,325 --> 00:06:47,322

he was a totally confident, cocky, banner-rooster type of individual.

64

00:06:47,322 --> 00:06:52,320

He could be most ingratiating and pleasant, even boyish.

65

00:06:52,320 --> 00:06:53,320

He says I have friends.

66

00:06:53,320 --> 00:07:00,317

But he can turn around and snap his fingers and become a tyrant if he were crossed in any respect.

67

00:07:00,317 --> 00:07:07,314

To the rank and file, Hoffa was a powerful boss who won good contracts.

68

00:07:07,314 --> 00:07:12,311

Enemies, however, claimed he made deals with employers outside Detroit,

69

00:07:12,311 --> 00:07:16,310

allowing them to pay his teamsters a substandard wage.

70

00:07:17,309 --> 00:07:24,306

Hoffa centralized Teamster Power and took control of the huge Central States pension fund.

71

00:07:24,306 --> 00:07:28,304

He lent millions to build gambling casinos.

72

00:07:28,304 --> 00:07:35,301

An estimated \$170 million of Teamster pension funds went into Las Vegas.

73

00:07:35,301 --> 00:07:39,299

There are also charges that Hoffa had ties to organized crime.

74

00:07:40,299 --> 00:07:47,296

From at least the mid-1940s, Jimmy Hoffa was dealing with organized crime figures in all parts of the country.

75

00:07:47,296 --> 00:07:56,292

He was using them to enforce his dictates on local labor leaders who were honest.

76

00:07:56,292 --> 00:08:03,289

He was also using them as a network for his own advancement and his own power.

77

00:08:03,289 --> 00:08:08,287

He put them in power in various unions from one end of the country to the other.

78

00:08:08,287 --> 00:08:17,283

The best answer in regards to hoodlums and what have you is the fact that every strike we have with employers who really want to fight,

79

00:08:17,283 --> 00:08:19,282

they revert to hiring hoodlums.

80

00:08:19,282 --> 00:08:26,279

And unless we know who our enemy is, unless we're in a position to do something about it, you'll lose your strike.

81

00:08:26,279 --> 00:08:28,278

But who controlled whom?

82

00:08:28,278 --> 00:08:34,275

What was the real relationship between Hoffa and men like New Jersey's Tony Provenzano?

83

00:08:34,275 --> 00:08:38,273

You've got people in Detroit, at least 15 who have police records.

84

00:08:38,273 --> 00:08:44,271

You've got Joey Glimko in Chicago. I say you're not tough enough to get rid of these people then.

85

00:08:44,271 --> 00:08:46,270

Well, I don't propose to be tough.

86

00:08:46,270 --> 00:08:47,269

You haven't moved against any of them?

87

00:08:47,269 --> 00:08:53,267

I don't propose to act tough. I have a follow-up constitution of the International Union.

88

00:08:53,267 --> 00:08:55,266

I don't frighten too easily.

89

00:08:55,266 --> 00:09:03,262

Well, you know, I don't intend to have the impression left, as been stated publicly, that I am controlled by gangsters.

90

00:09:03,262 --> 00:09:05,262

I am not controlled by them.

91

00:09:05,262 --> 00:09:06,261

Mr. Hoffa, I'm certainly...

92

00:09:06,261 --> 00:09:14,258

From 1957 to 1963, Attorney Robert Kennedy and his brother, Senator John Kennedy, feuded bitterly with Hoffa,

93

00:09:14,258 --> 00:09:18,256

as the McClellan Committee probed labor crimes.

94

00:09:18,256 --> 00:09:25,253

When John Kennedy was elected president in 1960, he appointed his younger brother, Attorney General.

95

00:09:25,253 --> 00:09:29,251

Bobby declared all-out war on organized crime.

96

00:09:29,251 --> 00:09:38,247

Hoffa was indicted for extortion, perjury, wiretapping, jury tampering, and pension fund embezzlement.

97

00:09:38,247 --> 00:09:42,245

Somehow, he managed to avoid conviction.

98

00:09:43,245 --> 00:09:52,241

Hoffa's bag of tricks included efforts to buy off sheriffs, prosecutors, congressmen, senators, governors,

99

00:09:52,241 --> 00:09:59,238

and he tried to influence cabinet officers and he at least compromised them.

100

00:09:59,238 --> 00:10:05,235

He even tried to buy me off, and he came out just out of the blue sky and said,

101

00:10:05,235 --> 00:10:08,234

Every man has his price, Clark, what's yours?

