

Inside Clay Shaw's Defense Team:



The Wegmann Files

***What the defense knew,
and didn't share...***



...until 1995.

By Jim DiEugenio

In preparing his book *Case Closed*, Gerald Posner secured access to the files of the late Edward Wegmann. He gained access through Wegmann's daughter Cynthia, who now practices law in New Orleans. Wegmann, who died in 1989, was Clay Shaw's longtime friend and civil attorney. To my knowledge, Posner was the first author to access and use the Wegmann files for a book on the JFK case. Posner, who wrote about the New Orleans scene (Shaw, Jim Garrison, and Oswald), used these files to back up much of what he wrote regarding Jim Garrison's investigation. To no one's surprise, Posner did pretty much what the likes of James Phelan, Hugh Aynesworth, and Walter Sheridan did thirty years earlier. He voted the straight party line on New Orleans: Garrison was a deluded, partly corrupt megalomaniac; Shaw was the cultivated, upstanding gentleman victimized by the runaway DA. Concerning Oswald's activities there, the Crescent City amounted to a bunch of fascinating loose ends adding up to very little.

One wonders if he truly read and understood what was in the Wegmann files.

It wasn't until the summer of 1995 that the public was able to gain access to the Wegmann files. At the ARRB hearing in New Orleans on June 28th of that year, Cynthia Wegmann turned over the extant files to the Board. Ms. Wegmann's comments to the Board showed that she was in complete agreement with Posner on the issue of Garrison's case against Shaw. Among other things, she said she was outraged at the recent treatment of Shaw in Oliver Stone's *JFK*:

...Clay Shaw's name remains besmirched, he can be portrayed as a buffoon in films, the true nature of the man has been hidden and destroyed. I believe that anyone who takes a look at these records will realize how amorphous, how little evidence, if any, there was, and it's for this reason that my mother and I and my brothers would like to make this record available to the public.

These remarks are quite logical and expected considering who her father was and considering the fact that, according to a file letter dated 11/3/69, she spent vacation time horseback riding with Aynesworth.

As noted above, Posner's fingers are evident in these files. The ones he used are forever stamped with his identifying post-its, which, of course, raises the possibility that he may have taken the originals. What is a bit surprising though is how much Posner left out. This says much about the Wall Street lawyer, but it says even more about Shaw, his defense team, and indirectly, the value of Garrison's case. For even though Wegmann was—quite literally—looking for an Oswald-did-it solu-

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tion to the assassination, he kept on bumping into evidence of conspiracy.

Ed Wegmann had been Shaw's civil attorney for more than a decade at the time of Shaw's arrest. Shaw had become quite prosperous as a real estate speculator in the French Quarter area of New Orleans, and he chose

Wegmann to handle the legal side of these real estate transactions. Ed's partner was his brother William, who, to my knowledge, is still alive. Their associate was Sal Panzeca, who is still around and who, in 1994, worked across the street from Bill Wegmann. This trio became Shaw's instant defense team in March of 1967 when Garrison had him booked for conspiracy in the Kennedy murder. Not one of them was an experienced criminal trial attorney. Their first choice in this regard was

Guy Johnson, who had been quite close to the Wegmanns. In a matter of two weeks though, Johnson was dropped. When I questioned Panzeca on this point in 1994, he replied that although Johnson was a fine lawyer, he and Ed Wegmann did not get along. The implication was that there was a personality clash. As we shall see, the files suggest that there was more to it than that.

Up until the Board's acquisition of this collection, the standard view of the makeup of Shaw's defense was contained in James Kirkwood's book *American Grotesque*, which was originally published in 1970. As that book reveals, Kirkwood had extraordinary access to Shaw, his defense attorneys, and their allies. (This was confirmed to me in a 1993 interview with a former amour of Rosemary James, Lyle Bonge). Unfortunately, the picture painted by Kirkwood is so violently skewed that the power structure inside the defense team was obfuscated. From Kirkwood one could logically guess that Dymond and Panzeca were the battery energizing the team. Not so. As revealed in these files, the real driving force was the Wegmanns, especially Edward. Dymond comes off as a hired gun, an expensive, skilled criminal lawyer. Panzeca is the young attorney on the way up who is essentially a courier for the big boys.

Still, that sketch is only partial. The real heart and soul of Shaw's defense is embodied in the munificent help they were getting from a multitude of sources. This is something only hinted at in Kirkwood's lopsided tome. And even those hints rarely reveal how some of that help filtered in. Finally, as we shall see in the second part of this article, the clandestine aspect of much of this aid is revealed in *Probe* for the first time. This will be done with the help of newly released files discovered by Peter Veal and Bill Davy from the so-called CIA "Segregated Collection". It is hard to believe that Posner, and especially Kirkwood, knew nothing of this aspect.

The Wegmanns hired not one, but two top-notch private detective services to help them. These were not just picked randomly out of the phone book. One was the now infamous Wackenhut corporation. Once billed by *Spy* magazine as the "CIA's CIA", this company is made up of a large group of former federal agents—mostly FBI—that gave many, many reports and interviews to Shaw's defense.

The other company was called "Holloway Associates Inc.", a Texas company subtitled on its letterhead, "Former FBI Agents". These two agencies were filing reports for a period of at least two years, right up to and during Shaw's 1969 trial. Whoever paid them—and there are hints the Wegmanns did—it must have been a ducal sum. (Coincidentally, Wackenhut was the same company that did the re-

What Did the Wegmanns Know?

Attorneys are often accused these days of not really caring about the truth of their case. As was stated in the fine 1981 Paul Newman film *The Verdict*, "You don't get paid to do your best, you get paid to win." The Wegmanns were wedded to the defense of the *Warren Report*. But they kept on bumping into evidence of conspiracy. To counter Garrison's evidence, they seem to have resorted to tactics of smear and defamation. Note that Posner, who had access to these files, resorted to the same tactics as well. It is instructive to partially list what they—and Posner—knew, and were not interested in, as well as what really held their attention.

Evidence of Conspiracy:

• In a report to the Wegmanns by Wackenhut agents along with WDSU reporter Rick Townley (4/19/67), there are references to an interview of Sandra Anderson, secretary to attorney G. Wray Gill. In this report she said she had a photo depicting both Shaw and Ferrie.

• The handwritten notes of one of the earliest interviews Garrison's office had with Jack Martin shows up in Wegmann's files. In this interview, (12/14/66), Martin unloads some striking information. Consider: *Ferrie had introduced Martin to Oswald in Banlister's office. With Ferrie at the time was Sergio Arcacha-Smith.* In an interview from the previous day, Martin states that Oswald had offices right next door to one Jimmy Hodges and that James Arthus, the custodian in the building had all of Oswald's paraphernalia.

