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## Magalen Ohrstrom Bryant

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# A Hunt Country asset of the British Crown

by L. Wolfe

Until the most recent period, Magalen Ohrstrom Bryant was hardly known in her native Loudoun County, outside the exclusive circles of the Middleburg Hunt Country. To the extent that anyone had heard of her, it was either in connection with her substantial contributions to environmental causes, locally, nationally, and internationally, or because of her strange stepson, J.C. Herbert Bryant, the self-styled generalissimo of the Armored Response Group U.S. (AR-GUS), a paramilitary organization cofounded with Loudoun County Sheriff John Isom.

That has all changed, especially since 1992, when she emerged in public as the principal investor behind the Dulles Greenway, the private toll road between Leesburg and Dulles Airport (see box). But those who travel the Middleburg circuit have long been aware of the ambitious Mrs. Bryant and the power that she wields. Maggie, as she calls herself, derives her clout from the extended business connections of her family, the Ohrstroms, which go all the way into the most exclusive corridors of the City of London banking community, with linkage to the royal family itself.

### A scam artist with connections

Maggie Bryant's family standing was not always that secure.

Her father, George L. Ohrstrom, was a Wall Street investment banker who was picked up and used by the Morgan, Mellon, and Harriman interests in the 1920s. Mr. Ohrstrom's specialty was in the creation of large utilities' holding companies, whose ownership was parcelled out to the exclusive clientele of the Morgans, Harrimans, and other allied investment banks. Often, among these investors were many of the key corporate powers, as well as politicians, judges, and others, whom the investment banks held in their pockets. The interconnected webs of these investment "trusts," with their interlocking directorates, were the means of British control over the U.S. economy, which was broken, in part, by the administration of Franklin Roosevelt in the 1930s.

Ohrstrom's Utilities Holding Corp. was modest by Morgan standards, but, with the blessing of the large investment banks that provided his clients, it made him a considerable

amount of money. That money placed him in the hunt country of Fairfield County, Connecticut, where he became active in the hunt, ultimately becoming the master of the hunt there and, later, in exclusive Westchester County, New York.

When the stock market crashed, Ohrstrom, whose bank had financed the New York headquarters of the Morgan-controlled General Motors, and who had an important correspondent bank in London, was overextended. His patrons were in no position to bail him out, and, in 1931, he was allowed to go bust.

However, Ohrstrom was given a new lease on financial life when "friends" in Connecticut arranged for the Merritt Parkway to pass through his property, which was purchased at a huge markup. One of the powers at the time in Connecticut was a later close friend, Brown Brothers Harriman partner Prescott Bush, the father of George Bush; Prescott's bank partners had financed the rise to power of Adolf Hitler.

Ohrstrom suffered another major setback when the Securities and Exchange Commission pulled his license to trade securities, on grounds of fraud. This time, Prescott Bush came directly to the rescue, rehabilitating him and having him placed on the board of directors of Dresser Industries, in which he played a role in the Bush-directed reorganization.

Following World War II, Ohrstrom was used by British and British-linked investment circles, including the Harriman-Bush crowd, to take over small but strategic sections of U.S. industry. Ohrstrom focused on defense component makers, electronic parts, and, along with the Bushes, holdings in foreign and domestic oil production and reserves.

When Ohrstrom died in 1955, he left his children, George, Magalen, and Ricard, holdings in a number of companies, in an estate valued in the tens of millions of dollars. Today, the combined interests and holdings of the three children (Ricard died this year) total nearly \$500 million, as estimated by financial journals.

### In Her Majesty's Service

The two principal holdings are in two huge conglomerates, the Dover Corp. and the Carlisle Companies. Maggie has long been the largest shareholder, along with her family's foundation, the Ohrstrom Foundation, and her brothers, in both companies, and she sits on their boards of directors.

Both companies are industrial producers of strategic equipment, in which their market share makes them "choke-point" producers, critical suppliers for an interconnected web of industries. Dover, which has nearly \$3 billion in worldwide sales, ranks first in the world in production of vital equipment for oil exploration, distribution, and pumping; they are also first in the world in the production of elevators and critical valves and compressors used in nuclear submarines and the nuclear industry, generally. The Carlisle Companies is among the world's largest producers of fabricated rubber products, and is also a multihundred-million-dollar company, with numbers of subsidiaries.

