

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : MR. W. C. SULLIVAN

DATE: 3/23/67

FROM : MR. W. A. BRANIGAN

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT
JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY
NOVEMBER 22, 1963,
DALLAS, TEXAS

- 1-Mr. DeLoach
- 1-Mr. Rosen
- 1-Mr. Mohr
- 1-Mr. Wick
- 1-Mr. Sullivan
- 1-Mr. Branigan
- 1-Mr. Conrad
- 1-Mr. Lonihan
- 1-Mr. Goble

Tolson	_____
DeLoach	_____
Mohr	_____
Bishop	_____
Casper	_____
Callahan	_____
Conrad	_____
Felt	_____
Gale	_____
Rosen	_____
Sullivan	_____
Tavel	_____
Trotter	_____
Tele. Room	_____
Holmes	_____
Gandy	_____

PURPOSE:

This reports on the fourth and last television (TV) program in the series by Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) on the Warren Commission Report. During the program certain of the old criticisms of the Bureau were again mentioned and, in addition, the Bureau was criticized for not accepting the bullet found on Governor Connally's stretcher in the hospital. CBS concluded the Warren Report is the best account of what happened on 11/22/63.

BACKGROUND:

On 6/28/67, CBS newscaster Walter Cronkite presented the fourth and last TV program on the Warren Report, considering two questions: (1) Should America believe the Warren Report and (2) Could America believe the Report?

In repeating criticisms previously directed at the Bureau Cronkite quoted the Warren Report that the FBI took an "unduly restrictive view" of its dissemination responsibilities. In addition, he questioned why the FBI tests of Oswald's rifle were made at a stationary target (rather than moving) and why the FBI did not accept the bullet found shortly after the assassination on Governor Connally's stretcher when it was offered to a Special Agent by the man who found it. CBS also criticized the Warren Commission for taking the word of the FBI on the question of whether or not Oswald was an FBI informant. Commission Attorney Arlen Specter stated he was completely satisfied with the competence of the FBI.

John McCloy, a member of the Commission, described the charge that the Commission tried to cover up a conspiracy as "silly" and unreasonable. He stated the Commission's conclusions were not rushed.

Professor Henry Commager, historian, believes further inquiry into the assassination would add nothing. He said there are some people who have a "conspiracy mentality" and reject the ordinary explanation for the extraordinary one and CBS newsmen Eric Sevareid strongly backed Commager, concluding that the notion there was a conspiracy which was being concealed was "idiotic."

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Memorandum to Mr. W. C. Sullivan
RE: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY
62-109363

OBSERVATIONS:

The criticism that we took an "unduly restrictive view" of our dissemination responsibilities is the same one the Warren Commission leveled at us. So far as the rifle tests are concerned, we did as prescribed by the Commission, that is, tested the rifle for rapidity of fire and accuracy at a stationary target at ground level. The criticism that several hours after the assassination we did not accept the bullet found in the hospital on Governor Connally's stretcher is completely unfair. We had no jurisdiction of the case when the bullet was found; the Dallas Police Department did. At that time it was gathering all of the evidence against Oswald. On the question of whether or not Oswald was an FBI informant, we did exactly what the Commission requested of us: furnished numerous affidavits that Oswald was not, gave the Commission the full Oswald file for its examination and in direct testimony by the Director and Mr. Belmont flatly denied Oswald was an informant.

ACTION:

Note. For information.

[Handwritten signatures and initials: "Oswald", "D.J.R.", "C.W.", and a large stylized signature]

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