

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : MR. HELD

DATE: 8/17/76

FROM : H. N. BASSETT *HNB*

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY

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| <i>Adm. Serv.</i> | _____ |
| <i>Asst. Dir.:</i> | _____ |
| <i>Ident. Div.</i> | _____ |
| <i>Intell. Div.</i> | _____ |
| <i>Lab.</i> | _____ |
| <i>Legal Coun.</i> | _____ |
| <i>Plan. & Eval.</i> | _____ |
| <i>Rec. Mgmt.</i> | _____ |
| <i>Spec. Inv.</i> | _____ |
| <i>Training</i> | _____ |
| <i>Telephone Rm.</i> | _____ |
| <i>Director Sec'y</i> | _____ |

PURPOSE:

[REDACTED]

CLARK

On 10/21/75 Mr. Adams testified before a Congressional Committee relative to Lee Harvey Oswald's visit to the Dallas Office prior to the assassination of President Kennedy, his leaving of a note and its subsequent destruction. A question was raised at that time and subsequently by the press as to what disciplinary action the Bureau planned on taking. The Bureau's official stance was that since the matter was still pending before Congressional Committees, no action would be taken until conclusion of their inquiries. This matter has been followed since that time. Mr. Mintz has advised that since the Congressional inquiries are now concluded, he sees no reason to delay further administrative action. The purpose of this memorandum, therefore, is to analyze this situation and to submit appropriate recommendations.

SYNOPSIS:

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During Mr. Adams' testimony when the issue of possible disciplinary action was raised, he pointed out that this was a grave responsibility and a grave matter to consider since we must recognize the possibility that in the passage of time recollections may be hazy. Further, consideration had to be given to possibly disciplining some who have been as candid as they can within the bounds of their recollections and yet not disciplining others who are not being truthful.

As a result of the inquiry, it was positively established that there were four principals involved, namely, Nannie Lee Fenner, SA Kenneth C. Howe, SA James P. Hosty, Jr., and retired SAC Gordon Shanklin. Since the inquiry Fenner and Howe have retired.

Excluding Hosty, there are 16 current employees who, during the inquiry, admitted to varying degrees some knowledge of Oswald's visit, the note and the destruction. Some of the information they furnished was

1 - Messrs. Adams, Jenkins, Mintz, Walsh

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(84) Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

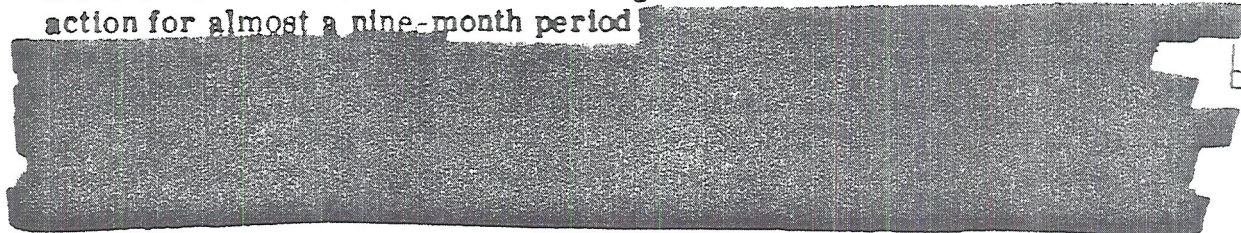
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at variance with information furnished by others, but there was no way to establish whether they were being untruthful or the passage of time had simply made it impossible to recall the events. The main fact, however, was that none of these individuals played any role in the handling or destruction of the note. Moreover, without exception, when asked why they had not brought the matter to the attention of their superiors, they advised that they assumed a matter of such gravity would have been brought to the attention of the SAC.