The boards of directors of both companies are interlocked with two high-level financial interests associated directly with the British Crown: the Kleinwort-Benson and Robert Fleming investment banks.

Kleinwort-Benson runs the financial affairs for Prince Philip's World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). David Benson, who sits on the board of Dover, is chairman of Kleinwort Charter Investment Trust and is the former chairman of Kleinwort-Benson Group, Plc. His father, Rex Benson, one of the bank's founders, was an associate of Lord Louis Mountbatten and was assigned during World War II, by Stuart Menzies, the head of the British Secret Intelligence Services, as the military attaché of British embassy in Washington, where his assignment was to spy on and penetrate American leadership circles; among the places he frequented were the Middleburg and other hunts. Michael Devas, the former chairman of Kleinwort Charter Investment Trust, also sits on the Dover board.

Robert Fleming and his brother Ian, the author of the James Bond stories, were operatives of the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) during and after World War II. During the war, they worked under the direction of the Canadian Sir William Stephenson in spying on the United States, and in penetration of U.S. military and intelligence circles, based in both Washington and New York. Roderick Fleming, Robert's son and the international portfolio director of Robert Fleming Holdings, Ltd. and their director of corporate financing in the United Kingdom, sits on the Dover board; David Thomas, chairman of the Fleming Enterprise Investment Trust, sits on Carlisle's board.

A London-based specialist on British Intelligence and the royal family said that the presence on the Dover and Carlisle boards of such high-level British operatives indicates that the companies are assets of circles associated with the British Crown, and that the Ohrstroms are "trusted operatives"; if the latter were not the case, the specialist said, they would have been removed from any positions of responsibility.

### A place in the Hunt Country

George Ohrstrom was moved from the New York area to Loudoun's Hunt Country in the late 1940s, settling in the Middleburg area, near the Harrimans and in close proximity to the Arundels. According to a *New York Times* article on Maggie Ohrstrom Bryant, he made the move to pursue "his love of fox hunting." At the time, he was already the publisher of the prestigious horseman's journal *The Chronicle*, and with his recommendations from the Harriman interests and New York and Connecticut (as well as international) hunt circles, the family was welcomed into Loudoun's elite.

Young Maggie Ohrstrom, tutored by her father in the Hunt Country's hypercompetitive, elitist ways, sought avenues that would bring her higher in the corridors of oligarchical power. She gained the reputation for making "good"

## Maggie Bryant's private toll road scam

It is hardly surprising that when the networks associated with the Mont Pelerin Society, which promotes fascist economic policy for interests linked to the British royal family, needed someone to head a "breakthrough" privatization scheme, the first private toll road in the United States in nearly two centuries, they tapped Maggie Ohrstrom Bryant.

The 14-mile Dulles Greenway cuts a swath through the center of Loudoun County, between Dulles International Airport and the county seat in Leesburg. The Greenway opened Sept. 29, with ceremonies featuring the celebrants of the Mont Pelerin-sponsored privatization craze and with positive publicity in the national media (see *EIR*, Oct. 27). Such publicity tended to downplay the fact that the private road charges a \$1.75 toll for a one-way trip (the toll is scheduled to rise to \$2.00 on Jan. 1, 1996); there is no graduation of the toll according to distance. The tolls collected go primarily to pay off an investors' group headed by Maggie Bryant (who claims to have put up approximately \$80 million in family funds) and a banking consortium, led by the North American branch of the City of London's Barclay's Bank, as well as other creditors, including three British-linked insurance companies.

Ten years ago, there were already state plans to build a Loudoun extension of the state-run toll road then under construction, whose terminus was at Dulles Airport. In 1987, those plans were put in motion to build the road,

financial judgments—the kind that would make her huge amounts of money. Her father left her an estate estimated at about \$4 million. Through shrewd investments, and two calculated marriages, she has parlayed that "grubstake" into a fortune estimated in excess of \$230 million.

