

3/7/69

Mr. George W. Healy, Jr.
The Times-Picayune
3800 Howard Ave.,
New Orleans, La.

Dear Mr. Healy,

Many thanks for your prompt reply to my inquiry. But your letter of March 5 leaves me perplexed. If there was no typed Q and A, how did your papers get it to print it? Please believe me, there is a great significance in the trial that I think you people are not in a position to appreciate because some of you has the time I have put into this. These transcripts are a matter of much greater historic importance than as a commentary on Garrison or as a record of the Shaw case. Should Garrison get transcripts, it is by no means certain I would be able to get them, at least in time for my current work. I have completed two of three books I am doing on the autopsy and what relates to it. This is the part that immediately interests me most.

I have clipped your papers and whatever you published I have. But many thanks for the offer. If there were important stories that did not appear in your mail editions, of course, I do not have them.

As you know, Garrison says and does things with which I am not in accord. However, risky as predictions are, let me make one: he will come out of this much better than now seems likely or even possible. My only concern is him. The rest, based on what I know, leaves me with little doubt. He is unpredictable. In some ways he borders on genius. To me, in some ways, he approaches stupidity. Possibly the veiled threats of suits against him and other actions triggered him too soon. As I have already indicated, I have no doubt Shaw did commit perjury. I also have no doubt that his lawyers skirted him around certain data in a way that amounts to deception, though, without doubt, it is within the law and proper practice thereof. Shaw is not the only perjurer, I am confident.

I believe I once offered to background you on any thing I could if you would maintain confidence. If I did not, I do now. There are many things that did not come out in the trial. Some, had I had anything to do with the case, certainly would have. I cannot tell you why they did not. But if I can ever afford to get to your charming city again and you'd care to spend an evening, I'll be happy to tell you some of them. Also, just at the time the case was set for trial, a number of new things turned up there was no time to investigate. I carried these where I could. Some are fascinating, the things of which exciting novels can be made. And yet they are very real. Some I have already substantiated.

Garrison is not making propaganda when he talks of the efforts to corrupt witnesses. If he can ever get this before a jury, there is little doubt in my mind there will be convictions - as many as three from what I know. For reasons not intrinsically New Orleans, this will make even bigger sensations.

One of the things that surprised me was that your papers never seemed to develop any interest in how the defense could have been so very well prepared, even for surprise witnesses. When the whole story comes out, I think you will find that what Bethell did is not all of it. I believe you will conclude much was at least very improper, when you find the positions of the people. Your reporting on Bethell was in non-essential ways not accurate. He was working for Garrison January 1, 1967, when he first got in touch with me. In June he went to New Orleans, whence he had come, to do research and keep the files. He did not quit in the fall. He went on a part-time basis. When the case was set for trial, he again began working, as I understand it, on what for him is a full-time basis. He does not believe in working, not even a normal working day. Nor is this Shaw-Panzeca affair the only involvement he has, to my knowledge, which means not from anything anyone in the Garrison office told me. He and Boxley shared the same office. If and when the entire story is known, I think every responsible person in New Orleans will be glad Boxley was fired when he was. However, I have no knowledge that he was still CIA.

I note with approval that the judge may have something to say about the violations of the guidelines. I wish I thought he knew what I do of some of the cases outside of New Orleans (not one of which involves Garrison, who I have never heard make any public comment on Shaw - and I have heard him refuse to and refuse appearance where this would have been expected of him, as in the case of the National Press Club, in Washington, where the invitation was offered through me).

For your information and whatever it may be worth to you, on the basis of my experience with them, not one of the lawyers actively participating in the case indicated any doubt of the rightness of it. I say this because of the reported rumors of resignation. If it involves any of these, my hunch is it would be for other reasons, one of which might be the conduct of the trial.

Again, my thanks. If you ever know of any of the transcripts to coming available, I would very much appreciate access to them.

Best wishes,

Harold Weisberg