

The Attorney General

July 29, 1975

Director, FBI

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

On July 7, 1975, Assistant to the Director - Deputy Associate Director (Investigation) James B. Adams and I met in my office with an individual who has requested that his identity be concealed. On this occasion this person discussed the fact that he had been advised by a source whose identity he could not reveal, whose reliability he had no reason to doubt, of two allegations which he believed warranted the Bureau's attention but apparently had not previously been brought to the Bureau's attention.

One was an allegation that Lee Harvey Oswald had visited the FBI office in Dallas sometime prior to the assassination of President Kennedy for the purpose of talking to Special Agent James P. Hosty, Jr. In the absence of Mr. Hosty, Oswald allegedly left a note which was threatening in nature. Further, that this visit and note were not properly reported following the assassination of President Kennedy by Oswald.

The same individual related a second episode as furnished to him by his source to the effect that a call was made to the Bureau office in Dallas prior to the slaying of Oswald warning that Oswald would be shot. Further, that this information had been conveyed to the Dallas Police Department. However, the following day Oswald was shot.

You were unavailable on July 7, 1975; however, on the following day, July 8, 1975, I personally advised you of these allegations in your office and also of this Bureau's intention to conduct an inquiry regarding them.

The purpose of this memorandum is to advise you of the results of our inquiries.

- Assoc. Dir. \_\_\_\_\_
- Dep. AD Adm. \_\_\_\_\_
- Dep. AD Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Asst. Dir.:
- Admin. \_\_\_\_\_
- Comp. Syst. \_\_\_\_\_
- Ext. Affairs \_\_\_\_\_
- Files & Com. \_\_\_\_\_
- Gen. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Ident. \_\_\_\_\_
- Inspection \_\_\_\_\_
- Intell. \_\_\_\_\_
- Laboratory \_\_\_\_\_
- Plan. & Eval. \_\_\_\_\_
- Spec. Inv. \_\_\_\_\_
- Training \_\_\_\_\_
- Off. Cong. & Public Affs. \_\_\_\_\_
- Records Mgmt. \_\_\_\_\_
- Sec'y \_\_\_\_\_

13 - ENCLOSURE

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REC-87 100-157667-7229X

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SENT FROM D. O.  
 TIME 10 AM  
 DATE 7-29-75  
 BY [Signature]

HNB:bhg (4)

[Handwritten signatures and notes]  
 HNB by [Signature]  
 Xerox copy delivered to Paul Mack  
 for delivery to Mr. James Robinson  
 Criminal Division of Dept. 10/9/75

MAIL ROOM  TELETYPE UNIT

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Upon my instructions, a conference was held on July 8, 1975, in Mr. Adams' office. In attendance, in addition to Mr. Adams, were Mr. J. Gordon Shanklin who served as the Special Agent in Charge of our Dallas Office from April 22, 1963, until his retirement on June 27, 1975; Mr. Theodore L. Gunderson, the current Special Agent in Charge of our Dallas Office; Supervisory Special Agent William E. Nettles of our General Investigative Division and who has assigned to him the assassination case; and Assistant Director in charge of the Inspection Division Harold N. Bassett. It was my instructions that the Inspection Division would coordinate the inquiries and that Mr. Bassett would personally take charge of same. At this meeting those people in attendance were briefed by Mr. Adams concerning the allegations mentioned above and were told my instructions that the matter must receive prompt and continuous attention.

Initially, it was necessary to conduct an extensive file review both at Bureau Headquarters and in Dallas to determine whether our files contained any information which might shed light on these two allegations. Also, it was necessary to determine, if possible, the identity of the employee who would have been in the position to have received such a note as alleged from Lee Harvey Oswald. There was no information developed as a result of these reviews indicating that Oswald had ever visited the Dallas Office of the FBI or that he had left a note. In fact, a review of pertinent testimony before the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy disclosed that Ruth Hyde Paine in her testimony on March 19, 1964, testified that Oswald had told her that he had stopped at the downtown office of the FBI and tried to see the Agents and left a note. It was her impression that this note was irritating. By way of background, in the Fall of 1963, Marina Oswald, the wife of Lee Harvey Oswald, was residing at the residence of Mrs. Paine at Irving, Texas, and Oswald would visit his wife at the Paine residence on weekends.