One of the most important of these calculated moves was her marriage to J.C. Herbert Bryant, from a large Southern plantation-owning family in Mississippi; his holdings included a mini-empire of farm supplies stores throughout the south (Herb Bryant Stores) and the O'Sullivan Company in Winchester, Virginia, which at one point made heels for shoes, and now ranks among the largest makers of fabricated body parts for the auto industry. Through this marriage, Maggie Ohrstrom enhanced her land holdings, both in Virginia and in Mississippi, and was reportedly able to use the Bryant wealth to finance her various environmental projects, including the creation of a wildlife preserve in Mississippi—Tara,

which was projected to have a graduated toll of about 75¢, and would have been completed by 1991, under a worst case scenario. At that point, Maggie Bryant and her privatizers got into the act. Through her connections to the corrupt George Bush apparatus, her "private toll road" scheme was pushed as a nationally prominent project by a Bush-run privatization council. She used her local connections to impose her private road on the state, getting it to drop its plans for a road, and then pass legislation that had state and local government create the "legal" basis for her project.

Under this misnamed "public-private partnership," the toll road investors were essentially able to use local and state government efforts and powers to secure their right-of-way, while state agencies "rubber stamped" their toll rates set as high as needed to "guarantee" a profit. (The tolls charged are more than double those on the existing state-run road, which generates a surplus of funds over its operating and bond expenses; if the same toll rate were charged on the New Jersey Turnpike, for example, motorists would pay \$20 for its full length, rather than approximately \$5.00 as is currently charged!)

Bryant and her privateers had claimed that their plans would keep costs down and deliver the road much sooner than the state could. According to published figures, their efforts doubled the cost of the road to more than \$326 million and delayed its projected completion by nearly five years! The privateers had added their own hefty profits into the project; while they claim that the road has been built "without taxpayer expense," taxpayers are indeed paying for it through the king's ransom tolls being charged.

### **Possibility of bankruptcy**

One of the major reasons for the delays was the inability to convince even friendly banks that the scheme was a sound investment. Maggie's management team projected that they would need approximately 30-35,000 trips daily to break even; as of this writing, motorists are refusing to pay the high tolls, as sources report that daily weekday trips are averaging "well below" 10,000, and on weekends, far less. (When the road first opened, it had three days without tolls; there were only 20,000 trips on those "free" rides.) If these trends continue, and there is no reason to assume that they won't, the Greenway will quickly exhaust its \$40 million revolving credit line, and a bankruptcy would be possible. According to state law, the Commonwealth of Virginia is prohibited from assuming the road's debt.

But the Greenway was intended by the Mont Pelerin crowd to plow a path for future and even larger privatization schemes, including the privatization of the interstate highway system. They are not about to admit the failure. Maggie's privateers have already made a proposal to take over the management of the state-run toll road and are salivating over the possibility of constructing a portion of a new "Outer Beltway" around Washington, D.C. And the Greenway itself continues to get free promotional publicity. On Nov. 26, Maggie Bryant appeared on the CBS Evening News, proclaiming the success of her venture. Showing her lack of touch with reality (and her faulty math), when asked if the tolls weren't a bit high, she proclaimed that she didn't think so, that they were "only" 10¢ a mile. It is for such reasons that her road has been renamed by some locals, the "Greedway."

named for the Bryant family estate.

The Ohrstrom wealth, as well as Maggie's own personal organizing capacities, have been deployed on behalf of British policy interests to create and manage a web of environmentalist organizations and funding conduits which are interfaced with the House of Windsor's international environmentalist-terrorist operations network and its World Wide Fund for Nature. Maggie Bryant currently is chairman of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, which has an annual budget of more than \$27 million, much of it for projects which interface with the WWF.

### **The intelligence connection**

Like Arthur Arundel, Maggie Bryant and her brothers have been identified as funding conduits for selected projects of the British-controlled elements of U.S. intelligence, associated with George Bush, the son of George Ohrstrom's pa-

tron Prescott Bush. That included the funding of Lt. Col. Oliver North's gun- and drug-running operations, and, along with another British-connected family front, the Hanes (hosiery and underwear) interests, with connections to the same Wall Street circles as the Ohrstroms, the aforementioned private army, ARGUS.

Much of the funding is accomplished through the Ohrstrom Foundation, Inc., which had assets valued at \$27 million in 1992; the family also controls two smaller foundations, the Catesby Foundation and the Little River Foundation.

