

# LINK GEORGE RAFT TO FIGHT DEAL

## Boxing Board Sets Hearing for Herman Taylor

### 'Muscling In' As Manager Laid To Promoter

By SAUL SCHRAGA

Film star George Raft, sleek movie menace, has been pictured as a real-life "heavy" in a deal which culminated in Herman Taylor, Philadelphia fight promoter, "muscling in" as manager of middleweight George Johnson.

This was learned by The Inquirer yesterday as Taylor was served with a citation by the Pennsylvania Athletic Commission ordering him to show cause why his promoter's license should not be revoked.

#### TURNED DOWN OFFER

Sworn testimony that Johnson was taken from him by "coercion and threats" after he refused to relinquish the managership to Raft for "publicity" purposes was given the commission by Donald Rettman, who formerly managed Johnson, who was billed as a "Seminole Indian."

Rettman said he turned down Raft's offer to use his influence with Frankie Carbo and other well-



Actor George Raft, named in the deal that resulted in Herman Taylor's "muscling in" as manager of middleweight George Johnson.

known characters involved in professional boxing, and shortly afterward found the pressure on to take his fighter away from him.

#### FOUR CHARGES LISTED

This charge constitutes part of the commission's case against Taylor, one of the country's leading promoters, who has sponsored many championship ring battles here, including the Walcott-Marciano fights for the heavyweight title.

The four-count citation against Taylor charged him with consorting with disreputable persons, taking over the Johnson management by coercion "alone or in conspiracy with others," acting as manager without a manager's license and having a financial interest in a fighter.

#### HEARING SET FOR DEC. 14

Taylor, as well as a former associate, Archie Pirolli, now in the restaurant business, were both ordered to appear for a hearing on the charges at the commission offices in the Finance Building on Dec. 14.

Pirolli, who holds a manager's license, was cited for conspiring with Taylor to take over management of Johnson, for failure to state Taylor's connection with him in applying for the license and for filing a "false contract."

#### UNDECIDED ON ACTION

Commissioner Alfred M. Klein, who announced issuance of the citations, said Pirolli filed a contract which stated that earnings were divided two-thirds to Johnson and one-third to the manager, whereas actually there was a 50-50 agreement between them.

Taylor, on whom State police served the citation, said he was undecided whether he would show up for the Dec. 14 hearing.

#### 'NO FINANCIAL INTEREST'

"I never have had any financial interest in any boxer since I became a promoter," Taylor insisted. "As for my associations, none of them are partners in my boxing business.

"If it's a crime to know people, I must be guilty of something."

Taylor said he was "undecided whether I will honor them with my presence at the hearing."

#### 'VALUABLE PUBLICITY'

Raft's proposal that he become Johnson's manager of record took place while Rettman and the fighter were on a trip to the West Coast, the Trenton man said in a statement he gave the commission in the course of its investigation of Taylor.

Rettman said Raft told him that being the manager of a fighter would result in valuable publicity which movie stars need to keep in the public eye if their earning ability is to remain high.

#### URNS DOWN OFFER

If he accepted the offer, Rettman said he was told, then Raft would use his friendship with Carbo and other influential figures in the sports world to see that Johnson got a lot of good bouts with fat purses. Rettman was to remain as the actual manager, but in the background.

It was after he turned down this deal, Rettman said, that he began to feel the pressure. With Johnson forced to turn to the boxing "syndicate" or else have his fight career virtually ended, the result was a foregone conclusion. Johnson parted with his manager, and turned up under the aegis of Archie Pirolli.

#### THREATS ARE CHARGED

Count "A" of the Pirolli citation charged that "you alone or in conspiracy with Herman Taylor or others, took over the management of boxer George Johnson on or about Jan. 15, 1954, from Johnson's then manager, Donald Rettman, by coercion and threats to Johnson's future boxing career."