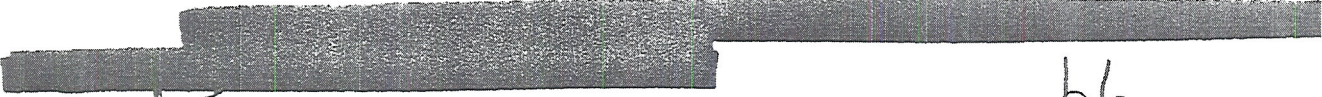
There are eight current employees who disclaim any knowledge of the matter whatsoever. There is no reason to question the veracity of these denials yet the inquiry certainly established a large number of individuals had some knowledge but were not directly connected with the incident. Furthermore, not everyone assigned to Dallas at the time of the assassination was interviewed simply because there was no logical reason to do so. It is possible that they too may have known of the situation and would truthfully inform us of it, thus raising the question: Is it fair to take action against those who were candid with us when there are others where no action would be taken simply because there was no reason to interview?  b6

It is possible that we will never know what really happened. We know that the Congressional Committees did not establish anything that our inquiry did not. If Hosty is telling the truth and he destroyed the note on the instructions of the SAC, this must be taken into consideration even though former SAC Shanklin denies any knowledge of the matter whatsoever. Also, it must be considered that Hosty has already paid a heavy price. He was in effect placed in position of double jeopardy when censured and placed on probation in 1963 and, with no really new information developed, later was censured, placed on probation, suspended for 30 days, and transferred. He was denied a within-grade increase because of this latter action for almost a nine-month period  b6

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That no action be taken against those employees listed in the details of this memorandum who admit some knowledge of the matter but are not directly related to the incident.



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APPROVED: *[Signature]*
Per *[Signature]*
Asst. Dir. *[Signature]*
ACm. Serv. *[Signature]*

Inspection *[Signature]*
Intell. *[Signature]*

Laboratory _____
Legal Coun. _____
Files & Com. _____
Rec. Mgmt. _____
Spec. Inv. _____
Training _____

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DETAILS:

On 10/21/75 Mr. Adams testified before the Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights of the House Committee on the Judiciary. On that occasion Mr. Adams discussed in detail the inquiry conducted by the Bureau relative to Lee Harvey Oswald's visit to the Dallas Office prior to the assassination of President Kennedy and the note left by Oswald and its subsequent destruction. During that testimony the issue of possible disciplinary action was raised and Mr. Adams, in essence, pointed out that this was a grave responsibility and a grave matter to consider since we must recognize the possibility that in view of the passage of time, recollections may be hazy. Further, consideration had to be given to possibly disciplining some who have been as candid as they can within the bounds of their recollection and yet not disciplining others who are not being truthful.

Shortly after Mr. Adams' testimony press inquiries were received as to what action the Bureau planned on taking, and the official Bureau stance was that since the matter was still pending before Congressional Committees, no action would be taken at that time.

This matter has been followed on a 30-day basis with Mr. Mintz. On 8/13/76 Mr. Mintz advised that he had been informed by [REDACTED] that testimony taken by the Edwards Committee has not yet been printed and it is unlikely that the hearings will be printed. Further, Congressman Edwards has no plan at this time to issue a report stating any conclusion regarding this matter. His intention was to await the outcome of the Church Committee inquiry to determine whether the Church Committee developed any facts at variance with the testimony offered before the Edwards Committee. According to [REDACTED] apparently no inconsistent facts were developed by the Church Committee. Mr. Mintz also advised that it was recommended by the Church Committee that the Inouye Committee continue the inquiry regarding President Kennedy's assassination, but the Inouye Committee has not acted to authorize a continuation of that inquiry as yet. William Miller, Staff Director of the Inouye Committee, advised [REDACTED] on 8/12/76 that the Inouye Committee will adopt the recommendation to continue the inquiry; however, it is not believed that their inquiry would be directed at the Oswald visit, the note and destruction of same. Mr. Mintz advised, therefore, that the Congressional inquiries are now concluded and sees no reason to delay further administrative action in this matter.

*As Appears
in admin
Folder.*

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CLAD
10/21/76

File in Hosty file
Hosty file

Mr. Burns

Mr. Trotter
b6

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|------------------|--|
| Mr. Tolson | |
| Mr. DeLoach | |
| Mr. Mohr | |
| Mr. Bishop | |
| Mr. Casper | |
| Mr. Callahan | |
| Mr. Conrad | |
| Mr. Felt | |
| Mr. Gale | |
| Mr. Rosen | |
| Mr. Sullivan | |
| Mr. Tavel | |
| Mr. Trotter | |
| Tele. Room | |
| Director's Sec'y | |

SYNOPSIS:

[REDACTED]

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