

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Mr. J. B. Adams

DATE: 6/3/75

FROM : Legal Counsel *JH*

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY
ASSASSINATION

Assoc. Dir.	_____
Dep. AD Adm.	_____
Dep. AD Inv.	_____
Asst. Dir.:	
Adm.	_____
Comp. Syst.	_____
Ext. Affairs	_____
Files & Com.	_____
Gen. Inv.	_____
Ident.	_____
Inspection	_____
Intell.	_____
Laboratory	_____
Plan. & Eval.	_____
Spec. Inv.	_____
Training	_____
Legal Coun.	_____
Telephone Rm.	_____
Director Sec'y	_____

On 6/3/75, Robert Saloschin of the Department's Office of Legal Counsel contacted Deputy Assistant Director Herington and said he had been requested by Mr. Marion Johnson of Archives to determine whether a document relating to the assassination matter could be released to the public. Mr. Saloschin and Mr. Johnson subsequently came to our office and exhibited the document to Herington. It was a one and one-half page letter written by former Department of Defense General John T. McNaughton (dec.) to Attorney General Katzenbach. Katzenbach had apparently made available to McNaughton an FBI report for his informal review and had requested his advice. The letter contains a number of criticisms with regard to style and content based mainly on McNaughton's view that some details should be pinned down more specifically with regard to the number of shots fired and which bullets struck which individuals. He also objected to some "conclusions" such as statements relating to the "window from where the shots were fired" which he felt indicated that the investigators had already made up their minds as to the facts.

The letter concluded with a paragraph indicating that there was no intention whatsoever of criticizing the FBI and stating that the FBI had done a remarkable job in pulling ^{together} so much material in such a short period of time.

Mr. Johnson stated that although the report was not identified in the letter, it was one of the FBI reports which has been made public by the Warren Commission.

Saloschin wanted to know whether the FBI would interpose any objection to release of this letter and was told that since the letter was

- 1 - Mr. Wannall
 - 1 - Mr. Gebhardt
 - 1 - Mr. Mintz
 - 1 - Mr. Herington
- JH:mtm

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LEGAL COUNSEL

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neither written by nor directed to the FBI, it did not appear that we had any basis to object. Since the letter was directed to the Attorney General of the time, Saloschin was advised that this was a Department decision. Saloschin indicated that he felt that the letter contained nothing which should be hidden, that it was subject to discovery under the FOI Act and he would recommend its release if a request is made for it.

OBSERVATION:

Although the letter does contain some criticism, its concluding paragraph is highly commendatory. In fact, the concluding paragraph could explain the reason for any shortcomings McNaughton saw in the report. Essentially, McNaughton's letter indicated the report as a historical document could have been much more precise and resolved some unanswered questions. On the other hand, he recognized the report as a compilation of information derived through a massive investigation during a very short time period which did not allow for leisurely editing.

RECOMMEDATION:

For information.

TAL

JDH

MS

John

JFH: TFO

per

wal JFH