

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10
MAY 1962 EDITION
GSA GEN. REG. NO. 27
5010-106
UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

- Tolson _____
- Belmont _____
- Mohr _____
- Casper _____
- Callahan _____
- Conrad _____
- DeLoach _____
- Evans _____
- Geale _____
- Rosen _____
- Sullivan _____
- Tavel _____
- Trotter _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Holmes _____
- Gandy _____

DATE: 11/27/63

TO : Mr. Conrad *JW*

FROM : R. H. Jevons *RHJ*

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT
JOHN F. KENNEDY

In connection with our examination of evidence received in the above matter, we have considered all possible examinations and techniques which would be productive in identifying the perpetrator of the crime. It is noted that we have already by means of microscopic examinations, identified the gun used in the assassination and further through handwriting examinations identified Lee Harvey Oswald as the individual who ordered and paid for this gun. It is further noted that an eyewitness reportedly selected Oswald from a line-up as being most similar in appearance to the subject whom the eyewitness saw aiming and firing the rifle at the Presidential car although the eyewitness was unable to make a positive identification.

TEXAS

Among the analytical techniques considered from the beginning has been a rather recently developed technique known as neutron activation analysis, which is an outgrowth of the atomic energy program and which makes it possible to analyze for the presence of much smaller quantities of materials than heretofore possible by the earlier existing techniques. One consideration of this technique in the present case was directed toward the possible detection of powder residues on the person and clothing of the suspect with the objective of showing that he actually fired the gun. In this respect, it is noted that the detection of such residues on the hands and on the person and clothing of Oswald would not necessarily establish the exact kind of weapon fired by him, the time at which he fired the weapon or the number of times the weapon was fired. Accordingly, in view of the nonspecific nature of such results and in view of the massive evidence already available indicating Oswald's guilt, it was not felt that this type of examination would contribute essentially to the investigation and trial of Oswald.

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Enclosure

- 1 - Mr. Tolson
- 1 - Mr. Belmont
- 1 - Mr. Mohr
- 1 - Mr. DeLoach
- 1 - Mr. Rosen
- 1 - Mr. Sullivan
- 1 - Mr. Handley, Rm. 5710

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Memorandum to Mr. Conrad
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However, Oswald is now dead and there will be no trial. In view of this development, it is felt that this examination should now receive further consideration in order to protect the Bureau against any possible future allegations, however unfounded, that if neutron activation analyses type of analyses had been conducted, one might have obtained extremely significant data.

It is noted that this type of analyses requires access to an atomic reactor, and, as pointed out in earlier memoranda, because of the cost and impossibility of placing such a reactor in any building presently in control of the FBI, the Bureau has not considered it feasible to purchase such a reactor. However, with the Director's approval, we have had for some time, a standing arrangement with the AEC and others whereby we have ready access to their facilities for such examinations. Moreover, representatives of the AEC and others have called since the assassination to offer any possible assistance.

The paraffin casts reportedly made by the Dallas Police Department of the hands and face of Oswald are now being forwarded to the FBI and these casts represent the best possibility of applying the neutron activation technique for the detection of powder residues. Accordingly, for the reasons set out above and primarily to place the FBI in a position to refute any speculative allegations as to the potential value if such tests were not made, it is felt we should conduct neutron activation tests of the casts upon receipt in the Bureau.

Any such examinations will, of course, be with the strict understanding that the information and dissemination of the results will be under complete FBI control.

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There is attached a more detailed discussion of the technical limitations and related details concerning this matter.

RECOMMENDATION:

That we arrange with AEC to use the facilities under contract to them for the purpose of conducting neutron activation tests on the paraffin casts made by the Dallas Police Department and on any other items of evidence such as clothing where it may appear logical.

SP.
q

Gr *V JWC*

BJW

Attachment to memorandum Jevons to Conrad dated 11/27/63
Re: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

Although we already had standing arrangements to use their facilities when necessary, on 11/23/63, representatives of General Atomic Division of General Dynamics, Incorporated, and also members of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) telephonically called the FBI Laboratory to advise they stood ready to help if necessary. Our thanks were expressed for their spirit of cooperation. On 11/27/63, the AEC called the FBI Laboratory to advise that in conformity with the President's announced desire that all agencies cooperate in this matter, they wish to assure us that their facilities for neutron activation analysis were completely available. They stated they would conform to our desires for complete control of the specimens during the course of the examinations, of any data obtained from the examinations and all matters relating to dissemination of this data.