102

00:10:09,233 --> 00:10:13,232

After seven years of prosecution, Hoffa was convicted of jury tampering

103

00:10:13,232 --> 00:10:18,229

through the testimony of a disgruntled teamster.

104

00:10:18,229 --> 00:10:22,228

Later, he was found guilty of embezzlement.

105

00:10:22,228 --> 00:10:28,225

In 1967, Hoffa surrendered to authorities to serve his term.

106

00:10:28,225 --> 00:10:37,221

The fateful series of events that would lead to Jimmy Hoffa's disappearance had begun.

107

00:10:37,221 --> 00:10:42,219

In search of, we'll continue in a moment, here on the History Channel.

108

00:10:45,217 --> 00:10:52,214

In 1967, ex-teamster boss Jimmy Hoffa headed for Lewisburg Penitentiary to serve his term.

109

00:10:52,214 --> 00:10:58,212

He may have regretted the involvement with gangsters that had led to his downfall.

110

00:10:58,212 --> 00:11:03,209

But Hoffa's knowledge of the underworld would become an even greater burden in prison.

111

00:11:08,207 --> 00:11:14,205

For nearly four years, Jimmy Hoffa brooded in his cell as his power slipped away.

112

00:11:14,205 --> 00:11:21,202

Meanwhile, Hoffa's trusted aide, Frank Fitzsimmons, began his takeover of the Teamsters Union.

113

00:11:21,202 --> 00:11:29,198

I wish to announce that I am a candidate for the general president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

114

00:11:29,198 --> 00:11:33,196

And we'll run for that office at the International Union Convention,

115

00:11:33,196 --> 00:11:37,194

which begins July the 5th in Miami Beach, Florida.

116

00:11:37,194 --> 00:11:43,192

Eligible for parole in two years, Hoffa resigned his union office so that Fitzsimmons could run.

117

00:11:43,192 --> 00:11:47,190

It was a decision he would later regret.

118

00:11:47,190 --> 00:11:53,187

Once elected, Fitzsimmons solidified his position by making friends in the White House.

119

00:11:53,187 --> 00:11:58,185

He personally appealed to Richard Nixon to pardon Jimmy Hoffa.

120

00:12:03,183 --> 00:12:07,181

I believe it.

121

00:12:07,181 --> 00:12:13,179

Unknown to Hoffa, Nixon added conditions to his pardon, banning him from union activity.

122

00:12:13,179 --> 00:12:21,175

Hoffa would say later that had he known about the restrictions, he would have refused to sign the pardon papers.

123

00:12:21,175 --> 00:12:27,172

In semi-retirement, Jimmy Hoffa found himself trapped in another kind of prison.

124

00:12:27,172 --> 00:12:37,168

To Hoffa, freedom, even life itself, meant a return to union power.

125

00:12:37,168 --> 00:12:41,166

Hoffa retained his amazing popularity.

126

00:12:41,166 --> 00:12:47,164

Observers thought that if Jimmy's lawyers were able to reverse the Nixon restrictions,

127

00:12:47,164 --> 00:12:51,162

Hoffa could win back the Teamster presidency from Fitzsimmons.

128

00:12:51,162 --> 00:12:55,160

But Jimmy never got the chance.

129

00:12:55,160 --> 00:13:05,156

July 30th, 1975. Jimmy Hoffa headed for Arandabu with two Teamster officials, Anthony Giacalone and Tony Provenzano,

130

00:13:05,156 --> 00:13:10,153

a former ally with whom Hoffa had had a fistfight in prison.

131

00:13:10,153 --> 00:13:15,151

At 2 p.m., Hoffa arrived at the Maccus Red Fox restaurant.

132

00:13:15,151 --> 00:13:23,148

After waiting half an hour, he entered the restaurant and telephoned his wife to check whether Giacalone had called.

133

00:13:23,148 --> 00:13:29,145

Josephine Hoffa has not seen her husband since.

134

00:13:29,145 --> 00:13:33,143

Take power, power's down here.

135

00:13:33,143 --> 00:13:41,140

Police searched the area for clues or a body.

136

00:13:41,140 --> 00:13:47,137

But industrial Detroit provides countless places to dispose of a course.

137

00:13:47,137 --> 00:13:50,136

There has been nothing, no calls or notes.

138

00:13:50,136 --> 00:13:52,135

As a police official, what do you think happened?

139

00:13:52,135 --> 00:14:00,131

There's too much to speculate on. I believe it was just too early, perhaps next 24, 48 hours.

140

00:14:00,131 --> 00:14:04,130

Could someone have snatched Hoffa from the restaurant in broad daylight?

