

Transcribed from tape,
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Joe Dolan, with
William W. Turner

Dolan --First of all, do you know the case of Thomas Bethell ?

Turner -- I know a little about it. I knew Tom from having got down to New Orleans very many times.

Dolan -- and would you give us a synoptic account of the Bethell affair ?

Turner -- Well, as far as your clipping, Joe, I have one dated here March 5th of this year, a UPI dispatch out of New Orleans... and it merely states that Jim Garrison's office had charged Bethell with supplying Shaw's attorneys with a secret list of prosecution witnesses prior to Shaw's trial on charges of conspiring to murder President Kennedy. The charge against Bethell said that he unlawfully did take, use and transfer to Salvator Panzeca, an attorney representing Shaw, a trial memorandum and an outline which contained the names and described the substance of testimony of each state witness to be called. Under our somewhat adversary procedures, that can be very damaging to the prosecution.

Dolan -- That was the charge. Now what

Turner -- That was the charge -- uh, I understand that Tom has not really denied it. I also understand that he was given the opportunity of leaving New Orleans, and he stayed around, so Garrison was more or less forced to bring the charges against him. So it's one of those unfortunate things. I believe he was acting in -- as his conscience dictated. I think that Tom however never really understood the implications of the case.....

...Dolan -- Even if he did give the witness list to Shaw, so what ?

...Turner -- ~~Exzwa~~ It was more than just the witness list. It virtually laid out the whole prosecution case, which you know under adversary procedure can be very damaging. It gave the defense a tremendous advantage in trial strategy, in cross examination and various other factors. On that topic, Joe, I just got a letter from Jim Garrison I think you and your listeners might be interested in -- just this brief sentence about the case -- would you ?

Dolan -- Yes, go right ahead.

Turner -- He says that "the case really came out much better than would be indicated by the press coverage. As a matter of fact, the two alternate jurors had sealed their votes in envelopes prior to the verdict, and they had voted for guilty as charged. In the final analysis, however, " -- and I think this is really the crux of the whole thing, this is my editorial opinion -- "I think," said Garrison, "that the case demonstrated that it is simply not possible to present a clandestine operation of this type in a courtroom. The protective considerations of Anglo-Saxon law, which are certainly necessary, have the effect of blocking the development of any clandestine operation"