• In a Wackenhut interview with Carlos Bringuier (5/9/67), Bringuier stated that Shaw's friend Alberto Fowler revealed that Garrison had "something big" and that "high persons" were involved in the assassination conspiracy. Fowler said *Shaw felt confident because he knew that these "high persons" would have to defend him.*

• In the same Wackenhut report quoted above, it is revealed that *Gordon Novel was a CIA agent and that Shaw was in the "Intelligence Services" of the armed forces.*

• In a Garrison memo of 6/21/67, one night Perry Russo and a friend were at Rick Townley's. The phone rang and Russo answered it. The caller was Gordon Novel. *Novel asked Russo if he had joined their side yet. Russo replied, "No, not yet."* The call seemed to be arranged for Russo's benefit at Townley's request.

• In a Wackenhut memo (4/7/67) of an interview with Novel lawyer Steve Plotkin, he reveals that *a former employee of Banlister, Vernon Gerdes, had seen Oswald and Ferrie together with his boss.*

The above all seem to be ignored by the Wegmanns. What are some of the things that interest them? In their interview with Bill Gurvich they seem to be preoccupied with sex and scandal. Ed Wegmann asks if Garrison has any hold on Judge Haggerty. Gurvich replies that there are rumors of bad checks. When Ed Wegmann asks if Garrison is "checking on the homosexual angle", Gurvich replied that Garrison was an authority on it. Wegmann harps on a "personal vendetta" Garrison may have against Shaw. Falling this, Wegmann and Dymond accuse Garrison of being a wife beater. Dymond caps this exchange with "Very, very bad—bodily." Garrison is not the only target of a smear campaign. In an interview with an acquaintance of Perry Russo, one Wackenhut report (3/30/67) lists, "Mrs. Maguar had no information regarding any prostitution activities by Russo."

The smears did not even stop with Garrison and his witnesses. They extended to the original victim of the tragedy. Another Wackenhut report (4/16/67) states that JFK was in Houston with his mistress prior to the assassination. ♦

ports for Eastern Airlines in the dismissal proceedings against David Ferrie. The firm was then called Southern Research.)

But the evidence now shows that Shaw was the recipient of much more than the services of former FBI agents hiring themselves out as paid detectives. As noted earlier, the sheer number of friends and allies that came to Shaw's side was stunning. Consider a partial list: New Orleans Cuban exile leader Carlos Bringuier, intelligence asset cum journalist Aynesworth, Garrison defector Bill Gurvich, Dallas Deputy DA Bill Alexander, FBI and CIA associated writer Edward Epstein, CIA operative Gordon Novel, Congressman and former HUAC member Ed Hebert, former Hoover crony and Metropolitan Crime Commission chairman Aaron Kohn, Jack Ruby's sister Eva Grant, CIA asset and manager of INCA, Ed Butler, Shaw's old friend and Time-Life Bureau Chief Holland McCombs, former FBI, NSA, ONI agent Walter Sheridan, along with his local protegee Rick Townley, Townley's reputed CIA associated lawyer Steve Lemann, and finally, David Ferrie's pal Layton Martens.

The above does not include the networking of Shaw's lawyers with other suspects and defendants involved in Garrison's case. This includes attorneys for Jack Ruby (Alan Adelson), and Edgar Eugene Bradley (George Jensen and later Glen Duke). Interestingly, at times the legal representation for some suspects is the same. One of Gordon Novel's battery of attorneys was Elmer Gertz. Gertz was also an attorney for Jack Ruby.

Elmer Gertz and Gordon Novel

The Gertz case is interesting. According to attorney Jim Lesar, Gertz was a respected libel lawyer who actually argued a case before the Supreme Court. Novel's attorney while he was in New Orleans was Steve Plotkin. When he fled to Columbus, Ohio to escape Garrison's jurisdiction, his new attorney became Jerry Weiner. But after Garrison's powerful October, 1967 *Playboy* interview, Novel decided to sue the DA and the magazine for millions. Since this was a libel and defamation case, Gertz magically entered the picture as Novel's third lawyer. What makes this even more peculiar is the statements Novel brought suit over. Garrison stated in the interview that Plotkin admitted he was being paid by the CIA, and that Novel was a CIA operative. He then added that Novel and Plotkin later sued him for millions but withdrew the lawsuit when it was learned they would have to return to New Orleans to give depositions. This material had been uncovered by local *States-Item* reporters Ross Yockey and Hoke May who reported it in a series of stories appearing in April and May in that newspaper. Later in the interview, Garrison comments on the 1961 raid of a muni-

tions bunker in Houma, Louisiana which Novel was a part of. Novel actually related this story himself to the DA while working with Sheridan to infiltrate Garrison's office in early 1967. Garrison also went into Novel's experiences with Cuban exiles and his part in the preparations for the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Again, these details had been printed in the local New Orleans papers, this time in May, 1967. Everything else related by Garrison about Novel in the interview was a matter of public record and the DA quoted such sources as the Associated Press for some of the mate-

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Target: Mark Lane

Throughout the Wegmann files, their hatred of Garrison fairly overflows. Clearly he was their main target. But running a close second is Mark Lane. When Lane arrived in New Orleans to aid Garrison's investigation, the Wegmanns and their allies quickly moved to try and neutralize him through personal attacks on his character. The strategy was basically dual edged: smear him as a Red, and try and enmesh him in a sex scandal.

Concerning the former, Wegmann's investigators talked to Ed Butler at INCA headquarters in April of 1967. Butler outlined a line of attack as follows:

BUTLER advised that his organization is interested in presenting to the public the true background of LANE and his connection with the investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy. They have asked Congressman F. EDWARD HEBERT to supply them with information from the files of the House on Un-American Activities, which allegedly contained information about LANE. BUTLER advised Mr. ROBERT RAINOLD and Mr. ALTON OCHSNER are directors of his firm. BUTLER advised that he would advise his Board of Directors of our interest in obtaining background information on Lane.

Hebert, a longtime CIA-Pentagon enthusiast, sent a letter to Ed Wegmann on January 12, 1968. Wegmann had requested files on both Bill Turner and Lane. Hebert regretted the fact that HUAC could find no files disclosing any relation of Turner "with organizations or publications which have been cited as subversive by the Committee." But Hebert did come up with files on Lane. The list of organizations termed as "Communist Fronts" are sad reminders of a nightmarish side of the fifties: the National Lawyers Guild, New York Teachers Union, Emergency Civil Liberties

Committee, Citizens Committee for Constitutional Liberties, and most grievous of all, The New York Council To Abolish the House Un-American Activities Committee. His file also notes an instance in which Lane opposed anticommunist legislation, speaking out against the (atrocious) McCarran Act in 1962.

Upon receipt of these files, INCA and Ochsner went on the attack against Garrison, branding him a dupe of Mark Lane and others who, through his JFK probe, were trying to weaken American institutions. Lane was branded "an unscrupulous communist", and communists were manipulating the assassination to cause the U.S. to "crumble from within" through public distrust of government." Ochsner added that, "it is a shame he [Garrison] is playing into the hands of the Communists because he is being advised by Mark Lane.."

