

12/17/69

Dear Dick (cc Gary),

Two things are of special interest in the last part of your Dempsey interview:

"Larry Laborde. Dempsey says that Larry Laborde was working for the CIA. He indicated that Laborde was a 'big mouth' and a braggart. He said that Laborde was a friend of Bob Brown"; and the noted added to the top picture, "Cuban who went to CIA. Got wages from CIA".

Laborde probably arranged for one of the LA. camps, Hemming told me he saw Laborde for this purpose in, I think, mid-1962, Hall told me he went to see Laborde (maybe Gus, not Larry, I'm not now sure) with Hemming, and they did fly over the north shore scouting for a spot. There is more, but this is perhaps enough to indicate the possible importance of what you report. If he did not give you more detail, it would be good to try and get it, if he has it, especially how he came to know Laborde, proof that L "was working for the CIA", who for, for what purpose(s), what capacity, etc. Anything and everything.

From the electrostatic copy, I cannot identify the top picture. Is it one I got from Howard? Or is it of a later period, as the presence of the CBS men would seem to indicate, as of his Masferrer connections, which followed his Hemming period, I would suspect.

Under "Talk of killing Kennedy" you quote him on what was said in his group after it happened. I again presume this was Masferrer's. But this need not be so, for there may have been remnants of other groups extant. The time the Hall/Howard/Hemming operation ended is unclear.

His description of the way they lived is consistent with what Hall and Howard told me.

I agree with your concluding note and will make no redistribution of any of the memos.

Nothing new.

Best,

CIA influence

Dempsey said that the CIA exerted its influence chiefly through the financing of some, but not all, of the para-military groups that he knew about. Groups not supported by CIA sought funds from private sources who apparently were not connected with the government.

Dempsey said that his own group had no CIA help, but depended heavily on the persuasive talents of people like Jerry Patrick who would solicit funds at lectures and through personal contacts.

He said that groups supported by CIA generally were better off financially than other groups, and did not have to worry about satisfying their basic needs.

Dempsey said that his own group was often so seriously in need of funds that they had trouble not only in securing the military equipment that they wanted, but also in getting food, smokes, and the like. He said that financing was a constant problem for his group, and that funds would be available in an irregular series of windfalls rather than in a steady stream of low-level financing. Members of the group often had to resort to hunting and fishing merely to provide food.

Larry Laborde

Dempsey said that Larry Laborde was working for the CIA. He indicated that Laborde was a "big-mouth" and a braggart. He said Laborde was a friend of Bob Brown.

Talk of killing Kennedy

Dempsey said that he knew of no meetings, bull-sessions, or the like at which the prospect of killing JFK was seriously considered. He said that members of the group generally disliked JFK and that none were grieved to hear that he had been killed, but he had no reason to believe that anyone whom he knew might have been involved in the killing. He said that one or two persons may have expressed a desire to kill Kennedy, but he did not regard these as serious proposals. (This sounds like shades of David Ferrie's "colloquial expression") Dempsey asserted that if such proposals were made, he had no reason to think that they were made with the intent of inciting interest in activating ~~the~~ the proposal.

In discussing the assassination after it occurred, some of these engaged in the discussion scorned the suggestion that communists were behind the killing. Dempsey said that many felt JFK knowingly or unknowingly was acting in the communists' interests, and that they had nothing to gain by killing him, and everything to lose.

Motives of individuals in Dempsey's group

Dempsey said that the Cubans in his group were moved by the personal injury that they had suffered at Castro's hands and by virulent anti-communism, although the anti-communism originated chiefly in their hatred of Castro.

Dempsey said that the motives of the Americans were mixed. All were Right Wing and anti-communist, and felt that they were serving American interests well by actively engaging in moves to overthrow, or at least to harrass, Castro. He felt that on a personal level many of them merely craved the excitement of warfare, the adventure of dangerous situations, and used their anti-communism as a pretext for satisfying their need for adventure.

Although he is a Canadian, Dempsey feels a sense of loyalty to the United States because he feels that the U.S. is the only nation that is successfully acting to thwart communist causes. He went to Florida with the intent of joining a para-military group that was acting against Castro, although at the time he had no ~~specific prospects~~ prospect of joining a specific group.

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This is the end of my report on the interview with Dempsey. I may send you further notes ~~xxx~~ later, however, since I hope to ~~not~~ stay in touch with Dempsey and eventually to speak with him again.

I have no objection to this report being read by others, but I would prefer that you not spread it widely, and that you be especially careful not to disclose any part of it that may embarrass Dempsey to a degree that would cause him to withdraw his trust in my word. He knows that I planned to distribute his information to others, and did not specifically request me to keep these matters confidential. Nevertheless I think that a reasonable amount of discretion is advisable.

If you have questions or can suggest further matters for me to probe with Dempsey in the future, please tell me.

Dick Bernabei