Pirolli holds manager's license No. 207, issued Jan. 26, 1955, while Taylor holds a license as a promoter, No. 18, issued Jan. 5, 1955.

#### 'ALL KINDS OF ELEMENTS'

Commenting on the count charging him with associating

# Coley Wallace To Deny He Was Doped in Fight

Witkin Says He Will Prove Report Of Pill Is a Hoax

By MATT RING 11/26/55

The Pennsylvania Athletic Commission will hold a secret "investigative hearing" tomorrow on reports that Coley Wallace was doped before a bout in 1954 and that his manager, Frank (Blinky) Palermo, was involved.

However, Palermo's attorney, Morton Witkin, said such reports will be proved "a hoax" and that he has a sworn statement from Wallace denying he ever gave a statement to anyone about a pill or doping at any time.

Alfred M. Klein, one of the three members of the commission, said Witkin has requested tomorrow's hearing at which time, Witkin said, "Wallace will make the same denial."

### Klein States Hearing

The hearing, to begin at 10 A. M. in the Finance Building on South Penn Square, was announced late yesterday by Klein.

Klein said it would be conducted by himself and commissioner Paul G. Sullivan, of Pittsburgh, but that chairman Jim Crowley, of Scranton, will be absent because of the illness of his wife.

"Because no charges are being made against Palermo, the hearing will not be open to the press or public," the commissioner said.

"We intend to question him fully and also Wallace and Jimmy Wilson, who seconded Wallace in the bout with Bob Baker.

"Their answers may give us some leads for further investigation."

According to the reports of the doping, Wallace is supposed to have said that shortly before he went into the ring with Baker—in Cleveland on October 1, 1954—he was given a pill by Palermo which had the effect of slowing down his reflexes and thus caused him to lose.

### Loses Return Bout, Too

Wallace afterward met Baker and a return bout and again was defeated, although nothing has been said about his being doped on the second occasion.

Tomorrow's probe is the indirect result of a letter from Witkin to the commission two weeks ago, wherein he commented on "charges" against Palermo and requested that his client be given an opportunity to answer them.

# George Raft Linked to Boxing Deal

By SAUL SCHRAGA

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with "criminals, bookmakers, gamblers or persons of similar ill repute, or with persons of no known or visible means of livelihood," Taylor said:

"There are all kinds of elements in the boxing business, but if the commission is accusing me of taking them in as partners, they are driving up a blind alley.

"Boys from the riverfront and from all walks of life can be found in boxing. If the commission is looking for college professors in the sport, then they had better start looking somewhere else."

### PALERMO ALSO CITED

Citation of Taylor and Pirollo was announced by Klein a few hours after The Inquirer disclosed that the commission had cited Frank (Blinky) Palermo, manager of former welterweight champion Johnny Saxton, and Jimmy Wilson, trainer and second, both of whom are to be given a hearing on Monday. Palermo also was accused of associating with undesirable elements.

Raft is widely known as an associate of characters who frequent the sporting world, and one of his friends was Bugsy Siegel, slain in his Beverly Hills, Calif., home about four years ago.

### REJECT RAFT'S BID

Last April the Nevada Tax Commission rejected Raft's application to buy into the Flamingo Hotel—a rich gambling casino in Las Vegas—on the ground that "his background does not warrant it."

While Raft had never been charged with any offense more serious than speeding, investigators for the Nevada body said he had frequently been questioned in connection with gambling investigations in Southern California.

Raft, a friend also of Leo (Lippy) Durocher, former baseball manager, appeared in the news in 1944 after a dice game in Durocher's apartment while the latter was away. An airline executive charged Raft used "loaded" dice to win \$10,000—a charge Raft denied indignantly.

# Palermo Facing Loss of License In Citation by State Boxing Board

## Second Hearing Ordered, Aide Also Is Called

The Pennsylvania Athletic Commission has taken the first step in an effort to drive Frank (Blinky) Palermo out of boxing by issuing a citation which threatens his right to act as a manager of fighters in this State, The Inquirer learned yesterday.