The ever-present Hugh Aynesworth figured in the other prong of the attack against Lane. Jock Whitney's *New York Herald Tribune* was furnishing material to the *Dallas Morning News* as early as 1964. It seems that the *Tribune* was out to thwart any political ambitions Lane harbored (Lane had served in the state assembly from 1960-62). The local DA put a tail on Lane because of his political fulminations against the excesses of the national security state. The surveillance led to a compromising photograph of Lane *en flagrante delicto* with a department store model. The *Tribune* forwarded the file on Lane to the *Morning News*, Aynesworth's employer, when Lane resurfaced on the national scene as a Warren Commission critic in 1964. Perry Russo first mentioned the compromising photo to me in 1993. He stated that Dymond showed it to him to deflate Lane's image as a hero. When I saw Dymond the following year, I related Russo's anecdote and asked him where he got the picture. He replied that Aynesworth had given it to him. ♦

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rial. In other words, there is nothing included that could be remotely termed as libelous.

Judge Campbell agreed with the above assessment. In his decision on the case in 1971, he wrote, "In this case, as I shall illustrate in detail, plaintiff Novel has done absolutely nothing toward bearing his burden of coming forth with affirmative evidence." He went on

to note that he found "no evidence by which this plaintiff can sustain his heavy burden of proving actual malice against either of these defendants." The judge concluded with these two statements before dismissing the lawsuit, "... it appears that the substance of the statements now claimed to be libelous originated with plaintiff himself." And finally:

His so-called connections with the CIA also originated with his own voluntarily offered stories. The facts as stipulated also establish that, Novel enthusiastically jumped into the fray with Garrison, offering news media statements about the Garrison investigation.

The document below is an excerpt from a three page affidavit signed by Fred Leemans who owned a Turkish bath in New Orleans and came to Jim Garrison through assistant DA Robert Lee. Leemans told Lee that he had seen Shaw with Oswald at his establishment. He then reversed his story and became a witness for Walter Sheridan on his NBC special. The affidavit below shows why he did and illustrates the close cooperation between Sheridan, federal officials, and Shaw's lawyers.

STATE OF LOUISIANA

PARISH OF ORLEANS

AFFIDAVIT

...I would like to state the reasons for which I appeared on the NBC show and lied about my contacts with the District Attorney's office. First, I received numerous anonymous threatening phone calls relative to the information that I had given Mr. Garrison. The gist of these calls was to the effect that if I did not change my statement and state that I had been bribed by Jim Garrison's office, I and my family would be in physical danger.

In addition to the anonymous phone calls, I was visited by a man who exhibited a badge and stated that he was a government agent. This man informed me that the government was presently checking the bar owners in the Slidell area for possible income tax violations. This man then inquired whether I was the Mr. Leemans involved in the Clay Shaw case. When I informed him that I was, he said that it was not smart to be involved because a lot of people that had been got hurt and that people in powerful places would see to it that I was taken care of.

One of the anonymous callers suggested that I change my statement and state that I had been bribed by Garrison's office to give him the information about Clay Shaw. He suggested that I contact Mr. Irvin Dymond, Attorney for Clay L. Shaw, and tell him that I gave Mr. Garrison the statement about Shaw only after Mr. Lee offered me \$2,500. After consulting with Mr. Dymond by telephone and in person, I was introduced to Walter Sheridan, investigative reporter for NBC, who was then in the process of preparing the NBC show. Mr. Dymond and Mr. Sheridan suggested that I appear on the show and state what I had originally told Mr. Dymond about the bribe offer by the District Attorney's office.

I was informed by Mr. Dymond that should the District Attorney's office charge me with giving false information as a result of my repudiating the statement I had originally given them, he would see to it that I had an attorney and that a bond would be posted for me. In this connection Mr. Dymond gave me his home and office telephone numbers and advised me that I could contact him at any time of day or night should I be charged by Garrison's office as a result of my appearing on the NBC show.

My actual appearance on the show was taped in the office of Aaron Kohn, Managing Director of the Metropolitan Crime Commission, in the presence of Walter Sheridan and Irvin Dymond.

/S/ FRED H. LEEMANS, SR.

SWORN AND SUBSCRIBED BEFORE ME THIS 6th DAY OF JANUARY, 1969

/S/ BYRON P. LEGENDRE, Notary Public

In the face of certain defeat, Novel decided to sue, and Gertz went along with it. Someone as experienced as Gertz *must* have known there was no real foundation for a lawsuit. Which naturally leads to the question: Why did he take the case? Especially considering a client of Novel's checkered background. The answer seems to be that someone behind the scenes wanted a libel action against Garrison to be trumpeted in the papers, knowing full well that a Garrison victory would never be published anywhere. In fact, to my knowledge, Campbell's decision is published here for the first time.

Mr. Gertz also had another profession: book reviewer. When Warren Commission critic and Garrison aide Mark Lane published his memoir *A Citizens Dissent* in 1967, the *Chicago Sun-Times* had Gertz do their review of the volume. Of course, the review was less than objective, but the thoughtful Gertz sent Ed Wegmann a copy.

The episode with Novel is interesting in other respects. For these and other files reveal that when Novel went to McLean, Virginia to take his polygraph test denouncing Garrison, he was still closely associated with NBC and Walter Sheridan. It turns out that the technician operating the polygraph was Lloyd Furr. Furr was the partner of another private investigator named Leonard Harrelson. It was Harrelson, enlisted by Sheridan, who did the phony polygraph of Ed Partin which attempted to frame Jimmy Hoffa for conspiring to kill Bobby Kennedy. Harrelson was later investigated and prosecuted for fraud in polygraph testing in St. Louis. Neither Furr nor Harrelson were certified by the Academy for Scientific Investigation which sharply criticized Harrelson's work in the Partin case. These two associations—Gertz and Furr—raise more questions about the real roles of both Sheridan and Novel in both the Garrison inquest and the JFK case overall. As we shall see in part two of this article, the questions about Sheridan will loom even larger in Washington.

Wegmann, Gertz and Epstein

It is through the Gertz-Wegmann correspondence that the figure of Edward Epstein enters Shaw's defense. Almost simultaneously, Epstein seems to have contacted both attorneys. In a letter dated 4/5/67, Gertz writes:

I have just now obtained possession of an unpublished manuscript of Edward J. Epstein, the author of *Inquest*. . . . The preparation of the article was financed by *The New Yorker* magazine, and according to Mr. Epstein, with whom I have spoken, is to be published in the immediate future. In due course. . . Mr. Epstein will enlarge the manuscript and publish it in book form.

The date of Gertz's letter is absolutely crucial in tracking Epstein's bona fides. For Epstein's article entitled "The Tangled Web" did not appear in *The New Yorker* until July 13th, three and a half months later. Even more revealing, in his preface to *The Assassination Chronicles* (1992, Carroll and Graf) Epstein writes that he began his investigation for this article in April of 1967. If this is so, what is the manuscript he is sending Gertz? Whatever really happened, it appears Epstein had his mind made up well in advance of the research for his article. If this is so, then it lends credence to those who had severe reservations about Epstein early on, i.e. Vince Salandria, Maggie Field, and Ray Marcus. It is also interesting to note, that at the inception of this project, before serious research had even begun, Epstein knew that the article would later become a book. Usually, the sequence is reversed. An already prepared book is excerpted as a magazine piece. The circumstances surrounding the article, and the eventual book, *Counterplot*, remain highly unusual.

