

JFK

JFK assassination records appeals

Harold Weisberg 3/30/80

"Find out who Sartre is. H.?" (b)(1)

Some months ago I believe I sent you a copy of the news clipping reporting the formation of a "Who killed Kennedy?" committee in Europe and the fact that Jean Paul Sartre would take an active role in it. This, of course, ~~is~~ represents the earth-shaking quality of information that required the personal attention of Director Hoover. As in his own unique manner he moved to keep the nation safe and secure Hoover began by annotating this short clipping: "Find out who Sartre is." This required that all the top FBI brass be activated in the national security, as the attached Serial 4116 reflects: Tolson, Belmont, DeLoach, Rosen, Sullivan and Tavel. (Plus others of lesser stature, like M.A. Jones, who wrote the 6/15/64 memo to DeLoach that is also 4116.)

The second part of 4116, ^{comes to} DeLoach, clearly an internal FBI record, is ^{claim} indicated on the attached worksheet as of ~~2~~ 2 pages for which the BI ~~is~~ is made and which in its entirety was referred to State. State, apparently, is more interested in cookie-pushing than in responding to the FBI's efforts to preserve the nation sound and secure because in two and a half years it appears not to have acted.

On its part, the FBI appears to be reluctant to disclose whatever is reasonably segregable in this part of 4116 because it continues to withhold it.

The next listed record, from Hoover to the Commission's general counsel, also has "national security" claim made for it, but there is no assurance it holds the FBI's rising, to a man, to meet this great danger.

A decade and a half has passed and while Sartre seems not to have endangered us, something that cannot be said ^{of} ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~FBI~~ Ayatollahs, there remains considerable historical interest in how the FBI coped with this great crisis. There are those of us who know Sartre as a philosopher, writer and prominent French Communist. However, we also know that Director Hoover was the greatest Communist hunter of ~~them~~ all, having virtually invented that business (if not entirely ~~single~~ single-handedly). We can understand that his devotion to the nation's security may have dulled him to philosophy and writing, but

we cannot believe that this renowned red-hunter was unaware of Sartre's politics. The conclusion that flows from this, made more significant by the national security claim for the withholding, is that the omniscient was aware of what is not known to mere mortals.

The passing of more than 15 years should make disclosure safe now, so I renew my appeal and express again my great desire to know the answer to the directive, "Find out who Sartre is." Clearly he must be other than generally reputed or all the top echelon of the FBI would not have been activated for the withheld response.

Many months have passed since I first called this to your attention. I can ~~stipulate~~ where determine this from ~~where~~ I am in the accumulation of copies made for appeals I was not able to get to.

Do you really believe the nation would be endangered by disclosure now?

I don't.