141

00:14:04,130 --> 00:14:07,128

Charlie Schatz was an old friend.

142

00:14:07,128 --> 00:14:15,125

Jim would have never walked into a trap. It's been tried before.

143

00:14:15,125 --> 00:14:23,121

This has been somebody that's been very close to Jim that he trusted.

144

00:14:23,121 --> 00:14:27,119

Hoffa's foster son, Chuckie O'Brien, was questioned.

145

00:14:27,119 --> 00:14:35,116

Police found blood in the car O'Brien was driving, but tests proved it was that of a fish.

146

00:14:35,116 --> 00:14:40,114

Hoffa's family waited in vain, hoping desperately to hear from his kidnappers.

147

00:14:40,114 --> 00:14:45,111

No ransom message ever arrived.

148

00:14:45,111 --> 00:14:52,108

But what about the men Hoffa was supposed to meet?

149

00:14:52,108 --> 00:14:59,105

Tony Provenzano and Anthony Giacalone had airtight alibis for the time of Hoffa's disappearance.

150

00:14:59,105 --> 00:15:03,104

Both denied arranging any meeting with Jimmy.

151

00:15:03,104 --> 00:15:10,100

Ironically, in 1978, Provenzano went to prison for the murder of another teamster official.

152

00:15:10,100 --> 00:15:15,098

Four of Provenzano's associates were also summoned to a grand jury hearing.

153

00:15:15,098 --> 00:15:23,095

Sal and Gabriel Bregulio and Thomas and Stephen Andretta, each refused to talk.

154

00:15:23,095 --> 00:15:30,092

In 1978, Sal was murdered gangland style on a New York street.

155

00:15:30,092 --> 00:15:34,090

The government still has no case for the murder of Jimmy Hoffa,

156

00:15:34,090 --> 00:15:43,086

but the testimony of a mafia hitman turned government informant is considered by the FBI to be a plausible description of the kidnapping drama.

157

00:15:43,086 --> 00:15:49,083

Investigative reporter Dan Molday has been researching the Hoffa case for five years.

158

00:15:49,083 --> 00:15:57,080

In the first act, Hoffa drives from his home, arrives at the restaurant expecting to meet two under-road figures.

159

00:15:57,080 --> 00:16:06,076

He's picked up by one, perhaps two close associates, driven to a private residence four minutes away from the restaurant,

160

00:16:06,076 --> 00:16:10,074

where he is ambushed and killed.

161

00:16:10,074 --> 00:16:19,070

His body is then stuffed into a 55 gallon drum and taken to a location where it is placed in a compactor for junk cars.

162

00:16:19,070 --> 00:16:24,068

It is crushed and it is smelled.

163

00:16:25,067 --> 00:16:30,065

Hoffa's body will never be found.

164

00:16:30,065 --> 00:16:35,063

If Hoffa's disappearance was a mafia hit, what was the motive?

165

00:16:35,063 --> 00:16:42,060

FBI investigators believe Hoffa was killed to protect lucrative mob deals.

166

00:16:42,060 --> 00:16:46,058

Joe Irwin knew Hoffa for three decades.

167

00:16:46,058 --> 00:16:53,055

Well, they had to get Jimmy Hoffa out of the way because probably within a month he would have been free of his parole deal

168

00:16:53,055 --> 00:17:00,052

and he would have went back into the union and he would have taken over without a doubt from Fitzsimmons and crew

169

00:17:00,052 --> 00:17:03,051

and he would have eliminated every damn one of them.

170

00:17:03,051 --> 00:17:12,047

The motive for Jimmy Hoffa's disappearance goes beyond his mere ambition to regain the general presidency of the team's union,

171

00:17:12,047 --> 00:17:15,045

which he was institutionally closed out from anyway.

172

00:17:15,045 --> 00:17:24,041

Hoffa was becoming increasingly unpredictable and was becoming dangerous for the mob to allow to continue operating.

173

00:17:24,041 --> 00:17:34,037

Dan Molday believes an angry Hoffa had begun to squeal about connections between the mafia and the CIA in Cuba.

174

00:17:34,037 --> 00:17:40,034

Cuba had long been a stronghold of organized crime and gambling.

175

00:17:40,034 --> 00:17:46,032

When the Cuban Revolution broke out, the mob sold arms to both sides.

176

00:17:46,032 --> 00:17:51,029

After Castro came to power, he began throwing gangsters out of Cuba.

177

00:17:51,029 --> 00:17:56,027

There is strong evidence that mobsters and the CIA were plotting to kill Castro

178

00:17:56,027 --> 00:18:00,025

and that Jimmy Hoffa was the original liaison between them.

