

Add on Shaw Civil Suit-Confidential; International Trade Mart; Warren deBruceys Jr, IR only

I should have included in last night's memo what I did with this new information on rental of space in the new ITC Building and a few other things about the old and the new.

My source on most that does not come from documents and interviews with other was Jesse Core, who became a friend. The Monday before Thanksgiving last year, 1971, he took me to a great lunch at the Commander's Palace in the Garden Section. I rarely get drunk any more, never when working, but I can keep drinking. I am not boasting when I say I stayed with him, round for round. I think Jesse wanted to relax or may have had a head start. We were both glad to see each other, both getting to the restaurant early, although he was in the middle of a campaign and had several clients. He had been advertising and per. manager for Garrison's first campaign. There was a pleasant intrusion that ended confidential conversation, a friend of Jesse's, a real movie character Charlie Gresham, came in with a woman who was alumnae chairman for the coming bowl game. Charlie was a friend of Meyer Lansky's, although from a fine family, the apparent source of his apparent wealth. Charlie lubricated to the point where he'd talk only personal things about Lansky. They had a business relationship.

This color stuff is not so much for use in AO as for reminding me of mood.

Aside: besides this from-the-top invite to the bowl game New Years Day I had another, from Gut Johnson. Bud had asked me to try to arrange certain things with Guy. It was not easy because he a) is an alcoholic and b) was separated from his wife, who would not say so and thus ran my--- off needlessly- I kept calling all weekend and didn't latch onto him until the last minute, just as I was leaving town for Dallas. Guy would set up a meeting between himself, Bud and me and Raoul Esquevil. Ed chilled immediately, I think from fear, and we never went back, although what he wanted was arranged.

Background: I had met Sal Panzeca in earlier years. Moo introduced us. He then expressed an interest in talking to me. The Friday before this, or the Friday before Thanksgiving 1971, I was in the Da's office for some purpose when Sal came in. We spoke briefly. I asked if he still wanted to talk to me and he said he did. I said fine because there was something about which I wanted to talk to him. He said he had just come back from abroad (he later told me he prefers these many overseas chores for his firm and seeks them out), so would I keep after him at home. He'd break away the first minute he had free, we had a tentative arrangement for Sunday I had to break when Moo told me belatedly his wife expected me for Sunday dinner and had arranged a big one, in the Italian way. Having done all the things planned except seeing Jesse (there are always things that can be improvised there) the last time I spoke to Sal over the weekend we set a meeting for late afternoon Monday. I had a rental car, so the driving around was no ~~problem~~ problem. It was close to 5 by the time I left Jesse and Co. and got to Sal's office. He had an unexpected client, would I come back in a half-hour or so? I walked over to Jean Andrews' office, and it isn't possible to leave him in a half hour. I got back to Sal's when the building was closed and security on. However, I found an elevator operator who remembered taking a client up after closing and not bringing him down, so Sal still had to be there. I went up, getting there as he and the client were leaving. We spoke for about an hour. About many things, like all he had on Russo he felt he didn't have to use, how he got into the case, and the seriousness of their civil suit. I told him I hoped they'd drop it because Shaw had committed perjury with which he had not been charged, that my interest was not Garrison, from whom we both knew there was no chance of collecting, and he should bear in mind that in a civil suit, for damages, much was relevant that is not in a criminal proceeding, and his client might come out hurt much worse than he could be said to have been by the criminal case. Sal insisted he was serious, and I had and have no trouble believing it. He tried to pump me for what I knew. I told him I had not told Garrison and would not tell him. Finally, without telling him any details, I did tell him that saying Cobb was so sorry that Salw insisted on quitting was false, that Cobb, personally, fired Shaw, that there were other than the existing personal reason, and that this addressed Shaw's alibi and I felt was in itself perjurious. When I would not tell him more and he was already an hour late for supper and wasn't home, we broke up when he called his wife. I know I did a memo on this, presume it had more details, although I probably did it on the plane to Dallas. Sla left no doubt that he, personally, yearns to get Garrison, for personal reasons, a no less personal insult from JC to him, the reason he was in the case in which he did all the real work. He didn't want to be at first.

