



UPI ARCHIVES

OCT. 8, 1987

Reuben Sturman, the No. 1 worldwide distributor of smut...

By MYRAM
BORDERS



Add as a preferred
source on Google



Audio Coming Soon

 Instaread



Bestselling book summaries in 15-minute
text or audio segments. Enjoy Listening!



LAS VEGAS, Nev. -- Reuben Sturman, the No. 1 worldwide distributor of smut according to an attorney general report, and four associates were charged with racketeering and interstate shipment of obscene material in an eight-count federal indictment unsealed Thursday.

Glenda Perry, 44, Gerald Fields, 48, and Stanley Loeb, 51, all Las Vegas employees of the Talk of the Town Bookstore, were arrested by FBI agents Thursday and released without bail, pending an appearance in U.S. District Court Oct. 23.

U.S. District Judge Philip Pro withdrew arrest warrants for Sturman, 63, of Cleveland, Ohio, and Ralph Levine, 56, Las Vegas owner of the adult book store, when lawyer Richard Wright promised both would surrender by noon Tuesday.

Federal prosecutors are expected to seek high bail or no bail for Sturman, who has made at least 12 trips abroad since July 1985 to countries that do not have extradition treaties with the United States for tax, racketeering or pornography offenses, according to court documents.

FBI Special Agent James Weller said the indictment was based on the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations statute, and demands forfeiture of numerous businesses, real estate, peep machines, cash and automobiles -- mostly Cadillacs and Mercedes.

Ask UPI

✦✦ Ask UPI...

'Sturman is the biggest porno distributor in the country and the world,' FBI agent Roger Young said. He said studies showed pornography was a \$7 billion business in the United States.

Larry Flynt, publisher of Hustler magazine and a friend of Sturman, once was quoted in 1985 as saying 'Reuben is worth \$200 million or \$300 million.'

Young said in an affidavit filed with the court that, based on documents seized in Cleveland during a 1985 Internal Revenue Service raid, Sturman owned 50 to 60 percent of several adult bookstores in Las Vegas and Reno.

Talk of the Town bookstore in Las Vegas was used as a centralized duplication and distribution center for obscene videotapes and films, Young's affidavit said. He said films were purchased by agents and police for prices ranging from \$100 to \$200.

The material was shipped by U.S. mail, United Parcel Service and sold over the counter, the affidavit said.

Young's sworn statement said the IRS determined in 1985, following a seven-year investigation, that Sturman 'had concealed his ownership of more than 200 corporations ... and skimmed large amounts of money from the corporations and failed to pay appropriate taxes on the skim.'

Special Justice Department prosecutor Ivan Abrams of Washington, D.C., presented evidence to the Las Vegas grand jury over a period of months.

The indictment said Sturman had been in the pornography business almost 15 years as the owner or the beneficial owner of more than a half-dozen adult book stores in Las Vegas and Reno and of 'numerous other distributors and producers of obscene matter.'

'Beginning June 6, 1973, and continuing to Aug. 22, 1986, Sturman, Levine and Loeb agreed that the Town bookstore would stock and sell films and videotapes having as their subject matter humans engaged in sexual acts with animals, humans engaged in sexual acts concerning urine and feces, and humans engaged in acts of sexual sadism and sexual masochism,' the indictment said.

The indictment specifically referred to the illegal interstate mail or parcel service shipments of pornographic films -- bearing names such as: 'You said A Mouthful,' 'Animal Special,' 'Female Domination' and 'Golden Showers' -- from Las Vegas to Los Angeles and Washington, D.C.

Sturman has been charged numerous times with violating state and federal obscenity laws, but never has served time in prison.

Sturman was arrested in Los Angeles in June 1985 after being charged with underpaying his income tax by \$1,618,483 during a five-year period. He was released when he posted \$3 million bond, which later was reduced to \$100,000.

Assistant Attorney General William Weld said at a news conference in Washington that Sturman was referred to by Attorney General Edwin Meese's controversial pornography commission as the 'largest distributor of obscenity in the world,' with control of 200 corporations in the United States and abroad.

Latest Headlines