Getting back to the correspondence, and unbeknownst to Mr. Gertz, on the same day he wrote the above letter, Wegmann sent him one that actually included excerpts from Epstein's upcoming *New Yorker* hit piece. The one Epstein had barely started researching.

How friendly and helpful was Epstein to Mr. Gertz? Consider this May, 1968 note from Gertz to Epstein:

Dear Mr. Epstein:

I greatly enjoyed talking with you today, and I look forward to seeing you. I think that we can be mutually helpful. At any rate, we will make the effort!

Good luck to you in your Ph. D. examinations.

Ed Wegmann's correspondence with Ruby's attorneys went on well into the '70's. For instance, Wegmann was communicating with Alan Adelson—who offered to help during Shaw's trial—about the ersatz tax charges and subsequent two trials of Garrison in 1977!

Wegmann also sent his advance copy of Epstein's article to George Jensen, one of Edgar E. Bradley's lawyers. Wegmann offered his "continued desire to cooperate and assist you in every way possible." Like the correspondence with Gertz and Adelson, these letters went out beyond the time of Shaw's acquittal. When Bradley filed a libel suit against Mark Lane and 15 other parties in July of 1969, copies of the filing were sent to Ed Wegmann upon his request. In return, on February 12, 1970, Wegmann sent Bradley materials from Garrison's files that were pilfered and given to him by Bill Gurvich. Apparently, Wegmann was sensitive about revealing the fact that Gurvich had stolen these materials from the DA. He added, "I deem it best not to advise

you at this point as to the source of these documents. However, I can assure you they are authentic."

Edgar E. Bradley and Bill Boxley

Bradley's following letter to Wegmann is interesting. One of the people named in Bradley's civil suit was William Wood a.k.a. Bill Boxley. Boxley was the "former" CIA agent who turned up one day to help Garrison further his case against his former employer. Boxley did a lot of work investigating Bradley. In a note, Wegmann is advised that Bradley had located Boxley/Wood in Austin, Texas and:

He is a scared _____ and is really hiding out. . . I understand that Boxley tried to convince J. G. that I had murdered someone in 1962. I think it was a man named Perrin. J. G. checked to find out I was in Europe at the time.

Regarding Wood, a recently declassified CIA file shows that a "William Wood" was actually a CIA recruiter in New Orleans in 1963. Once Wood was found out by Garrison, Walter Holloway of the Wegmann's Holloway Associates Inc. tried to recruit him to their cause. Reportedly, Wood refused.

Gurvich: Unwanted Witness

Such was not the case with Gurvich. The files contain the stenographic record of a marathon interview between him and all four of Shaw's attorneys, dated August 29, 1967. Gurvich left Garrison's office in late June of 1967. He then went on a whirlwind nationwide press tour in July and August which was at least partly arranged by Sheridan. He then returned to New Orleans and worked for the Wegmanns until Shaw's trial and beyond. During this August interview, Gurvich made some revealing statements about his place in Garrison's investigation. The DA trusted him so much that, said Gurvich,

Garrison and I shared the same office, the same desk—I had his car—he never used it—the Oldsmobile—I had a full set of keys to his office and everything.

Later on, Gurvich admits that he took things off Garrison's desk and Xeroxed them, things that were *not* part of the "master file" he stole.

Although Gurvich volunteered to be a witness for the defense, he was never called at Shaw's trial. His seriousness and reliability as such can be measured by his comments about Garrison's knowledge of Guy Banister made during the above referenced interview:

Q: To what extent was Banister involved in this, do you know?

A: He was simply involved because Ferrie had once worked for him.

No mention of Banister's CIA or ONI links.

No mention of the presence of Sergio Arcacha Smith or Oswald at Banister's office. Later, Gurvich tops himself:

Q: Does he [Garrison] have any proof that Banister was a CIA or any federal agent.

A: I don't believe he has any proof that Banister ever existed.

With answers like this, its no wonder Gurvich was never called as a trial witness or that the grand jury didn't take his charges against Garrison very seriously.

As *Probe* previously noted (Vol. 3 #4 p. 3), when the Wegmann files were released to the public by the ARRB, this very interview was featured in the press. A section of Gurvich's comments were construed as the DA offering "bribes" to witnesses Darrell Garner and Clyde Johnson. Apparently, no reporter read past the first few pages of the transcript. On page 18 of the second session, the following exchange occurs:

Q: The only persons you have seen him give money are characters such as Garner—

A: No, not Garner. I have never seen Garner.

Q:—Johnson.

A: Johnson.

Q: All he'll put out is maybe a \$10.00 bill or a twenty?

A: That's what I was told that's what they gave him. I actually didn't see the money. . .

Q: Who told you that?

A:—er—Alcock. [Emphasis added.]

In other words, Gurvich was told by assistant DA Jim Alcock about small amounts of expense money, which as *Probe* reported, came out of Garrison's own pocket. Gurvich had to have known this since he goes on to say that Alcock then put up Johnson at the Monteleone Hotel. So the stories pushed in the media by the likes of *New Orleans Times Picayune* writer Dave Snyder were completely unsound.

Hugh Aynesworth: CIA Applicant

From the Wegmann files, it is clear that a major contributor to their effort was *Newsweek* reporter Hugh Aynesworth. The evidence indicates that Aynesworth was with Ed Wegmann almost from his arrival in New Orleans to a point well past Shaw's trial. There is a note from Aynesworth on *Newsweek* letterhead to Wegmann dated 9/18/71, about 18 months past Shaw's acquittal.

The entire series of reports Aynesworth cabled to *Newsweek*—most of it unpublished—is part of this file. Generally, the reports fall into three categories: attacks on Garrison, profiles of David Ferrie, and hagiographies of Shaw. On some days, the prolific Aynesworth

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would type up more than one report; sometimes he would do as many as three. The series on Ferrie strongly suggests that Aynesworth had access to government files. They contain too many details, especially from Ferrie's early life, that could not have been attained from Aynesworth's New Orleans vantage point. The fact the information was shared with Wegmann suggests that Aynesworth was a "cutout" for either the FBI or CIA into Shaw's defense. Aynesworth's FBI ties were exposed long ago. With the new release of the CIA's "segregated collection", his tie to the Agency can now also be revealed in print for the first time.