Subsequently in her testimony Mrs. Paine stated that she had learned only a few weeks ago that he never did go to the FBI office. Continuing, she stated "Of course, knowing, thinking that he had gone in I thought that was sensible on his part but it appears to have been another lie." This particular testimony can be found on pages 18 and 19 of Volume III of the hearings before the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy.

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It is noted that in Mrs. Paine's testimony she does not advise who informed her that Oswald had not visited the Dallas Office. However, the July, 1964, issue of "Redbook" magazine contained an article entitled "Prelude to Tragedy: The Woman Who Sheltered Lee Oswald's Family Tells Her Story." This is an interview of Ruth Paine. On page 88 of that article she stated, ". . . Oswald told me he had tried to contact the Agent although we learned after the assassination from the FBI that he had lied about this."

Our review of pertinent material did disclose information relating to an anonymous telephone call received at the Dallas Office at 2:30 a. m., November 24, 1963, wherein an unknown male stated, ". . . tonight, tomorrow morning, or tomorrow night, we are going to kill the man that killed the President." This information was promptly reported to the Dallas Sheriff's Office and the Dallas Police Department and recorded in our files. The Interview Report Forms pertaining to this information were published by the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy and may be found in the Commission's Hearings as follows: (1) Volume XXIV, page 429, Exhibit 2013; (2) Volume XXIV, page 434, Exhibit 2018; (3) Volume XIX, page 772, Exhibit 5087; (4) Volume XXIV, page 436, Exhibit 2021. (Copies attached.)

Following completion of the above-referred-to file reviews and in the absence of any information indicating that Oswald had visited the Dallas Office, it was readily apparent that certain interviews would have to be conducted. Accordingly, Assistant Director Bassett made plans to depart for Dallas on the evening of Sunday, July 13, 1975. However, because of another urgent matter his departure had to be delayed. Accordingly he departed for Dallas on the morning of July 15, 1975.

On July 15, 1975, Mrs. Nannie Lee Fenner, a current clerical employee of our Dallas Office, was interviewed and she furnished a sworn statement, a copy of which is attached. In essence, she advised in this statement that approximately one week or ten days prior to November 22, 1963 (the date President Kennedy was assassinated), an individual appeared at the reception desk and asked to see SA Hosty. At that time Mrs. Fenner was serving as the receptionist in the Dallas Office. According to Mrs. Fenner she learned that Hosty was not in and so informed this visitor. He then left an envelope with a note inside. On the envelope there appeared the name SA Hosty. The envelope was not sealed and the note was partially sticking out from the envelope. Mrs. Fenner read the note and according to her recollection it said something like the following:

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**"Let this be a warning. I will blow up the FBI and the Dallas Police Department if you don't stop bothering my wife."**

**"Signed Lee Harvey Oswald"**

From photographs which Mrs. Fenner later saw in the newspaper she recognized the person who delivered this note to be Lee Harvey Oswald. To her recollection she took this note to then Assistant Special Agent in Charge Kyle Clark (since retired). Clark, after reading the note, stated that he was just a nut and instructed Mrs. Fenner to give it to Hosty. According to Mrs. Fenner, upon returning from Clark's office she showed the note to a Miss Helena May and some time thereafter to a James White and a Joe Pearce. Sometime later in the day she personally gave the note to SA Hosty. Mrs. Fenner recalls that he made some comment to the effect that Oswald was a nut.

It is Mrs. Fenner's recollection that she reported to work on November 24, 1963, and sometime during that day ASAC Clark said to her, "Forget about the Oswald letter." On a subsequent date she asked SA Hosty whatever happened to the Oswald letter to which he replied, "What letter -- I don't know what you are talking about." Further, sometime after this, perhaps two or three days, she was told by Supervisor Kenneth C. Howe to "Forget the letter."

