Variations On a Theme About Russo

My doubts about Perry Russo are in Oswald in New Orleans, explicit enough for Sal Panzeca to have understood, which led him to tell me he had much on Russo they didn't use, deeming it not necessary. Nobody ever paid attention to it and when I called it to Garrison's attention, it is now apparent he also did nothing. The clue was in his having an "Oswald" handbill at his Baton Rouge home when a sportswriter was there from N.O. I questioned him about this a number of times, never getting anything satisfactory back. He admitted he must have been at one of the distributions but claimed he had no recollection of it. If he had been and saved, he'd recall, so he could be lying. It is also possible that someone gave it to him, something he'd also remember, Oswald having soon enough become a celebrity and not long thereafter the corpse of an infamy. As soon as I had a chance to do a little superficial looking around I was full of them most serious doubts about him and one of the possibilities that occurred is that he was some kind of plant. Now I digress. To get to the point.

Recently I've pointed out a number of parallels between Farewell America and a coming book attributed to and ghosted for on Jose Luis Romero. Both have this in common: a built-in self-destruct. Neither can stand the most superficial analysis.

Exactly the same was true of Russo. My doubts preceeded my first trip to N.O.

If Russo was a plant, it was by someone who knew and understood Garrison very well. It is also possible that Russo was off on his own kick and was of the kind that Garrison would just go for. At every point, there is a special touch with the Russo story that I think is a bit to sophisticated for him. Also in O in NO is the impossibility that the man he claims to have seen at Ferrie's was Oswald. He claims not to have known him at the time of the assassination but that he was introduced as "Leon", exactly what Odio said, a bit too much. One could go through all of his story this way and in each segment there is something like it, a rich sense of humor indulging itself. Even picking Sandra Moffitt to have been his companion that night. When she bore him a bastard, their relationship could not be doubted, and with that and her criminal record for prostitution it could be assumed she'd make no real waves.

This is the case with Farewell America, perhaps the most glaring example being the one-page description of the assassination, pure Garrison, from those who claim they were in contact with one of the assassins in Mexico. So long a book, a first-person source and so little on the crime? And that little, as with Russo's story, exactly what Garrison wanted to hear? Another is the gently-exaggerated flattery about Mark Lane's work in a footnote. Another is the incredible size of the alleged conspiracy, with an elaborate structure for no purpose, all for no purpose and allless than amateurish.

These things find their duplications in my earlier memos on Romero, from interviews.

Or, the pattern is the same. Each had a special-purpose timing, and that of Romero remains unclear. Watergate is one possibility.

There is a possible unity purpose if one asks, "cui bono"? All can be said to serve intelligence interests.

Russo has long been out of my thinking. This returned to mind on reading Dymond's cross-examination of Russo in Kirkwood.

Earlier, I found myself wondering what there is not yet exposed about the operation of which Watergate was part. There is close to $10,000,000 in unexplained funds. They seem not to have been spent in normal campaign costs and I don t assume they were used for bribery. So, for what purpose rae they used or have they been used? With the Wash Post the only paper with substantial interest, and with it seeming to be supplied often enough with more than sufficient in leaks that have to come from official sources, the prospectes for real digging on this story are not good, and there is much yet to be done on it.

HM 2/15/73