

471

(18)

FACSIMILE

November 24, 1963

4:00 P.M.

SECRET

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover said as follows:

There is nothing further on the Oswald case except that he is dead. Last night we received a call in our Dallas office from a man talking in a calm voice and saying he was a member of a committee organized to kill Oswald.

We at once notified the Chief of Police and he assured us Oswald would be given sufficient protection. This morning we called the Chief of Police again warning of the possibility of some effort against Oswald and he again assured us adequate protection would be given. However, this was not done.

They brought him out of the City Jail and were taking him to the County Jail when a man stepped out and shot him in the stomach. This man was arrested at once. He goes under the name of Jack Leon Ruby but his real name is Rubenstein. He runs two night clubs in Dallas and has the reputation of being a homosexual. Immediately after the shooting, he (Oswald) was moved to Parkland Hospital and died about 45 minutes ago. We had an agent at the hospital in the hope that he might make some kind of a confession before he died but he did not do so.

Ruby says no one was associated with him and denies having made the telephone call to our Dallas office last night. He says he bought the gun about three years ago and that he guessed his grief over the killing of the President made him insane. That was a pretty smart move on his part because it might lay the foundation for a plea of insanity later.

I dispatched to Dallas one of my top assistants in the hope that he

DECLASSIFIED  
FBI ltr, September 1, 1978  
By Trudy Peterson NARS, Date 9-18-78

SECRET

CLASSIFIED BY 4915 - 7/18/78  
EXEMPT FROM GDS CATEGORY 2 & 3  
DATE OF DECLASSIFICATION INDEFINITE

S  
E  
C  
R  
E  
T

U

U

1478  
28

y9

SECRET

-2-

might stop the Chief of Police and his staff from doing so damned much talking on television. They did not really have a case against Oswald until we gave them our information. We traced the weapon, we identified the handwriting, we identified the fingerprints on the brown bag.

We were able to identify the bullets as coming from that gun. All the Dallas Police had was three witnesses who tentatively identified him as the man who shot the policeman and boarded a bus to go home shortly after the President was killed. He got on a bus to go home to get a shirt and the bus conductor tentatively identified him as the man who boarded the bus.

Oswald had been saying he wanted John Abt as his lawyer and Abt, with only that kind of evidence, could have turned the case around, I'm afraid. All the talking down there might have required a change of venue on the basis that Oswald could not have gotten a fair trial in Dallas. If they keep on talking, perhaps the same will be true of Ruby.

Chief of Police Curry I understand cannot control Capt. Fritz of the Homicide Squad, who is giving much information to the press. Since we now think it involves the Criminal Code on a conspiracy charge under Section 2-11, we want them to shut up. Furthermore, I have ordered the evidence be secured by the Police Department. We sent most of the evidence back to them. We still have the bullets that were fired and will keep them.

The thing I am concerned about, and so is Mr. Katzenbach, is having something issued so we can convince the public that Oswald is the real assassin. Mr. Katzenbach thinks that the President might appoint a Presidential Commission of three outstanding citizens to make a determination. I countered with a suggestion that we make an investigative report to the Attorney General with pictures, laboratory work, etc. Then the Attorney General can make the report to the President and the President can decide whether to make it public. I felt this was better because there are several aspects which would complicate our foreign relations.

(deletion)

DECLASSIFIED  
FBI letter, September 1, 1978  
By Trudy Peterson NARS, Date 9-18-78

SECRET