Concerning Aynesworth's deep involvement with assassination-related matters, it seems apt to quote from another recently declassified document, this one from the FBI. This one reveals Aynesworth's involvement with Marina Oswald. It has long been a mystery as to how Aynesworth got hold of Oswald's "diary", which he then made a killing off of by selling it to *The Dallas Morning News*, and then *U. S. News and World Report*. Some had thought that Deputy DA Bill Alexander had stolen it from the property room of the Dallas Police Department. But in 1993 this issue was clouded even more. The FBI declassified a July 1, 1964 report that states an informant had told them that "Oswald's diary had been obtained by Aynesworth from Marina Oswald at no cost." When *Life* also bought rights to it, Marina was paid \$20,000 for the copyright. Further, the informant stated that "he had heard that Aynesworth stated he had an affair with Marina Oswald when he interviewed her some time ago." (Interestingly, the report goes on to say that the philandering Aynesworth had lost his former reporting job for the *Denver Post* because he had been caught "en flagrante delicto" with an ex-convict's wife.) Because the informant in this report would not reveal his name, the above information must be judged tentatively. But, Aynesworth's use of Marina is not. Aynesworth's local newspaper pal Holmes Alexander wrote about it in July of 1964. He revealed that it was Aynesworth that was putting pressure on both the Warren

Commission and the FBI to paint Oswald as a deranged leftist assassin.

Marina, Aynesworth and Nixon

One of Marina's most dubious stories has always been that Oswald had threatened to kill Richard Nixon. The FBI looked at this possibility in February of '64 and found it difficult to certify since Nixon was not in Dallas-Forth Worth when Oswald threatened him

tensibly on the *Newsweek* staff, he was also being paid by Time-Life and also Ed Wegmann, for whom he would do occasional special assignments. (This, of course, discounts any monies he may have received from the Bureau or the Agency). Aynesworth brought into Wegmann's orbit his old friend and Dallas cohort who had worked with him on the aforementioned "diary" caper and with whom he had split the fee. Bill Alexander was used to keep Garrison's assistants from questioning Sergio Arcacha Smith in Dallas. Aynesworth was particularly worried, with good reason, that Arcacha might fall into the DA's hands.

Aynesworth's initial reports to *Newsweek* are quite revealing. His checks from Time-Life seem to stem from the fact that he was a part of their research team on *Life's* aborted reinvestigation of the case in 1966. This investigation resulted in the November 25, 1966 cover story entitled "A Matter of Reasonable Doubt". This "investigation" was quickly squelched by Editor-in-Chief Hedley Donovan. But the presence of Aynesworth in the crew prompts the question as to how serious that inquiry was in the first place. The question is even more pertinent because according to these files, other members include Dick Billings (HSCA cover-up), *Life* stringer David Chandler (major obstructor of Jim Garrison), and Holland McCombs (old and warm friend of Clay Shaw). Consider this excerpt from Aynesworth's 2/22/67 report:

Billings made at least two trips to New Orleans to confer with Chandler and some Cubans, and in particular, David William Ferrie, the onetime pilot who was arrested shortly after the assassination. . .

10 Oct 63

CONFIDENTIAL

FROM: Chief, Contact Division (LA Branch)

VIA: Chief, Houston Office
Resident Agent, Dallas

Possibility of Hugh Grant Aynesworth Making Trip to Cuba

1. Hugh Grant Aynesworth, Science-Aviation reporter for the *Dallas Morning News*, told me that he had applied for a visa for Cuba approximately a year ago. He heard nothing for some 11 months and then in early September of 1963 he received a call from the Czech Embassy in Washington D. C., asking him if he was still interested in going. He replied that he was and asked if his application was going to receive favorable consideration. The Czech Embassy representative would only state that it was being considered.

2. Aynesworth has had some 15 years experience as a reporter and since February 1960 has been the Science-Aviation reporter for the *Dallas Morning News*. He has offered his services to us if it develops that he receives a visa. I am submitting a name check request for Aynesworth and will keep you advised of developments.

J. WALTON MOORE

Note in the above document that Aynesworth's contact at CIA is the same man who was supposedly the handler of George DeMohrenschildt, and the man who kept an eye on any revival of interest in Garrison in the mid 70's, J. Walton Moore. Also, the date—the month before the assassination—is very suggestive and the mission to Cuba, at this time, would obviously be of great interest to the CIA. Aynesworth, shortly thereafter, wrote several of the early news articles about the Kennedy assassination.

(supposedly in April, 1964). But even though the Bureau and the Commission tried to talk her out of this, she insisted on it. It turns out that Holmes Alexander quotes Aynesworth as saying that he had an exclusive interview with Marina afterwards and she was still insisting on the veracity of this story. Aynesworth naturally tries to tie the attempt to Nixon's calling for a decision to force Castro's regime out of Cuba, a story which had run in the local press before the incident. Alexander's article implies that the FBI may be downplaying this story because of their failure to spot Oswald as a possible assassin before the fact.

Whatever his covert ties in 1963-1964, by 1967 Aynesworth was on three payrolls. Os-

This is extraordinary. From this and other information (surfaced by Wallace Milam through the Holland McCombs' file) we can surmise that:

1. Aynesworth and *Life* were onto the same leads as Garrison either independently or in tandem.

2. David Chandler knew about Ferrie's importance prior to the public exposure of Garrison's investigation. Chandler also knew Oswald and associated with him more than once in New Orleans in 1963.

3. The presence of McCombs, Chandler, and Aynesworth doomed the investigation which, according to Milam, dated back to 1965!

The Mystery Deepens: Charles Spiesel

The Wegmann files contain many newspaper clippings on Garrison's infamous witness Charles Spiesel. The reader will recall that Spiesel was the New York City accountant who stated that he had met up with Shaw and Ferrie in New Orleans in 1963. While there, they had talked to him about assassinating President Kennedy. On cross-examination, Dymond brought out the fact that Spiesel had filed a lawsuit in New York alleging that he had been hypnotized dozens of times by various public authorities and private interests. Spiesel's apparent neurosis and the DA's lack of knowledge of it was a disaster for the prosecution and perhaps the crucial event at the trial. There has been a long debate ever since over whether Spiesel's appearance was an act of negligence by assistant DA Jim Alcock and Garrison or whether he was a deliberate plant and therefore an act of sabotage.

Although the Wegmann files offer (for reasons to be stated) no definitive answer on this point, they do offer some interesting and illuminating sidelights on the matter. First, many of the clippings in the files were those in the *New York Times*. These were written by Martin Waldron, their special correspondent for the trial. Like Jack Nelson's coverage for the *Los Angeles Times*, Waldron's bias for Shaw and against Garrison is manifest. Like Nelson, Waldron injected information into his stories that could only have come from Shaw's lawyers, as it was not mentioned at the trial. But a close reading of the stories sheds some light on Spiesel. First, it was Spiesel who called Garrison about his knowledge of Shaw and Ferrie. Garrison's probe did not lead him to Spiesel. Secondly, on the stand, Spiesel revealed that his father had been an undercover agent for the FBI, and Waldron wrote that Spiesel Sr. was fully aware of his son's role in Garrison's investigation and would know what he would say on the stand.

This is intriguing since Wackenhut was getting a lot of cooperation from the Bureau for Shaw's defense. In an undated summary of prospective witnesses around the time of the trial, it appears that Wackenhut was being aided by the Bureau's Identification Division. This is how they (and probably Aynesworth) were getting records on past arrests, and names of family members of possible witnesses.