Esis, by the way, is so typical of that leading Garrison that have no trouble believing it. Sal's anger, in repeating the story after so long an interval, left no doubt about his sincerity. He is a very small man. Jim's insult had to do with his size and was racist, calling him "dago" or "wop". That part I know is in the note I made, verbatim.

So, in my mind, an element of mystery remains: why does Sal and this prestigious firm insist in going through with a suit in which they do not have real expectation of a major recovery? Sal said their expenses and costs were enormous, much more than they were repaid, and they want to recover. I don't believe this explains it. The possibility of serving another interest was and remains in my mind. Which leads to the ITM.

That was on the boat of Warren C. deBruyts. He covered it as regularly as a reporter touches base with regulars on his boat. There was an additional reason. Shaw and the normal work of the ITM brought in a wide assortment of foreign dignitaries who were overloaded with enemies, like Samosa. Thus there were legitimate security concerns the FBI had. Jesse met with deBruyts on such things often, knew him personally, and regarded him as a friend. Aside: he was always baffled that deB has so little interest, took so long in coming, when he phoned to leave word that he had the leaflet Oswald was using. I do have a memo of that and a xerox of the original from Jesse. Plus other details. Further aside: Jesse was in the original WDSU footage. He reviewed it with Ed Planer as soon as Oswald was mentioned and it was still there, not an outtake. Ed Planer confirmed it by phone the day after I saw Jesse, Tuesday morning, before I met Guy.

How I learned things about deBruyts by just working, bumping into it. For one thing, the lawyer Zell arranged to defend the spurious Bringuier suits had been a law-school classmate. So, deB was a local boy on long-time local assignment, a reasonable situation. Also, something that did not emerge in the hearings, he was fluent in Spanish. If to this and other things for which I do not now have time are added what is in COUP, there is an explanation of why deB, of all the agents the FBI had available, was shipped to Dallas immediately to do the correlating, which we know with certainty was really filtering. He was an ideal man to remain in N.O. for that job, and any competent agent could have done his Dallas job, if the intent was a straight job. deB had the special knowledge for filtering. I believe that had he remained in N.O., some of the really fine leads in those reports would not exist. A similar conditions does not exist in Dallas, where he did his job rather well, considering the bulk of what he handled.

Shaw gave free space in the oldITM to a CIA outfit, a Cuban one, the name of which the incompetents in Garrison's office never got in the trial record. It is in the grand-jury transcripts, taken from Josephine Hug. I think there is indefinite reference to it in her trial testimony, which I do not have in transcript. Now William George Gaudet, who immediately fingered Ruby to the N.O. FBI, ran the Latin American Reports as it could not afford to be run from a three-room suite in the ITM. Gaudet was CIA, as was his IAR. Shaw's explanation of why LHO picketed the ITM was the presence of the Cuban consulate there. There was none, so his explanation makes no sense. But good old JO let it stand, unchallenged. I believe LHO had been told here to picket. Hearing on this he had numbers not listed in his book, including relating to this. Alice Vera Rotman's not at WDSU and not in Rotman's name. It was not a haphazard thing. And deB covered that building. He was also yanked from N.O. I do not know the date, but right after my grand jury appearance, which was I think 4/18/67, he was in Washington and did not return to N.O. for the duration. For some reason it was decided that he was more touchy than the other key agents whose name does not ~~come~~ come to mind immediately, the one who "investigated" Shaw, who was allowed to remain in N.O. and assert privilege.

If all of this is put together, it can be made to add up to CIA. Why this is risked in a Civil suit when Garrison alleged and failed to prove it in a criminal action, I can't figure. With Shaw's character the key thing in the amount of damages, there is nothing relating to his suit that is not admissible. I don't really think this suit is designed or intended for Shaw's benefit. I think he has been talked into believing that it is his chance for full vindication and recouping his financial losses. He must be out much, despite the help he got. I also think Sal would consider that Tom Bethell knew all there was to know about Shaw in Garrison's files or knowledge, and this would be untrue. I could go to N.O. and without too much trouble, with help and some financing, make a strong case for Shaw's being Clay Bertrand even if it were not true. The other agent is Regis Kennedy. One of the unfollowed leads is the barkeep Trumbach who knew a Clay Bertrand and described a man like Shaw! That is where the investigation ended. The FBI did investigate Shaw.