

Arnie and the Fish

By Mark Latterman

Arnie Weinmeister, one of the finest defensive tackles in the history of the National Football League, recently passed away and I was reminded of his "involvement" in the investigation of the disappearance of former teamster President Jimmy Hoffa.

Mr. Weinmeister who was fast enough to play end and fullback , as well as tackle at the University of Washington, was one of the most effective defensive tackles in the NFL and was a key to the famous "umbrella defense" designed by Steve Owen of the New York Giants in the early 1950's.

After his playing tenure in the NFL and Canada, Mr. Weinmeister became a leading official of the director of the thirteen state , 400,000 member Seattle based Western Conference of the Teamsters.

When Mr. Hoffa disappeared in August of 1975, it appears that he was picked up in a car owed by Joey Giacalone driven by his (Hoffa's) "foster son" Chuckie O'Brien. Mr. Hoffa has never been seen since that time. When the FBI bloodhounds smelled blood in the car driven by Mr. O'Brien, they initially were certain that it was the blood of Mr. Hoffa. It was subsequently discovered that Mr. Weinmeister had sent a salmon to Mr. Giacalone and Mr. Giacalone had put this salmon in the car. The blood that they had scented, was in fact the blood of the fish and not from Mr. Hoffa.

Arnie started his career with the New York Yankees of the AAFC in 1948 and ended his NFL career with the Giants in 1953. He had excellent size, exceptional strength and was widely considered to be the fastest lineman in professional football. After his career with the Giants, he joined the British Columbia Lions of the Canadian Football League as a player/coach, winning a court battle with the Giants, who maintained that he still belonged to them. He was elected to the Pro-Football Hall of Fame in 1984.

In 1988, when the Justice Department followed suit to remove the Teamsters senior leadership, charging it had made a "devils pact" with organized crime, it accused Mr. Weinmeister and the seventeen other members of the executive board of failing to rule out corruption. Under a consent degree, scores of Union officials were removed by overseers. Mr. Weinmeister remained in office. He said in a 1988 deposition that he had no knowledge of organized crime other than what he had read in the newspapers or had seen in the "Godfather" movies.