

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
Memorandum

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1 - Mr. White
 1 - Office, 7133
 1 - Mr. Cunningham
 DATE: January 24, 1975

1 - Mr. Kilty
 1 - Mr. Mintz
 Attn: Mr. Bresson

TO : Mr. White

FROM : Mr. M. E. Williams *MEW/R*

SUBJECT: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA) REQUEST
OF HAROLD WEISBERG

John F. Kennedy

Reference is made to Legal Counsel to J. B. Adams' memorandum of December 17, 1974, wherein it was recommended that the Laboratory Division review Weisberg's request for information concerning the assassination of President Kennedy and identify pertinent material available which may satisfy his request.

Weisberg indicates in his letter that he is interested in "the report itself" or "the complete report only"; however, since these are available to him at National Archives, his request must extend beyond these documents.

The material available in this case falls into three categories. 1. All of the background information and data accumulated during the actual examinations of the evidence specimens. 2. The compositional analyses arrived at from calculations of the raw data. 3. The final reports.

Spectrographic analyses were conducted on bullets and/or fragments therefrom, lead fragments and several items of clothing. Examinations by neutron activation were conducted on the above-mentioned bullet and lead materials and on paraffin casts taken from the hands of Oswald. The results of all these examinations, with the exception of the neutron activation studies of the bullet and lead materials, have been included in the FBI Laboratory reports. The results of the neutron activation examinations of the bullet and lead materials are contained in a letter to J. Lee Rankin, General Counsel, The President's Commission, dated July 8, 1964. This letter and the FBI Laboratory reports are available in the National Archives.

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The Laboratory has on hand spectrographic plates and neutron activation analysis data which were used to calculate answers and make judgments regarding the compositions of the materials examined. As with most scientific data, interpretations of these plates and neutron activation analyses data will not stand alone but must be accompanied by technical

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information which explains the parameters involved. Some of this explanatory information could be obtained by an inquirer from outside experts in emission spectroscopy and neutron activation analysis, but in the absence of detailed procedural data, the raw information is not subject to interpretation by non-technical individuals.

Notes were made at the time the examinations were conducted which contain the actual analyses including percentage of some elements present, relative concentrations of other elements and absence of detectable concentrations of elements. Some of these notes are physically in the Laboratory and others are assumed to be interspersed in the case file. The search for this material will be extensive and time-consuming. It is estimated that approximately 50 pages of technical notes may be involved. The costs of reproduction will vary according to the physical dimensions and nature of the material to be furnished.

If we are requested to produce copies of the actual spectrographic plates and neutron activation data, costs will be substantial because of the various formats involved. In the case of the spectrographic plates, the Special Photographic Unit of the Laboratory is investigating the possibility of accurately reproducing the plates so that the recorded information can accurately be assessed from the "duplication." Estimates of the costs involved in such reproduction; if they can be made, are not presently available. In the case of the neutron activation data, the total reproduction of this material will involve the equivalent of approximately 1,000 pages. Much more clerical time than that normally required to reproduce 1,000 pages will be involved due to the nature and size of the pages to be copied. It is not unreasonable to assume that the time involved would be approximately ten times greater than the time needed to reproduce 1,000 normal pages.

Accordingly, it will be necessary to evaluate each request in terms of the material to be furnished, and the overall costs will depend on what materials are to be reproduced in response to a specific request..

ACTION: None. For information only.

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