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watch was abolished on October 9, 1963, for no apparent reason, only hours before the FBI received critical information on Oswald. When Marvin Gheesling canceled Oswald's FLASH,²⁰ he effectively silenced the national security alarm that was just about to sound from an incoming CIA report on Oswald's (or an impostor's) activities in Mexico.

From the perspective of the plot to kill Kennedy, the cancellation of the FBI's FLASH came in the nick of time. Oswald was to play the indispensable role of scapegoat in the scenario, requiring that he be quietly manipulated right up through the assassination. Had the FBI alarm sounded, Oswald would have been placed on the Security Index, drawing critical law enforcement attention to him prior to Kennedy's visit to Dallas. That much pre-Dallas focus on the patsy would have made it impossible to play out the assassination scenario. The FBI watch on Oswald had to be revoked immediately. It was.

What would have sounded the alarm on Oswald was the CIA's October 10, 1963, message to the FBI about Oswald contacting the Soviet Embassy in Mexico City.²¹ Because Oswald's security watch had just been lifted, the CIA's October 10 message managed to document his latest Soviet connection in a way that would become explosive after the assassination, while at the same time avoiding a security alert on Oswald before the assassination. It was a brilliant tactic in manipulating the FBI that demonstrated just how sophisticated the plotters' knowledge and control was of their national security bureaucracy. John Kennedy was killed by people who knew their national security state inside out and could direct it according to their will.

Even FBI director J. Edgar Hoover was subservient to this kind of power. When Hoover learned after the assassination that supervisor Marvin Gheesling in the FBI's Soviet Espionage section had canceled the security watch on Oswald, he imposed censure and probation on Gheesling.²² We have no evidence that Hoover himself had given any order to cancel the FLASH on Oswald. On the contrary, he seems to have been quite upset by Gheesling's action. He wrote angrily on the document censuring Gheesling: "Yes, send this guy to Siberia!"²³ ("Siberia" in Hoover's geography turned out to be the Detroit FBI office.)²⁴

Hoover's comments suggest he was not a total master of his own house. A higher authority in the national security complex was bypassing him. We have already seen how Hoover scrawled another revealing comment on an FBI memo whose subject was that of keeping track of CIA operations in the United States. In that case Hoover was skeptical that the FBI could avoid being manipulated by the CIA. He wrote doubtfully: "O.K., but I hope you are not being taken in. I can't forget the CIA withholding the French espionage activities in the USA nor the false story re Oswald's trip to Mexico, only to mention two instances of their double-dealing."²⁵

By "false story," Hoover meant false to the FBI—not the CIA's staged duplicity to the public whereby Oswald posed as a pro-Castro activist, but rather the CIA's behind-the-scenes lies to its co-intelligence agency, the FBI,

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