The conventional wisdom, originally established by James Kirkwood in *American Grottesque*, was that Shaw's defense found out about Spiesel's past while Dymond was first questioning him on the stand. Panzeca was supposed to have gotten a phone call from a man named Bill Storm who had worked with Spiesel before and had heard about his lawsuit. The Wegmann files raise some questions about this rendition. For instance, Aynesworth was raising questions about Spiesel ten days before he took the stand and at that time stated that the defense had "tried to contact him" previously. This is the first mention of this that I have seen. Two days before Spiesel's appearance, Wackenhut had tracked down both his daughter, Barbara, and her husband, Dr. Bruce Turner. After Spiesel had testified, on February 17, 1969, the Wegmanns other detective service, Holloway Associates, concluded a confidential report plus legal attachments for Ed Wegmann. The report was prepared by another detective outfit called International Security Bureau of New York. In the file turned over by Cynthia Wegmann available at the National Archives, only the cover sheet of this two part report exists. The confidential report and the legal file are missing or were vacuumed by the Wegmanns before their files were turned over to the Board. ♦

To return to Aynesworth's intelligence ties, there are strong suggestions in his reports to *Newsweek*, as to just how far they go. In a 2/24/67 report on Ferrie, Aynesworth describes his ordination into the Old Catholic Church of North America. He then adds parenthetically, "We're trying to protect our own in this group and would appreciate your not using the church's name." This clearly denotes that Aynesworth knew this strange religious sect was being used by the CIA as a front organization, as other sources, like Thomas Beckham, have confirmed. Also note the use of the possessive pronoun "our own". In another report dated 3/3/67, Aynesworth writes that the CIA attempted to get former Nazi intelligence officer turned CIA mercenary Otto Skorzeny in on a Castro kidnapping plot in 1963. The fact that this gem has never been revealed, even in the 1967 Inspector General Report, shows just how connected Aynesworth was.

As an intelligence operative, one of Aynesworth's prime functions was to garner information from inside Garrison's camp (probably from moles like Gurvich), find out who prospective witnesses were, and get to them before Garrison did. Therefore, the Wegmann files contain a long interview between Aynesworth and Cuban exile Julian Buznedo. Buznedo was an associate of both Ferrie and Arcacha-Smith. Aynesworth got hold of him before Garrison and had a long talk with him on 3/18/67 attempting to find out what he had of value to the DA and who he had talked to so far. In another case, when Dealey Plaza witness Jim Hicks was being interviewed by Garrison's staff as a prospective witness, Ed Wegmann wrote to Aynesworth in January of 1968:

At your convenience, it would be helpful if you would have your secretary listen to the tape of your telephone conversation with Hicks and take therefrom the gist of the tape and any statements which might be helpful.

Three days later, Aynesworth wrote back to Wegmann "... I will try to dig out the Hicks tape and get the important points from it." (It is interesting to note that at the same time Aynesworth is researching Hicks, he was attacked and beaten up in his hotel room while preparing to testify before the grand jury). Even more revealing as to Aynesworth's operations, when Garrison was checking out Dallas policemen like Roger Craig and Buddy Walthers, Aynesworth wrote to Wegmann, "I am having a friend check Buddy Walthers' position, because of his mention in the Norden papers." Eric Norden was a leftist writer and scholar who conducted the extraordinary interview with Garrison in *Playboy's* October, 1967 issue. The implication here is that Aynesworth had not just the interview, but Norden's notes for the interview. If so, one can only speculate as to how he got them. Aynesworth was so plugged into the New Orleans scene that he was on to witnesses whose names and testimony are still murky today. In October of

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1967, Aynesworth begins a letter to Wegmann, "Received your letter about Cedric von Rolleston. I had already begun a systematic checkout on him, since I was aware of his call to the *States-Item* earlier in the week." Since both Rosemary James and Chandler worked at that paper, this is how Aynesworth probably knew about the call. He concludes the letter with, "Meanwhile, don't worry about Cedric. He's in the bag."

Aynesworth also appears to be a central conduit for burglar John Cancler. Cancler was one of the New Orleans Parish prison witnesses used by Walter Sheridan in his hour long NBC polemic against Garrison broadcast June 19, 1967. Aynesworth visited Cancler with Sal Panzeca in May. In this original interview, Cancler levels charges against the DA even wilder than the ones in Sheridan's broadside. He states that the DA's office is accepting kickbacks from lottery operations, is in on a prostitution ring, and that Cancler is setting up fellow burglars on the outside so that Garrison can look good in the papers for an upcoming election. Amazingly, Cancler, through prison worker Nina Sulzer, was still in contact with Aynesworth in March, 1969, after Shaw's acquittal. Cancler was still holding out promises of more "dirt" on Garrison.

Ruth Paine II: Nina Sulzer

As mentioned above, these interviews were initially arranged through Nina Sulzer, a good friend of Clay Shaw's who was closely associated with a Quaker group in New Orleans. Through co-worker Jane Lemann, Sulzer also connects with the local law firm of Monroe & Lemann, which according to a Garrison memo, was a conduit of funds to Sheridan which helped pay off "witnesses" for his special. As Bill Davy pointed out in his fine monograph on Clay Shaw, Sulzer also helped harass witnesses dangerous to Shaw, e.g. Vernon Bundy, while he was under her watch in prison. How close was Sulzer to the defense? In a letter from Dymond to the Wegmanns dated 8/29/67, it is revealed that Sulzer had accompanied defense investigators to Dallas and was transcribing notes she took during the trip. On another occasion, April 13, 1967, a meeting took place in her office with Panzeca, Wackenhut agent Bob Wilson and inmate Donald Jordan. The point was to dig up dirt on Perry Russo of a sexual and neurotic nature.

Sulzer figures prominently in Kirkwood's aforementioned lengthy polemic. As Bill Davy notes in *Through the Looking Glass*, Kirkwood's

index sources her nearly twenty times. Towards the end she is acknowledged with "warm phrases of camaraderie and gratitude" (p. 659). Right above this quote, Kirkwood singles out Clay Shaw for his friendship and cooperation on his book. At the beginning of the tome, Kirkwood dedicates his book to James Leo Herlihy (p. 7) and addresses him in his preface as "Jim" (in the text he refers to the defendant as "Clay".) Herlihy, Kirkwood and Shaw visited Lyle Bonge, according to my interview of Bonge. Bonge related that this trio had visited him and gotten drunk at his place together. From all this, it is natural to presume that Kirkwood would be privy to much of what was going on behind the scenes in Shaw's camp. If so, there is much that he left out. As I mentioned above, Davy notes in his monograph that Sulzer, on numerous occasions, tried to dissuade Bundy from his story. Davy also notes that:

A physical surveillance placed on Mrs. Sulzer after she had attempted to dissuade Bundy's testimony disclosed that on at least one occasion she visited a residence where Shaw was staying and spent approximately three hours with him.

