

UNDER THE TABLE:

Dirty Deals in American History

BY ADAM ROSEN

THE BANKER WHOSE GREED INSPIRED A FEDERAL AGENCY

About five weeks before the stock market crash of 1929, Albert H. Wiggin, the president of Chase National Bank, knew his company's stock was about to take a nosedive. Not the type of captain to go down with his ship, Wiggin sold 42,000 of his shares. Although legal at the time, the massive dumping went a long way to making Chase collapse, and by early December Wiggin had made \$4 million off his own company's misfortune. Spurred by Wiggin's actions and shameless greed, the federal government formed the Securities and Exchange Commission in 1934.

WHEN ALL THE VOTES DON'T COUNT

The 1876 presidential election between New York Democrat Samuel J. Tilden and Ohio Republican Rutherford B. Hayes has been called the "final battle of the Civil War," yet it was the South that emerged victorious. The day after the election, Tilden had won 184 electoral votes and Hayes only 165. But 20 votes from three notoriously corrupt states—Louisiana, South Carolina, and Florida—remained up in the air. Tilden



needed just one vote to win, while Hayes needed all 20. Congress appointed a commission to decide the election, and in a series of backroom deals, they gave all the votes to Hayes. Why? Southern Democrats wanted federal soldiers out of the South, where the troops had been safeguarding the rights of freed slaves. The Democrats agreed to give the presidency to Hayes, a Republican, if he agreed to pull out the soldiers. When Hayes became president, Reconstruction ended, and Jim Crow laws began.



1931 ✦ 12 ANGRIER MEN

Just before his criminal trial begins, typically stoic mobster Al Capone looks on, stunned, as the jury before him is swapped with a jury from another part of the courthouse. Because the mob boss' men don't have time to intimidate and bribe the new jurors, Capone is convicted and sent to Alcatraz.

1962 ✦ JACKED FM

Famed radio DJ Alan Freed, who is widely credited with coining the term "rock 'n' roll," admits in court to accepting money in exchange for playing certain songs on his program. Freed becomes the face of a payola scandal, which shakes the music world. He starts drinking heavily and dies from liver disease three years later.

2002 ✦ FROM RUSSIA, WITH LOVE

Controversy erupts at the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City when a pair of Russian figure skaters wins the gold medal instead of the obviously superior Canadian duo. The decision to give Russia the gold comes down to one vote, which is cast by the judge from France. Later, in the ice-dancing competition, the vote of a Russian judge helps the French win the event, and the Russo-French alliance is exposed.

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