Mrs. Fenner was asked whether she had any personal knowledge as to whether Mr. Shanklin had been aware of this letter. She said she did not but recalled being advised by SA Ural Horton (now retired) in approximately April of this year that he had informed Mr. Shanklin approximately a year previous of Oswald's visit to the Dallas Office and the fact that he left a note. Horton stated that upon telling Shanklin this he "almost jumped out of the car."

Following the interview of Mrs. Fenner, Mr. Bassett proceeded to San Diego, California, the current office of assignment of Kenneth C. Howe. On July 16, 1975, he furnished a sworn statement, a copy of which is attached. He advised in his statement that he recalled having received information that Mrs. Fenner had stated she thought Oswald had been into the office some time prior to the assassination. He stated that he was of the opinion that having heard this comment he mentioned it to either

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SAC Shanklin or ASAC Clark. He categorically denied ever telling Mrs. Fenner to "Forget the letter." Following his furnishing of this sworn statement, Howe voluntarily contacted Mr. Bassett and Inspector Francis M. Mullen, Jr., and furnished the following additional information which was also incorporated into a sworn statement, a copy of which is attached.

According to Howe, subsequent to the assassination of President Kennedy, in searching for a serial or file of some sort in the workbox of SA Hosty he came upon a note which obviously appeared to be from Lee Harvey Oswald. He stated that he has no present recollection of the wording in the note but there was no doubt in his mind that it was from Oswald and that to his recollection the note appeared threatening in nature. He stated that he recalled taking the note to either SAC Shanklin or ASAC Clark. He claims that following reporting of this incident that the matter was never discussed by him with anyone and he has no knowledge what action, if any, was taken by the individuals to whom he delivered the note.

I telephonically advised you on July 17, 1975, of the information received from Mrs. Fenner and SA Howe and also that SA Hosty and former ASAC Clark would be interviewed.

Subsequently, on July 21, 1975, Kenneth C. Howe contacted an Inspector who was then conducting an inspection of the San Diego Office. At this time he furnished another sworn statement, a copy of which is attached. According to Howe, in giving this matter additional thought he recalls that upon finding the letter in question in the workbox of SA James Hosty, which appeared to have been prepared by Lee Harvey Oswald, he immediately and personally delivered the letter to then SAC Shanklin. He stated that he is not able to recall the exact date that he found the letter but states it was after Oswald had been arrested and believes that it was after he had been shot. He said that he seems to recall that SAC Shanklin expressed some consternation but cannot remember specifically what he said.

On July 17, 1975, Mr. Bassett departed for Kansas City, Missouri, the current office of assignment of SA James P. Hosty, Jr. He was interviewed on that date and furnished a sworn statement, a copy of which is attached.

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Hosty advised that approximately three, possibly four, weeks before the assassination of President Kennedy he recalled coming into the office and Mrs. Fenner, the Bureau's receptionist, gave him an envelope containing a letter with the comment, "Here -- this is from some nut." Hosty advised that to his recollection the letter was in the nature of a complaint, complaining that he had interviewed the wife of the letter writer without this person's knowledge or permission and it said something to the effect "If you want to know something about me come and talk to me directly." Hosty advised that he did not recall any signature on this note and in fact he thought it was from the subject of a case he had handled who had made a complaint alleging his civil rights had been violated and upon his interview of this individual's wife she furnished a different version of the allegations, completely wiping out the civil rights complaint. Therefore, he merely placed this note in his workbox along with other material.

Continuing, Hosty advised that on November 22, 1963, shortly after the assassination he learned that Lee Harvey Oswald was in custody at the police department and also believed to be the assassin of President Kennedy. Upon hearing this name he immediately advised the Special Agent in Charge that Oswald was the subject of one of his cases and immediately obtained the file and brought it to the Agent in Charge. On that same date he assisted in the interrogation of Oswald and upon Oswald learning of Hosty's identity Oswald commented, "So you're Hosty. I have heard about you -- you were the one who was out talking to my wife and bothering her. If you wanted to know something about me you should have come and talked to me."