Served on Palermo's counsel, former City Commissioner Morton Witkin, the citation orders the fight manager to appear Monday morning to face charges that his long record of association with "known criminals and gamblers" forfeits his right to a license.

### TRAINER ALSO CITED

Also ordered to face the commissioners was Palermo's trainer, Jimmy Wilson, who faces possible loss of his second's license because he failed to note on his application that he was once convicted of a crime—20 years or so ago.

Klein replied that there are no charges and said that the subject is still under investigation.

The commissioner subsequently sent Witkin a letter confirming "an understanding that the Pennsylvania Athletic Commission will proceed with an investigative hearing into the alleged doping of Coley Wallace."

In making the public announcement of the hearing yesterday, Klein said that the commission has been investigating Palermo for some time to ascertain his fitness for holding a license as a

The hearing is to be held before Commissioners James H. Crowley, of Scranton, chairman; Paul Sullivan, of Pittsburgh, and Alfred M. Klein, of this city, with Deputy Attorney Herbert S. Levin presenting the case against the two men. It was learned that the commission intends to question Palermo on all his record, which includes arrests and convictions dating back of 1928, for such offenses as assault and numbers and liquor violations.

The commission intends to delve into the entire record despite a pardon granted by the State Board of Pardons about a half a dozen years ago, it was learned, on the theory that a pardon does not change the essential character of a person.

### QUIZZED LAST WEEK

By associating with known racketeers, the citation charges, Palermo has engaged in "acts prejudicial and detrimental to boxing"—which under the State Boxing Code would deny him the privilege of a license in this State.

Last Thursday the commission had Palermo and Wilson before

them on another matter—the investigation of reports that one of Palermo's stable of fighters, heavyweight Coley Wallace, had stated he was given a sedative before a fight in Cleveland on Oct. 1, 1954.

The fact that Palermo had received a pardon was disclosed when the fight manager's case became of interest to the Kefauver Crime Investigating Committee during hearings held here in 1953.

### PARDONS AIDE CALLED

Joseph Nisley, secretary of the State Board of Pardons at Harrisburg, was summoned to explain how Palermo, manager of Ike Williams, then lightweight champion, had obtained the pardon, granted on Jan. 14, 1948.

Robert C. Duffy, now Philadelphia Republican Chairman, represented Palermo at the pardons hearing and told the board he had "an outstanding record in Philadelphia and was interested in boys' work," Nisley told the committee. The pardon was for a 1928 conviction for aggravated assault and battery, and one in 1934 on a numbers-writing charge. Nisley said Palermo served 60 days of an original six-month sentence on the numbers charge.

manager. He explained that tomorrow's hearing can be considered a part of the same investigation.

Whether the questioning of Palermo, Wallace and Wilson—plus several others whom the commission will interrogate, according to Klein—will venture beyond the Cleveland doping story is open to speculation. Klein's letter to Witkin, dated November 28—two days ago—specifies only "the alleged doping of Coley Wallace."

# Fight Board Moves To Bar Palermo

A citation has been issued by the Pennsylvania State Athletic Commission to fight manager Frank (Blinky) Palermo to appear before that group Monday morning. Served on Morton Witkin, Palermo's attorney, the citation orders Palermo to face charges that could cause him to lose his license in the state.

The citation states that Palermo's long association with "known criminals and gamblers" forfeits his right to a license. Should Palermo's license be forfeited here, it would automatically be suspended in the other 46 member states of the National Boxing Association, New York, which is not a member of the NBA, has already declared Palermo "persona non grata" and refused to issue him a license.

The Commission also ordered Jimmy Wilson, trainer of the Palermo stable of boxers, to appear before it. Wilson faces the possible loss of his license for failing to state on his application that he was convicted of a crime 20 years ago.