In all likelihood, Sulzer was informing to Shaw about her progress with various prisoners at the Parish Prison in weakening Garrison's case. Kirkwood must have known about this. But Kirkwood does something even worse. Early in the book, Kirkwood has Shaw relate a story about Garrison at a New Orleans restaurant with his wife where, as a public official in a public place, Garrison then allegedly threw a drink in her face. Shaw then added that some had speculated that his own observation of the incident may have been a reason for his prosecution. (When the Wegmanns asked Gurvich about this incident, he replied, "I never heard that.") Kirkwood left out Shaw's accompanying story about Brennan's bistro. In the long Gurvich interview Ed Wegmann reveals that with both Shaw and Garrison sitting at nearby tables Garrison stated to someone who is not named, "I'm going to get that sonofabitch", meaning Shaw. Again, when questioned on this point, Gurvich responded "I have never heard that."

Garrison was not Shaw's only defamation target. And Sulzer was not his only informant. In various memos to Ed Wegmann, Shaw refers to "informants" supplying him with ammunition against the DA. In fact, Shaw seems preoccupied with the task of discrediting potential witnesses with the use of sex, alcohol, and/or drugs. Perry Russo and Clyde Johnson (see *Probe* Vol. 3 #6 p. 18) receive much attention from Shaw in this regard, probably because they directly connect him to a conspiracy. For instance, Shaw wrote an undated memo stating that Johnson injected

himself into the case when he and a friend got drunk one night in a bar and "thought it would be fun to call up ole Garrison and tell him he knew all about the plot." There is no source given for the information in Shaw's memo. But the implication is that it came from Shaw's cousin by marriage, Archie Wall.

In this article, for the most part, we have been concerned with goings on at the local level, i. e. in New Orleans. There have been hints of higher level involvement, especially in certain "experts" volunteering their services (see the sidebar at right). Also, Aynesworth's CIA and FBI connections clearly suggest that he is a back channel for upper level forces. But there is another instance, touched on previously, that is probably even more significant in this regard and goes a long way in clarifying who in fact the Wegmanns were and why Shaw may have been drawn to them originally.

Banister and Guy Johnson

In the third transcribed reel of Gurvich's long 8/29/67 interview with Shaw's defense (mentioned earlier), the subject of Guy Banister's intelligence ties surfaced. Ed Wegmann was curious as to what Garrison knew about Banister in this respect. Gurvich pooh-poohed this with his nonsensical comment that he believed Garrison had no proof of Banister's existence (see p. 11). After this exchange about Banister's government ties and Garrison's knowledge of them, Bill Wegmann made a most telling comment: "This was a bone of contention between Guy Johnson and myself..." There are two implications in this statement. First, that there was dissension on the defense between at least one of the Wegmanns and Shaw's first choice for lead attorney. This makes Panzeca's previously mentioned comment about a "personality clash" suspect, or at least not the entire truth. The other implication is that Guy Johnson disagreed with Gurvich's assessment. In other words, Johnson thought that Banister did have intelligence ties and that Garrison either knew about them or would discover them.

In light of this, it is fair to garner that it was this dispute that led to the replacement of Johnson with Dymond. This is quite justified in view of the eventual trial strategy of the Wegmanns, which was to completely deny any intelligence tie between Shaw and the government and any relationship between Shaw, Banister and Ferrie. We know this to be completely false today. And even though many felt Shaw was lying, this strategy proved fairly successful at the trial.

But why would Johnson assess the situation differently at such an early stage, in the fortnight following Shaw's arrest on March 3, 1967? And why would this lead to, using

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The Wegmann "Experts"

With all the furor of late over the use of quite questionable findings by FBI lab "experts", it is interesting to note that the Wegmanns also seem to be the beneficiaries of much technical help from questionable experts. In the Wegmann files is a report from the *Washington Post* of 3/27/67. After it became known that Garrison was using sodium pentothal to test the veracity of his witnesses, the *Post*, ran an article based on the comments of one Edwin Weinstein M.D. Weinstein stated that Russo's examiner, Dr. Chetta, was:

... grossly distorting the medical facts. Under the influence of sodium pentothal, subjects may give highly fictional accounts of past events and describe incidents that never happened. . . . Russo's "memory" of Oswald may well be a personification of his own problems, which could include his relationships with New Orleans authorities.

Wackenhut agent Charles Carson appended to this report that on 4/10/67 he "was advised by a confidential source in the Tulane Medical School, Psychiatric Section, that Dr. Weinstein is an outstanding authority in his field." Since Tulane Medical School was highly influenced by Dr. Alton Ochsner, a strong ally of the Wegmanns, this endorsement is quite suspect. Tulane was also the site of many CIA mind control experiments.

Another expert attracted to the Wegmann's cause is a Dr. C. D. Dwyer. Evidently, Dwyer was a friend of Percy Foreman, the attorney who dubiously coerced James Earl Ray into pleading guilty in the King case. In turn, Foreman was a friend of Irvin Dymond. Ed Wegmann's description of Dwyer is telling:

He is and has been for some time past the Consulting Psychiatrist for Harris County, Texas. Is and has been for sometime (sic) past been the Consulting Psychiatrist for the FBI and the Secret Service....He is well connected politically and has many contacts.

Dwyer was apparently recruited for the same purpose as Weinstein: to belittle the use of sodium pentothal. But what the overt experts don't admit to is what the covert side of government agencies do all the time. As recently

revealed in long secret Army Intelligence files on covert action in Nicaragua, sodium pentothal, "could be used under certain extenuating circumstances. . . . It could be intravenously injected and would have results of a truth serum." (*The Consortium* 3/31/97 p. 5). But disregarding this, Wegmann's memo on Dwyer is worth quoting:

According to Dr. Dwyer, there is no mechanical or chemical device in existence or in use today by which anyone, regardless of his skill, can ascertain with certainty whether the subject is telling the truth or a lie. In his opinion the best chemical for ascertaining the truth from an individual is alcohol. The second ranking item is barbiturates. . .

Later in the memo, Wegmann writes:

I find some more notes and find that he stated that for courtroom purposes all homosexuals are psychotic and in his opinion should not be allowed to testify without corroboration.

Incredibly, and in spite of Shaw's sexual proclivities, Wegmann notes in his memo that Dwyer "would make an excellent witness for the defense, and I do believe that we should ascertain further just what it will take to get him here." Apparently, cooler heads prevailed in the Shaw camp, since Dwyer did not testify at trial.

As noted above, Wegmann wrote that Dwyer was politically connected and had many contacts. That is borne out by this excerpt from the 5/5/67 memo:

Further in connection with Dr. Dwyer, he tells me that an attorney in Houston—one Leon Jaworski, in the Fulbright office—is Johnson's personal attorney. That nothing went on in the Warren Commission investigation i.e., that is anything of importance, without Jaworski's approval. He believes that Jaworski can be of help to us and suggests that I contact him.

Dwyer's estimate of Jaworski's importance to the Commission seems exaggerated. Commission documents reveal no such awesome import by Jaworski who was originally detailed to the aborted Waggoner Carr, Texas inquiry. But it is interesting that Dwyer felt that the politically connected Jaworski—involvement in both the JFK and Watergate whitewashes—could help Weg-

mann.