It was the Ohrstrom Foundation which poured funds into Prodemca in 1986, one of Ollie North's "support" groups for his Contra operations. It also funds the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), an Anglo-American private intelligence operation, in which Maggie's close friend Arthur "Nicky" Arundel plays a prominent role and which has recently been

## Bryant's GETF pushes environmental sabotage

In late 1988, while he was still playing a major role in the ARGUS operation, Magalen Ohrstrom Bryant tapped National Security staffer Tom Harvey to head a new off-line intelligence "asteroid" that she was creating: the Global Environmental and Technology Foundation (GETF). The organization's profile places it among the extended network of Prince Philip's World Wide Fund for Nature (with which it works), in imposing environmental policies in order to destroy national economies.

According to its brochures, the GETF has inserted itself into international leadership in the transfer of "environmental technology." However, its major areas of focus appear to target the defense-related industry of the former Warsaw Pact nations. It has programs in the "newly independent states of the former Soviet Union, Central and Eastern Europe, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East." It works directly with the U.S. Department of Defense to implement a program "that made all DOD commanders responsible for environmental stewardship."

Meanwhile, representatives of GETF's Annandale, Virginia office have visited some of the most highly classified weapons labs and production facilities of the former Soviet Union. There are unconfirmed reports that GETF personnel are targeting Russia's military-industrial complex (MIC) scientific cadre, utilizing information drawn from U.S. intelligence profiles of the Soviet Union's weapons labs and production facilities.

At a November 1995 GETF conference in Washington, D.C., entitled "Environmental Opportunities in Central and Eastern Europe and the New Independent States," Harvey's teams, heavily funded by the Department of Energy, outlined their goal to corrupt Russia's remaining MIC core cadre to ensure that Russia's industrial-scientific potential would be bound into an environmental strait-jacket.

Speaker after speaker let the cat out of the bag, that the biggest "contribution" to Russia's environment, was to shut down its industry.

Harvey appears to have been chosen for his job with GETF, in which he holds the title of "chairman of the board, CEO, and founder," because of his past work with his good friend Richard Armitage, who headed up the Bush administration programs to assist Russia in "converting" its MIC.

Other GETF directors have all the characteristics of a "hit team" in environmental sabotage:

GETF President Stephen R. Wassersug is a former Environmental Protection Agency bureaucrat who headed the Budapest, Hungary Regional Environmental Center after President Bush's visit there in 1989; GETF Vice President Warren Philips is a behavioral psychology man, and author of a 1983 tome, *Crisis Warning: The Perception Behavior Interface*; director Robert Leroy Herbst is the Washington representative of the Tennessee Valley Authority who, in 1977-81, was Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, a key position within the environmentalist mafia. Herbst is reported to be a close friend of fellow board member Magalen Ohrstrom Bryant.

Director Henry J. Hatch, chairman of the Law Companies Group Inc., was the former head the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Hatch imposed on the Corps the ideas of "relevant engineering and sustainable development." In 1988, the Law Companies Group, an environmental engineering consultancy, absorbed Britain's Sir Alexander Gibb & Partners. Sir Gibb was a leading figure in British Intelligence's Arab Bureau, whose company helped build the military and port infrastructure needs of the Empire in the Middle East.

According to London sources, Ohrstrom Bryant played a key role in choosing the board members of her "asteroid"; she demanded that Hatch be brought "on board" GETF, and asked Harvey to accomplish that task.

involved in helping foment British-sponsored genocide in Rwanda (see previous article).

Meanwhile, the Catesby Foundation funded the Afghan Relief Committee, an intelligence project run from the offices of John Train, a New York-based private investment banker who handles the portfolios for some of the wealthiest American families, including the Mellons. In the 1980s, ARC provided the seed money to Afghan mujahideen and their support apparatus then fighting the Soviets; that apparatus has provided the basis for a new terrorist international being deployed by the British to destabilize South Asian and other

countries.

The Catesby Foundation also provides funding for Greenpeace, a British-controlled sponsor of environmental terrorist actions. Sources in London report that Maggie Bryant is currently lobbying to have herself placed on the international board of directors of Greenpeace, "for services rendered."

Ohrstrom family foundations also fund the Manhattan Institute for Policy Studies and the Heritage Foundation, two premier think-tanks promoting British "free market" economics and "privatization" schemes.