Hosty advised that following the interview of Oswald he returned to the Dallas Office and sometime during the evening of November 22, 1963, the letter in question, which was in his workbox, was brought to his attention by he believes Supervisor Howe but possibly SAC Shanklin. He claimed they discussed the possibility of this note being from Oswald and although at the time he received it he did not believe it was, based upon statements that Oswald had made to him at the police department, [REDACTED] (c) they believed it was probable this letter was from Oswald.

According to Hosty, it was his recollection that he was going to include reference to this letter in a report being prepared but after

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consultation with he believes SAC Shanklin and Supervisor Howe he was instructed by SAC Shanklin to disregard and destroy the letter. It is his recollection that this letter was then discarded by him in a Bureau wastebasket. Hosty stated that he is absolutely and positively certain beyond a shadow of a doubt that there was no threat to do him or anyone else bodily harm. He would have recalled such a threat and it is his recollection the letter was in the form of a complaint about his bothering the letter writer's wife.

It is noted that Hosty testified before the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy on April 2, 1964. His sworn testimony may be found in Volume IV on pages 440 - 476. On page 464 of this testimony Mr. Hosty made this statement, "Prior to the assassination of the President of the United States I had no information indicating violence on the part of Lee Harvey Oswald. I wish the record to so read."

Mr. Hosty also advised that he recalled Mrs. Fenner asking him several weeks after the assassination about a letter from Lee Oswald. He stated that he had been instructed by his Agent in Charge not to discuss any of his prior investigation of Oswald with any unauthorized persons and since Mrs. Fenner had the reputation in the Dallas Office of being a loud mouth he did not think he should discuss the matter with her so he answered her question by saying, "What letter," and then changed the subject.

With regard to the previous testimony of Ruth Paine, as well as her comments in the "Redbook" magazine, Hosty claims that sometime in the early part of 1964 Mrs. Paine advised him that Oswald had told her he had gone to the FBI office and had talked to Hosty. Hosty stated that he told her this was not true, he had not talked to Oswald. From this Mrs. Paine may have drawn the conclusion that Oswald had not come to the FBI office in Dallas.

On July 18, 1975, Mr. Bassett proceeded to New York, New York, and conducted an interview with former employee Kyle G. Clark, who is now retired and employed in that city. Attached is a typed copy of his sworn statement.

Mr. Clark was given the opportunity to read the statement furnished by Mrs. Nannie Lee Fenner. Clark advised that the information

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in her statement was new and foreign to him. He stated that at no time prior to the assassination was he ever shown a note or made aware of such a note. Further, that he was never aware of nor did he hear any rumors or statements that Oswald had visited the office to see SA Hosty.

On July 21, 1975, former SAC J. Gordon Shanklin voluntarily traveled from Dallas to Washington, D. C., for the purpose of being interviewed. A copy of his sworn statement is attached.

After reviewing the statement furnished by Mrs. Fenner, Mr. Shanklin advised that he had no recollection of the information furnished in her statement ever being brought to his attention until approximately two and one-half weeks ago. (As noted previously, he attended a conference in Mr. Adams' office on July 8, 1975, and in fact the source who furnished the allegations had actually contacted Mr. Shanklin on July 3, 1975, advising Mr. Shanklin of the allegation relative to Oswald's visit to the Dallas Office. Upon being advised of this Mr. Shanklin suggested that this person bring it to the immediate attention of Mr. Adams or me.)

Mr. Shanklin also stated categorically that he had no knowledge or independent recollection of Howe ever bringing the matters he mentions to Mr. Shanklin's attention, either before or after the assassination. Moreover, he advised that he has no independent knowledge of Hosty ever discussing Oswald being at the office, leaving a note for Hosty and was certainly never shown any note by Hosty, Howe, or anyone else. He states unequivocally that he never told Hosty or anyone to destroy any note. He points out that after reading Hosty's description of the note, if there was one and if it had been brought to his attention, he certainly would have instructed that same be included in an appropriate report. He notes further that there would have been no embarrassment as far as he can see to the Bureau or to anyone except possibly Hosty for not handling it a little more expeditiously.