One other expert, who did testify at Shaw's trial bears mentioning. This is FBI handwriting expert Charles Appel. Appel is the expert who testified that it was not Shaw's handwriting, signing the name Clay Bertrand, on the Eastern Airlines VIP Lounge sheet. As readers will recall, *Probe* co-editor Lisa Pease has dug up some interesting facts about Mr. Appel (*Probe* Vol. 3 #2 and #5). Appel was a longtime FBI employee, 24 years to be exact. He was called in for the famous Charles Lindbergh kidnapping case. About that case, Appel stated that "The chances against anyone but Hauptmann having written the ransom notes were one in a hundred million million." Today, most authorities agree that Appel helped send an innocent man, Bruno Hauptmann, to the electric chair. Later, Appel testified for CIA ally Sen. Thomas Dodd when he got in trouble on ethics charges. Even though his staff members testified that they saw him sign certain checks, Appel stated that it really was not Dodd's signature on them.

What is odd about Appel's appearance at Shaw's trial is that he was not the first handwriting expert announced in court by Dymond. Early in the proceedings, on 2/7/69, Dymond announced one Gilbert Fortier, a local expert as his analyst. When I asked Dymond about the switch, he stated that Appel had called him and volunteered his services for free. Dymond's implication—that Appel materialized out of nowhere—is not entirely true.

As Bill Davy found, Appel had been secretly contacted by Shaw's cohort at the International Trade Mart, Lloyd Cobb, who he had worked for before. In this regard, it is interesting to note that Cobb also had a CIA security clearance for a "cleared attorneys panel". Appel had also testified for longtime CIA operative Bob Maheu in his lawsuit against Howard Hughes. Although Appel was ostensibly retired, he appears to have been "on call". ♦

The Wegmann Files

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Panzeca's adjective, the "excellent" attorney's departure?

One reason is that Johnson knew the truth about Banister and was more honest about it than the Wegmanns were. Consider the following. In a 1976 obituary in the *Times-Picayune*, it is revealed that Johnson served in the Navy in World War II. In a 1955 newspaper article, it is noted that he would address members of the Sertoma Club. His talk was entitled "Trouble in the Formosa Straits." The article then notes that "Johnson recently served in the Formosa area with the Naval Intelligence department." (Emphasis added). From this, one would deduce that when the war was over Johnson's navy career continued. As Jim Garrison noted in *On the Trail of the Assassins*, Guy Banister was also ONI. In the film *JFK*, when Garrison takes out two assistants to visit 544 Camp St., one of them mentions an old intelligence adage, "Once ONI, always ONI." In a 1960 news article in the *New Orleans States-Item*, a movement was started to root out "subversive influences in the state." Two of the men wishing to serve as investigators for this new committee were Guy Banister and "Atty. Guy Johnson of New Orleans."

But the association between Johnson and Banister is even closer than the above would suggest. Among the recently declassified documents that Garrison had turned over to the HSCA were pages from Ferrie's treatise on cancer. Garrison noted to the HSCA that, when copying this work, another letter of Ferrie's was "accidentally stuck in the photostat machine". This caused an unintentional notation to be left at the bottom of one of the pages of the treatise. It read in part: "Some of B's microfilm were sent to Atlanta right-wingers—many of original files are at Guy Johnson's."

Johnson was also in a position to know about Banister's association with Clay Shaw. As Davy notes, one of the most tantalizing facets of Shaw's career was his high level security clearance coded QKENCHANT. In recently declassified CIA files, either Johnson or his son Guy Jr. also has a high level CIA clearance. In a December 1981 interview, Bud Fensterwald talked to a former associate of

Banister's in New Orleans named Tommy Baumler. Garrison also knew of Baumler at the time of his investigation, but he was understandably tight-lipped with the DA. Years later, with little to worry about, he was more candid. In Fensterwald's handwritten notes of the interview one line reads: "Shaw, Banister and Guy Johnson—intelligence apparatus for N. Orleans". Further in the interview notes, Fensterwald writes that Baumler was very clear that "Oswald worked for Bannister." (sic) Right below this, figuring even more into

Baumler was very clear that "Oswald worked for Bannister." Baumler also stated that Banister was able to give letters of marque i.e. a license to clear one with law enforcement officers, so that "if you are caught as a communist, the letter will clear you of communist leanings."

Oswald's New Orleans profile, Baumler stated that Banister was able to give letters of marque i.e. a license to clear one with law enforcement officers, so that "if you are caught as a communist, the letter will clear you of communist leanings."

So, by all indications, Johnson was quite aware of the reality of what was going on at Guy Banister's office in the summer of 1963. But another question arises as we delve deeper into Johnson's departure from Shaw's defense. Did the Wegmanns know also? Or were they just unaware of such a connection and how that could compromise their client, Clay Shaw? In the aforementioned 1976 obituary for Johnson, it is revealed that he worked for two New Orleans DA's. Before his ONI service Johnson was an assistant under DA J. Bernard Cocke. The article then notes that, "After serving in the Navy in World War II, Mr. Johnson returned to become an assistant DA under Herve Racivitch."

This is quite interesting. When Racivitch stepped down from public office, he formed a private law firm in New Orleans. The name of this firm was Racivitch, Johnson, Wegmann and

Mouledoux. There is a recently declassified file which contains a letter by Guy Banister to Johnson at this law firm, proving Baumler's assertions. The date of the letter is January 5, 1959. In it, Banister is proposing for infiltration purposes into the National Students Association one Wilfred A. Bergeron. Banister states that while talking to Bergeron, he told him that "he had served in the Air Force and had just gotten out and entered school. He said he served in the security section and has atomic clearance." At the close of this letter, Banister states "If it

is satisfactory and you can determine this individual's reliability, I will set him up to begin work with me and pass on to you any information he produces." In the March 1967 issue of *Ramparts*, writer Sol Stern exposed the longtime CIA infiltration of the National Students Association (NSA), which Johnson and Banister seem to have had a hand in. That Johnson was performing these "anti-subversive" activities while partners in this law firm with at least one of the Wegmanns is illuminating.

But there is something even more telling involved. In another recently declassified CIA file, it is noted that the articles of incorporation for Banister's so-called detective agency were notarized on 1/21/58 by none other than William J. Weg-

mann. This seems to be at the time of course, when he was associated with Johnson at the above firm. Could it truly be possible that the Wegmanns would *not* be cognizant of what Banister was really up to at 544 Camp Street, or at his previous location in the Balter Building? This strains credulity. If so, Wegmann's comment to Gurvich is refracted as if in a prism. It is most likely that the Wegmanns did know of Banister's federal connections and were now intent on stopping Garrison, not so much from finding out about them, but being able to present witnesses to testify about it and the Shaw-Banister-Johnson nexus. With this trial strategy, Johnson was too close to the fire to sit at the defense table.

The above outlines and hints at who and what was involved in the defense of Clay Shaw against Jim Garrison. The reader will note that the trail seems to lead above New Orleans and into the higher echelons of power in Washington D. C. The next part of this article will use declassified files to show with precision the Wegmann connection to Washington. ♦