179

00:18:00,025 --> 00:18:09,021

The evidence is also clear that in 1975 during the Church and Committee's investigation of the Castro assassination plots

180

00:18:09,021 --> 00:18:19,017

that Hoffa was indeed giving information to the Church Committee about his knowledge and perhaps even his participation in these plots.

181

00:18:19,017 --> 00:18:27,014

Sam Giancana, who was planning to speak before the Church Committee, was murdered exactly one month before Hoffa disappeared

182

00:18:27,014 --> 00:18:31,012

and I believe these two murders are connected.

183

00:18:31,012 --> 00:18:42,007

Only weeks before his disappearance, Hoffa had completed a book in which he made bitter charges against Frank Fitzsimons.

184

00:18:42,007 --> 00:18:51,003

He implicated mobsters by name and specifically mentioned the end of his friendship with Tony Provenzano.

185

00:18:51,003 --> 00:18:56,001

This book may have been Hoffa's death warrant.

186

00:18:56,001 --> 00:19:02,998

Receivably, he knew enough secrets to send dozens of mobsters to jail or the electric chair.

187

00:19:02,998 --> 00:19:06,996

Did Hoffa know the secret behind the crime of the century?

188

00:19:06,996 --> 00:19:14,992

On November 23, 1963, John Kennedy was shot to death in Dallas.

189

00:19:14,992 --> 00:19:21,989

The alleged killer was Lee Harvey Oswald, whose Cuban connections were documented by the Warren

Commission.

190

00:19:21,989 --> 00:19:26,987

Oswald's murderer, Jack Ruby, had well-known ties to mobsters.

191

00:19:26,987 --> 00:19:36,983

According to Dan Molday, FBI records indicated that Ruby phoned Hoffa AIDS repeatedly during November 1963.

192

00:19:36,983 --> 00:19:44,979

Hoffa hated the Kennedys for mercilessly hounding him during the McClellan hearings.

193

00:19:44,979 --> 00:19:48,977

But did he know more than the rest of us about the president's murder?

194

00:19:48,977 --> 00:19:56,974

In September of 1962, Santos Tropicani and his Florida Underworld figure were speaking with a FBI informant.

195

00:19:56,974 --> 00:20:05,970

During the conversation, which included the Hoffa's personal approval of a \$1.5 million dollar

team's repension fund loan for Tropicani's associates,

196

00:20:05,970 --> 00:20:15,965

Tropicani went into a rage over Kennedy's pursuit of Hoffa and indicated to the FBI informant that Kennedy was going to be hit.

197

00:20:15,965 --> 00:20:26,961

During my investigation, the FBI informant indicated that Tropicani also added that Tropicani had, quote, made it clear that it was Hoffa

198

00:20:26,961 --> 00:20:29,959

who was making the arrangements for the president's assassination.

199

00:20:29,959 --> 00:20:33,957

Jimmy Hoffa's connection with Kennedy's murder is tenuous.

200

00:20:33,957 --> 00:20:38,955

More certain is that Jimmy was involved with organized crime.

201

00:20:38,955 --> 00:20:43,953

Was he murdered by mob enemies, as the government believes?

202

00:20:43,953 --> 00:20:50,950

Could he have fled to avoid assassination? Or is he still being held in Communicado?

203

00:20:50,950 --> 00:21:01,945

For society, the moral is clear. When underworld power is linked to mighty institutions and charismatic leaders, no one is safe.

204

00:21:01,945 --> 00:21:07,942

Jimmy Hoffa's disappearance was the final twist in a long and turbulent career.

205

00:21:07,942 --> 00:21:14,939

Gifted with unique talent and charisma, Hoffa could have been one of our country's great leaders.

206

00:21:14,939 --> 00:21:19,937

He began on the loading docks and earned his status as a working class hero.

207

00:21:19,937 --> 00:21:24,935

But like so many leaders, Hoffa was corrupted by his tremendous power.

208

00:21:26,934 --> 00:21:32,931

He was unable to see the folly of his alliance with the underworld until it was too late.

209

00:21:38,929 --> 00:21:48,924

Coming up next, agents investigating the murder of radio DJ Alan Berg uncover a white supremacist conspiracy on FBI The Untold Stories.

210

00:21:48,924 --> 00:21:56,921

Then, histories, crimes and trials chronicles the hunt for serial murderers in the case of the Zodiac Killer and the Green River case.

211

00:22:07,916 --> 00:22:09,915

The Untold Stories