The hearing will be held before the full commission, composed of Chairman James Crowley, Alfred M. Klein and Paul Sullivan, Deputy Atty. Gen. Herbert S. Levin will handle the state's case.

The commission will go back to 1928 in questioning Palermo about his record of arrests and convictions despite the fact that he was granted a pardon by the State Board of Pardons six years ago. The commission bypasses the pardon on the theory that it does not change the essential quality of a person.



FRANK PALERMO  
... Pardon by-passed

LAST THURSDAY Palermo and Wilson were called before the commission when the latter was investigating the alleged doping of boxer Coley Wallace. The incident in question took place over a year ago in Cleveland, and Wallace was reportedly fed a "slow pill" prior to a bout with Bob Baker.

Wallace also was questioned at the hearing, which was termed "investigative" by the commission. Palermo, Wilson and Wallace denied any knowledge of the incident.

Palermo's pardon was brought to light during the Kefauver Crime Investigating Committee hearings here in 1950. Joseph Nissley, secretary of the State Board of Pardons, was called before the committee to explain the pardon.

—BOB McCURLEY

CHARLEY DOUGLAS  
No. Philadelphia, Pa., Middleweight  
1955

Jan. 14—Frankie Analem, Philadelphia	L	6
Feb. 4—Johnny Finney, Philadelphia	KO	5
Feb. 11—Mel Collins, Philadelphia	L	7
Dec. 1—Jesse Watson, Long Island C.	W	4
Dec. 15—Bill Fiamie, Long Island C.	KO	3
1955		
Mar. 15—Al Dixon, New York	W	4
July 23—Joey Donovan, New York	L	6
Sept. 1—Art Suffoletta, New York	L	6
Oct. 26—Art Suffoletta, New York	W	6
Dec. 17—Harold Smith, New York	W	6

Link to N. Y. Suspected

# Pa. Commission Probes State Pilots' Guild

By BOB McCURLEY

Daily News Staff Writer 12/15/55

The Pennsylvania Boxing Managers Guild may be in for the same treatment recently meted out to its New York counterpart. This was revealed by Alfred M. Klein of the State Athletic Commission.



HERMAN TAYLOR  
... hearing postponed

Klein said the local group has been under investigation by his office for quite some time. During which it was established that the two groups have a definite relationship.

THE NEW YORK GUILD was outlawed recently by the New York Commission.

A powerful working agreement exists between the two boxing commissions and they are in almost daily contact with one another.

Julius Helfand, chairman of the N. Y. body, sent James Crowley, head of the local group, a copy of his opinion handed down on the N. Y. Guild.

In a return letter, dated Dec. 13, Crowley thanked him for the copy and pledged the 100 percent cooperation of his commission.

CROWLEY ALSO indicated in the letter that he would read Helfand's opinion to Klein and Paul Sullivan, the other member of the local commission.

At the same time Klein let it be known that he had also written Helfand. He asked for a copy of testimony on the Managers Guild hearing. A request that is certain to be granted.

All this can only mean one thing for the Pa. Managers Guild—a rough trip ahead. Exceedingly rough if the local commission, as Klein indicates, has definite proof of a tieup with the New York body.

# Taylor, Pirolli Granted Delay By Commission

Fight promoter Herman Taylor and fight manager Archie Pirolli were granted a continued hearing until next month by the Pennsylvania State Athletic Commission.

Taylor is accused by the Commission of allegedly consorting with criminals and gamblers and with Pirolli, of taking over the contract of boxer George Johnson without obtaining a license.

The Commission had granted a similar delay in hearing to fight manager Frank (Blinky) Palermo and one of his trainers, Jimmy Wilson. It is expected that the hearings will be held in the middle of January.

## Jim Robinson TKO's Ford

Jim Robinson TKO'd Johnny Ford of Baltimore in 35 seconds of the fourth round to win last night's featured bout at the Adelphi AC.