Mr. Shanklin made particular note of the fact that he recalled that some time subsequent to the assassination information came to his attention that Oswald may have been seen in a garage immediately adjacent to the Dallas Office. He recalls that he ordered this matter to be investigated.



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A review of our files disclosed that this matter was indeed investigated, the results of which were furnished to the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy, but were not used in the publication of the Commission's findings.

With regard to Mr. Shanklin's comment that there would have been no embarrassment to the Bureau had this note become known, he orally pointed out that under the dissemination procedures in effect at that time and assuming that the note contained the comments as alleged by Mrs. Fenner, the Bureau would not have disseminated this information to the Secret Service. Page 444 of the Final Report of the President's Commission sets forth the FBI instructions relative to liaison with other Government agencies which existed at the time of the assassination. A copy of this page, together with the Commission's recommendation that liaison between all Federal agencies responsible for Presidential protection should be improved, is attached.

On July 21, 1975, a conference was held in my office which was attended in addition to me by Messrs. Adams, Bassett, Assistant to the Director - Deputy Associate Director (Administration) Thomas J. Jenkins, and Inspector - Deputy Assistant Director J. Allison Conley of the Inspection Division. A review was made of the material developed to date. It was agreed by those present that four additional interviews would be necessary at this time, specifically, the three individuals whom Mrs. Fenner claimed had read the note, as well as former SA Ural Horton who, according to Mrs. Fenner, told her that he advised Mr. Shanklin of the Oswald visit and note sometime in 1974.

I telephonically contacted you on July 22, 1975, and informed you of our progress to date and that it was necessary to interview four other people before we could furnish a report to you. You were in agreement with this course of action.

On July 22, 1975, James Von White, Miss Helen V. May, and SA Joe A. Pearce were interviewed separately at Irving, Texas, by Messrs. Bassett and Conley. They all furnished sworn statements, copies of which are attached.

Mr. White, a special clerk, was advised of the information furnished by Mrs. Fenner. He categorically denied that Mrs. Fenner had

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ever showed him a note and further denied that he had any knowledge of such a note or that Oswald had visited the Dallas Office of the FBI. White pointed out that on November 12, 1963, he reported for assignment as an investigative clerk from the Dallas Office to the Fort Worth Resident Agency. This is confirmed through review of his file. Since the date of this transfer Mr. White has been continuously assigned to the Fort Worth Resident Agency.

Miss May was also advised of the information furnished by Mrs. Fenner. She categorically denied ever seeing the note to which Mrs. Fenner makes reference. She did state, however, that Mrs. Fenner did mention to her that Oswald had come to the Dallas Office and had left a note. She is of the opinion that she was so informed subsequent to the assassination but prior to the time that Oswald was killed. She stated that she does not recall exactly what Mrs. Fenner told her as to the contents of the note but seemed to think there was something about the police department and that Oswald was mad about a dishonorable discharge. She did state that under no circumstances was she informed that the note contained any threat to President Kennedy. In response to a specific question Miss May recalled that Mrs. Fenner had mentioned to her that she had been told to forget having received the note. She claims, however, that if she was informed of the identity of the persons or person who so told Mrs. Fenner she cannot now recall their identities.

