

11/29/69

Dick's Dempsey interview (5)

For the most part I think what Dempsey said can be taken at face value and I agree with it. On the Hall part, he perhaps failed in not indicating Hall is far right and believes that stuff. He is all the things said, but more. I'd go so far as to say he often cannot distinguish between fact and his fabrications.

Dempsey's idea of a "likeable person", as applied to Seymour, might not conform to our standards. But again, I think aside from special twists such characters have, think it incomplete to ignore ideological persuasion.

Patrick is a more complex character, but as he is more intelligent and talented than the others, that is more a measure of their lack of both rather than his possession, or of the company in which Dempsey travels. It seems rather generous to evaluate him as not "worthy if implicit trust". My is the real question. To say his statements "should be regarded with caution" is, I suggest, an understatement. He is a much smoother liar than Hall but no less possessed of the predisposition.

I would wonder why anyone from the United States had to have been involved in the Trujillo killing - in either they planning or execution. I'd also believe this and CIA backing mutually contradictory, in the existing circumstances. Frankly, I see no reason for the CIA to want him dead. Or any of the US military or State. He was a bastard, but he was our bastard. He did our dirty work for us (example: Arbenz overthrow). He was a certain UN vote our way. I'm beginning to wonder how far to the right Dempsey is.

Fiorina: why should the Mafia recruit anti-Castro forces?

Despite these comments, Dempsey seems like the most reasonable and rational of that crew, and his appraisals of Hall and Hemming are basically correct.

Perhaps this will explain his comment on Hall as with Castro: Hall was with him until hexwon, when Hall was tossed in jail, no doubt one of Castro's wiser earlier decisions.

One of the things that he might have heard I assume he did not from your not mentioning it: any mention of Odie or visits to her or anyone else in Dallas. I do not assume all the FBI reports say of Hall are wrong and some of the ignored is fascinating. It relates to various people as possibilities, as with the boat, Yates. I also assume he knew nothing of the busts, including Hall's with the rifles and medicines, if this is what they were. If you can write him, it might be worth asking him about any bragging Hall did about his foraging, or his bitching. I have Hall's end of it, or some of it. And he is right saying Hall has been swallowed up. I think that would not discourage D's recollections. If we knew the right questions to ask him, he might have some interesting answers about Hall and his connections. Did he ever mention "the professor" or Johnny Alba? Did he indicate a date on which they recognized changed official attitudes toward them? Or their relations, if any, with any of the exiles or their groups? Anything about October 1963 trip(s) to Guatemala?

Loran Hall

Dempsey said that he does not know the present whereabouts of Larry Hall. He described Hall as a "wheeler-dealer", not reliable either in the things he does or in the things he says. Without citing specific examples, Dempsey claimed that Hall was liable to lie for any of a number of reasons, including money and the desire to draw attention to himself and to magnify his own importance. Dempsey said that Hall did not spend much time in the Key area. He asserted further that Hall was "involved with Fidel". I took this to refer to the time before Castro publicly went communist, for Dempsey did not imply that Hall was a Castro agent.

William Seymour

Dempsey knew Seymour well, and described him as a quiet and likable person. Dempsey had little to say about Seymour. He knew from the Warren Report or from some other form of public disclosure that Seymour had been linked with the assassination, but otherwise he knew nothing that connects Seymour with the assassination.

Jerry Patrick

Dempsey advised that Patrick's statements on any matter should be regarded with caution. He said he would trust Patrick somewhat more than he would trust Hall, but nevertheless thought it likely that Patrick would stretch a short story a long way. Dempsey admired Patrick greatly for his talent and intelligence, and for his strenuous efforts in anti-Castro causes, but generally he did not consider Patrick worthy of implicit trust. He thought that Patrick, too, could be influenced easily by money and by attention.

Dempsey said that Patrick was cast out of Cuba by Castro.

Assassination of Trujillo (Dominican Republic)

Dempsey said that two Americans "from No. Carolina" were among the group who assassinated Trujillo. He believes that the killing was done with CIA backing. He did not know details of this incident.

Frank Fiorini

Dempsey knew of Fiorini as a recruiter for anti-Castro personnel, chiefly in Miami. He knew of no connection between Fiorina and the Mafia.

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