Ford, 162, was a late substitution for Stan Michaux, Mahway, N. J., who was examined by commission physicians and found to have the flu. Robinson, of Philadelphia, weighed 165.

In the semi-windup, Dave Galley, 191½, scored a technical knockout over J. E. Warner, 191½, in 2:59 of the first round.

In four-round preliminaries, Johnny Johnson, 167, defeated Herman Blake, 163½; Vic Diamond, 155, TKO'd Bob Lee, 131, in 1:00 seconds of the third round; Joe Melito, 136½, TKO'd McCull, 136, in 1:00 of the fourth round, and Jack Lennon, 128, and Tom Brown, 122, drew.

## Cummings Gets Decision Win

Charley Cummings, 142, won a unanimous but close decision over Cortez Jackson, 140, in the featured eight rounder on last night's Cambria fight card.

The program marked Al Lewis' debut as a fight promoter.

In the six-round semi-windup, Candy McFarland, 134, decisioned J. D. Ellis, 133.

In the four-round preliminaries, Willey Bey, 143, decisioned Tom Gibson, 139; Vic Diamond, 134, scored a first-round technical knockout victory over Curley Stewart, 131, and Tom Brown, 126, decisioned Ed Mulliner, 129.

# Taylor Reinstated, Vows Big-Time Boxing Revival

By LARRY MERCHANT  
Sports Editor

A license to promote finally in hand, Herman Taylor promised yesterday to revive big-time boxing in Philadelphia on a regular basis.

Taylor said he would promote television shows with

the International Boxing Club and/or independently.

"WE INTEND to put on shows regularly," the 70-year-old promoter said. "I'm going to New York to confer with IBC officials.

"We also want to stage

non-TV shows. Our first one may be in November."

TAYLOR SAID he had been in touch with George Katz, manager of welterweight contender Gil Turner, and Mary Stein, Sugar Hart's boss.

"We'd like to match Turner with either Vince Martinez or Tony DeMarco in a welterweight elimination bout," he said. "Hart is a good boy and we think he'd draw well here with the proper opponent."

Taylor was granted his license yesterday by the State Athletic Commission. He has promoted a fight in Philadelphia since the Julius Mederos-Harold Johnson incident in May, 1955.

Chairman James H. Crowley said that charges of alleged misconduct against Taylor could not be considered because of a ruling by the Dauphin County Court, which has jurisdiction over the Commission.

Despite the ruling, which stated that the Commission could not consider any charges of misconduct before Aug. 31, 1955 (date of the new boxing code), the Commission held hearings last summer and spring on Taylor's application.

But there was no ruling on the claim of middleweight George Johnson, of Trenton, and his Manager Donald Rettman, that Taylor had a financial interest in Johnson. Nor was there any ruling on whether Taylor "hijacked" the promising Johnson from Rettman in 1954.



EX-HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION Rocky Marciano and promoter Herman "Mugsy" Taylor frame a caricature of the champ as they chat at Palumbo's. Marciano received plaque for his contribution toward battling juvenile delinquency at dinner sponsored by the Observer, a liquor trade paper. Taylor promoted three of Marciano's fights, the last one being the title bout with Joe Walcott. No, Rocky is staying retired.

Daily News Photo by JOE AZARO

## McFarland Gains Nod Over Bibbs at Cambria

Candy McFarland, 138, Andy Love, 167, knocked pounder from West Philadelphia, hammered out an 2:21 of the first round. And eight-round decision over Ralph Stokes, 152, KOed Bernard Bibbs, 135, last, Willie Bey, 151½, in the night in the substitute feature bout at Cambria AC.

The battle was a last-minute sub for the Bobby Douglas-Julio Rhodes bout, canceled when Rhodes came down with the flu.

A PAIR of quick knockouts highlighted the preliminaries, all involving area boys.

Larry Johnson, 148, decisioned Bobby King, 144, in a four-rounder, and Rickie Johnson took a six-round decision over Herman Blake, 142, in the other contests.