SA Joe A. Pearce was informed of the information furnished by Mrs. Fenner. He noted that in November, 1963, he was employed in the Dallas Office as a complaint clerk. Pearce stated that he never saw a note, letter, message, or communication as alleged by Mrs. Fenner. He did recall that possibly several weeks or months after the assassination Mrs. Fenner mentioned to him that Oswald had been in the office prior to the assassination and had delivered a note for SA Hosty. Pearce said that he did not think anything of it, however, since he had heard that Oswald was an informant or source of Hosty and it was not uncommon for sources to occasionally come to the office for the purpose of delivering some note to the contacting Agent. (This particular comment concerning Oswald being a possible source of Hosty's was looked into by the President's Commission and there was no substance whatsoever to this particular claim.) According to Pearce, he cannot recall ever hearing anything further on the subject matter of Oswald's visit to the Dallas Office until sometime subsequent to May, 1974, when Pearce returned to Dallas as a Special Agent. Sometime

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after arriving back in Dallas, while in a group with several other Bureau employees in the Dallas Office, Mrs. Fenner made a comment to the effect that the note Oswald had delivered to Hosty contained something about a bomb. He said that in his opinion this statement was nothing more than an exaggeration since Mrs. Fenner has a tendency to exaggerate in the opinion of SA Pearce. He was of the opinion the other employees in this group also had the same reaction. He could not recall who was part of this group but thought possibly SA Drain was present (SA Vincent E. J. Drain). According to Pearce, he was never advised by Mrs. Fenner that she had been told to forget the visit by Oswald.

Ural E. Horton, Jr., retired Special Agent, was interviewed on July 23, 1975, by Mr. Conley at Buffalo, Wyoming. He furnished a sworn statement, a typed copy of which is attached.

Mr. Horton advised that in January of 1974 Mr. Shanklin asked him to accompany Shanklin to Abilene, Texas, for a retirement dinner in honor of former SA Coleman Mabray. While en route by car to Abilene a conversation took place between Shanklin and Horton concerning SA Hosty. Shanklin indicated he had recently been in Kansas City for a conference with Director Kelley and during this conference Director Kelley had mentioned to Shanklin some concern over the reason for Hosty being transferred to Kansas City. The Director, knowing that Hosty had worked for Shanklin in Dallas, asked Shanklin what kind of an Agent was Hosty. Shanklin then asked Horton what he thought of Hosty and Horton stated that he replied he thought Hosty was a "damn fool" if it was true that Hosty had gotten a note from Oswald, not opened a case on him or checked further into it. Horton stated that he made this comment because during the assassination investigation he had heard that Hosty had received a note from Oswald allegedly containing a threat against Hosty. Horton advised that after making these comments to Shanklin the latter acted astonished but he cannot recall any specific words Shanklin might have said in response to Horton's comments about Hosty and the note. He said that he had the feeling Shanklin was surprised but he was unable to further explain how he obtained that impression. He advised that he does not recall Shanklin indicated in any way having knowledge of an Oswald note.

Continuing, Horton advised that in either late March or early April, 1975, shortly before his own retirement, there was a conversation in the Dallas Office by several employees concerning a Dallas radio station

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commenting on the possibility of reopening the investigation of the assassination. Prior to this discussion Horton had a conversation with SA Drain about the possibility of reopening this investigation and Horton informed Drain of the conversation which he had had with Shanklin in January, 1974, and Shanklin's apparent surprise when Horton mentioned the Oswald note. Sometime later, during this same day, Horton observed SA Drain, Mrs. Fenner and other unrecalled employees engaging in conversation. Mrs. Fenner called Horton at his desk and asked him to come over to the group. On doing so Mrs. Fenner asked Horton about what he had earlier related to SA Drain concerning the Oswald note and the surprise of Shanklin. Horton then related the incident and while he cannot recall the words he used to indicate the surprise of Shanklin he did in some way convey the surprise of Shanklin. Mrs. Fenner then commented as best he could recall Shanklin should have been surprised because she, Mrs. Fenner, saw the damn thing, referring to the note. Horton recalled Mrs. Fenner said the note contained a threat but cannot recall if she said who this threat was against or if she elaborated further in this regard. Horton denied having any first-hand knowledge of Oswald visiting the office or of his communicating in any way with Hosty and has no knowledge if any Oswald communication ever existed and no knowledge as to its possible disposition.

Enclosures (P)  
(16)