

OSWALD AS CUBAN REFUGEE AGENT; NEW ORLEANS

Statements of Witnesses - Carlos BRINGUIER
Deposition 2

10 H 32-51

Unlike the other depositions I have thus far read which are precisely dated and give the hour of the beginning of the deposition, this one is marked as "taken on April 7-8, 1964 ...". There is no point in the deposition indicating the end of one session or the beginning of the other. There are many, many points at which off-the-record discussions are indicated.

Although he was trained as a lawyer and is a member of the Cuban bar, the appearance of Mr. Bringuiere is a mixture of speculation, gossip, rumor, conjecture, fantastic theories, and political propaganda, combined with the revelation of probably accurate information not in the interest of the United States Government or its foreign policy.

After identifying himself, giving his education, establishing himself as a member of the Havana bar, and presently an immigrant rather than a refugee in the United States, Bringuiere avoids any reference to his connection with the Castro government which ended when he left Havana on May 4, 1960. Mr. Liebler is likewise accommodating, avoiding any reference to Bringuiere's earlier Castro connections. He was assistant secretary for the criminals court in Havana.

His present occupation is identified as "a salesman and manager" of a store called "Casa Roca," 107 Decatur Street, New Orleans. (p.33)

Actually, as is revealed in the depositions of some of the other New Orleans Cubans, especially the Penas and Rodriguez, and as Bringuiere himself inadvertently admits on p.36, he is a partner in this business with his brother-in-law, Orlando Peliaz.

On the testimony of the others and from his own statements in this deposition, Bringuiere appears to have excellent contacts with the

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FBI, AND, by inference at least, with the Secret Service and the New Orleans police.

He identifies himself as active in the anti-Castro movement in New Orleans, where he first came Feb. 18, 1961, having been New Orleans delegate of the Cuban Revolutionary Council and beginning in June 1962 he was "designated New Orleans delagate of the Cuban Student Directorate and I am in that position from that time to now."

His testimony of this New organization, the Student Directorate, parallels the information adduced by the Commission about Oswald's "Fair Play for Cuba Committee". Each was a one-man outfit.

Bringuier said that on Aug/ 24, 1962, his organization carried "on a shelling of Havana." Two days later Bringuier was interviewed by Warren C. de Brueys, an FBI agent, who said that the FBI was gong to infiltrate Bringuier's group.

Fro this reason, Bringuier says, when Oswald approached him a year later, he assumed Oswald was going to infiltrate the organization he had already described as having only member, himself. (p.34)

Another of Bringuier's undiplomatic revelations had to do with the existence of a military training camp for anti-Castro Cubans near New Orleans. When it was exposed, Bringuier again was suspicious of the activities of a Castro agent. This exposure, he dated as Aug. 2, 1963, three days before Oswald came to see Bringuier. The camp, he said, belonged to the "Christian Democrratic Movement", which he identified as an anti-Castro organization.

Oswald, he said, represented himself as anti-Castro and anti-Communist. (p.35) Oswald asked for and got anti-Castro literature in English, told Bringuier of his Marine Corps training, including in guerrilla warfare, "and that he was willing to train Cubans to fight

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against Castro. Even more, he told me/^{that} he was willing to to himself to fight against Castro." Bringuier said that he turned down the offer on the ground that he had nothing to do with military activity and his function in New Orleans was purely propaganda. Despite his alleged suspicion of Oswald, he admitted the conversation lasted about an hour and thereafter Oswald had an additional lengthy conversation with Bringuier's brother-in-law (p.36) who believed Oswald was "really a smart person and really interested in the fight against Communism ...". The following day Oswald returned to the store with his Marine handbook which he left for Bringuier. Three days later Bringuier heard of the first of Oswald's several literature distribution forays in downtown New Orleans, sought him out with cohorts and signs, and didn't find him.

Thereafter, he did find him, Bringuier created a scene by his own statements, while Oswald was allegedly engaged in the peaceful distribution of literature. (p.37) When Bringuier menaced him, Oswald folded his arms in front of him and, according to Bringuier, said, "O.K. Carlos, if you want to hit me, hit me."

If there was a fight, as I believe is indicated elsewhere in these volumes, it is not indicated in Bringuier's deposition. They were ultimately both arrested and fingerprinted. Bringuier complained about having to post \$25 bond, as did two colleagues arrested with him, while having heard that Oswald didn't have to put up bond, "that somebody went to the First District" and made an affidavit for Oswald. There is no questioning and no interest in this "somebody". When they appeared in court, Bringuier, who had done what little was done, pleaded not guilty, and Oswald, who had done nothing, pleaded guilty. (p.38). Oswald was fined \$10 and Bringuier and his cohorts were released.

Again there is reference to the mysterious Latin Americans with

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Oswald in New Orleans with Bringuier insisting the Secret Service - he doesn't say when or who - showed him pictures seeking his aid in identifying them. (p.39) Discussion of these mysterious Latins continues for several pages.

Whereas Oswald/^{'s}first literature distribution was signed with the name Hidell, the material distributed August 16 bore his own name and address. So Bringuier sent an agent to infiltrate Oswald. Bringuier presented the Commission with an application obtained from Oswald (p.41). After this foray, Bringuier reported Oswald and his alleged activities to "Edward Butler" of the "Information Council of the Americas" (p.42)

Bringuier offers various newspapers, including Cuban refugee journals (p.43) as a modern version of the Gospel of St. John. He regularly offers for the record and has accepted quite a bit of this kind of clutter, including all sorts of rumor and speculation about Oswald in Mexico, Oswald in Cuba, and things of that sort. He also reveals interference with the United States mail by Cuban refugee organizations - he is careful to specify his own was not involved. (p.44) He finally gets to the point that Liebeler, who has been allowing Bringuier pretty much to conduct his own examination as he himself says at the end of the deposition, was compelled to say, "Now it doesn't seem likely, does it, that Oswald would go around handing out literature in the streets like he did if he was actually attempting to infiltrate the anti-Castro movement?" which is only painfully obvious. The only thing that makes sense out of this whole thing is that Oswald was carefully establishing himself as a mover under which he might hope to be able to enter Cuba. Bringuier knows of no connection between Oswald and any ~~the~~ pro-Castro people or groups.

He is aware of the entire lemonade incident with Oswald and the

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Pena bar. (p.45) And he goes out of his way to say that Rodriguez is a straightforward man not given to deception. He then introduces an article from "Bohemia International", another gospel, quoting Castro on Oswald's "first" trip to Cuba. This nonsense continues for several more pages, mixed up with the incident at the Pena bar (p.46-9).

Liebeler's quote, referred to previously, is "You have done most of othe testifying without my help and you have done very well."

Bringuier makes this exceedingly interesting observation about the FBI, and it is presumed that he did not know Oswald had demanded that the FBI visit him when arrested. He said the FBI "interviewed Oswald, but not in front of me. They were talking to him in front of me, but when they were ready to interview Oswald, they moved to other place to interview him." He also complained the FBI thought he and his colleagues might be pre-Castro or Communist. (p.50)

The only possible meaning all of this can have is that Oswald was connected with some group or organization on whose behalf he was establishing a cover that might provide an entree to Cuba. This became so clear that even Liebeler in his own left-handed way acknowledged it on the record. It may be possible Bringuier believed the contrary. It is just as likely that Bringuier knew exactly what was up and was himself dissembling.

His one-man organization is no less suspect ^{than} ~~than~~ Oswald's.