

8/7/61

Dear Lou,

Because you have been silent, I also have been, assuming that the thoughts that occurred to me are either invalid, as you people, who are closer and know more see it, or you just don't care. Whatever the reason, ~~xx~~ I sure as hell am getting too tired and remain too busy to waste time. However, I have read the affidavits, have reached my own conclusions and estimates, and I think I am more detached than any of you are or can be. Which is not why I write.

From time to time I have been baffled at things you(plural) do. I have just been sent a copy of the States 7/28 story saying you have dropped the charges against Sheridan and Townley. In the one case of which I have personal knowledge, no, two, there is no doubt of the attempt at bribery. And while this attempt was being made, there was the only tangible evidence of a federal connection, something other than somebody's belief that there had to be such intervention. So, the federals go after Jim and as soon as a federal grand-jury is convened the possibility of a case against the federal people is dropped?

I wish I could make sense out of this, or the published explanation, that there now is no case against Shaw. Is bribery or attempted bribery not a crime separate from Shaw? Is it less a crime when attempted by a man who simultaneously serves other federal purposes? Townley is minor in this, but is Sheridan? Is it possible you (plural) didn't know what Sheridan was doing simultaneously in Baton Rouge? Certainly Moo did, because one day when he and I were in your office, Sargent Pitcher phoned you. You were not there. Moo spoke to him and then put me on the phone because this was right after my all-night taped interview with John George (now tell me that this tape is missing, too!).

Obviously, the Hoffa/Partin case involved Sheridan, the same kind of deal. Sheridan remained the ramrod after Bobby was no longer A.G. And also obviously, if news in New Orleans is something other than fairy-tales, this whole thing is in a position to break wide and spectacularly open, with Nixon having every interest in not doing anything to stop it. They have already made a deal with Hoffa, which can help them in the next election. It can hurt the Democrats (everywhere) and all Kennedys and those Kennedy-connected. What do they care if Partin sings? And fingers Sheridan, as he already has. I enclose one of the things I have on this. The other, much better, I can't let you have without permission, but I have no reason to believe you'll (plural) want it, lemmings seeking water and the whole world being an ocean. Please return this when you have finished with it.

If you still have files, you'll find a memo from me of a phone conversation with a Baton Rouge reporter the day Brownlee was picked up in B.R. on that license charge, the week after I interviewed J.G. on tape. (And can you remember that Norris then was haunting your office but never giving you anything, not even the right time?) This was the time Partin was involved with Sheridan and shows Partin's involvement in that ploy.

I am beginning to wonder if your job as Jim's investigator ought not broaden a bit, for the timing on this things is, to me, incredible. I can't help but wonder about people in a for-keeps poker game with aces backed up and throwing the hand in before the third card is dealt. Harry Golden said, "Only in America". This is an "Only in New Orleans" script.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

DA Drops Bribery Charges

Charges filed in 1967 by Dist. Atty. Jim Garrison against two television reporters in connection with alleged bribery of witnesses in the Kennedy assassination probe have been dropped.

First Asst. DA John Volz said the cases were dropped because of the elapsed time in the case and because the main case against Clay Shaw has been terminated. He said no useful purpose would be served by further prosecution.

Walter Sheridan, working for the National Broadcasting Co., and Richard Townley, of WDSU-TV, produced a TV documentary June 19, 1967, critical of Garrison's Kennedy probe. The following month Garrison charged Sheridan with bribing Perry R. Russo, a witness who later testified in the Shaw trial.

Garrison charged Townley with bribing Russo and two others he said were potential witnesses.

The case has been in the federal courts for the past two years.