

R. W.

AM-JFK SKED STAKES 12-7

BY DAVID NAGY (UPI) -- J. EDGAR HOOVER WAS TROUBLED BY POSSIBILITIES OF A CUBAN CONSPIRACY IN THE JOHN F. KENNEDY ASSASSINATION AND QUASHED AN EARLY FINDING THAT LEE HARVEY OSWALD ACTED ALONE. FBI DOCUMENTS DISCLOSED WEDNESDAY 40,000 PAGES OF RAW FBI ASSASSINATION FILES, RELEASED WEDNESDAY MORNING, DID NOT INDICATE WHETHER OR WHEN HOOVER MIGHT HAVE ABANDONED HIS CONSPIRACY SUSPICIONS, OR WHAT BECAME OF SOME PURPORTED GET-KENNEDY LETTERS HE SAID WERE WRITTEN TO OSWALD FROM CUBA.

AND, ALTHOUGH THE OTHER HALF OF THE JFK ASSASSINATION FILE WILL NOT BE RELEASED UNTIL EARLY NEXT YEAR, THERE APPEARED NOTHING IN THE MASS OF DOCUMENTS TO CONTRADICT THE WARREN COMMISSION CONCLUSION THAT OSWALD ACTED ALONE IN MURDERING THE PRESIDENT.

BUT THE FILES DID SHOW THAT WHILE HOOVER BELIEVED IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE ASSASSINATION OSWALD WAS THE KILLER, AND CONSIDERED HIM IN THE CATEGORY OF A NUT AND THE EXTREMIST PRO-CASTRO CROWD, THE HEAD OF THE FBI AND SECRET SERVICE CHIEF JAMES BOWLEY BOTH SAID POSSIBILITIES OF A MURDER CONSPIRACY FROM THE VERY OUTSET.

-- THAT THE FBI HAD SOME PROVOCATIVE LETTERS PURPORTEDLY WRITTEN TO OSWALD FROM CUBA, WHICH IT COULD NOT AUTHENTICATE AND WHICH, FOR THAT REASON, IT APPARENTLY NEVER GAVE THE WARREN COMMISSION. 20 DAYS AFTER THE NOV. 22, 1963, DALLAS MURDER, TO WITHHOLD A TENTATIVE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT FINDING THAT OSWALD WAS THE LONE ASSASSIN -- AND HAD NO TIES TO HIS OWN KILLER, JACK RUBY -- UNTIL MATTERS WERE INVESTIGATED FURTHER.

DISCLOSURE OF HOOVER'S DOUBTS WAS ONE TIDBIT IN THE AVAILANCHE OF INFORMATION -- NEARLY HALF A TON OF PAPER IN A FLOOR-TO-CEILING STACK -- MADE PUBLIC FROM THE FBI'S LONG-GUARDED KENNEDY ASSASSINATION FILES IN RESPONSE TO A FREEDOM OF INFORMATION SUIT. REPORTS -- RAW MATERIAL -- CENSORED TO DELETT SENSITIVE SOURCES AND INCLUDING RUMORS AND FAULTY LEADS -- ALSO INDICATED AFTER MASS CONFUSION AT FIRST REIGNED AMONG INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITIES AFTER THE KENNEDY MURDER; BUT THAT HOOVER IMMEDIATELY ORDERED THE BUREAU TO POUR ON ITS INVESTIGATIVE RESOURCES AND WITHIN HOURS OF THE SHOOTING, WAS ABLE TO DESCRIBE OSWALD AS THE PROBABLE KILLER AND AS "A NUT" FROM THE EXTREMIST PRO-CASTRO CROWD.

PRO-CASTRO CROWD. HOOVER'S CONSPIRACY SUSPICIONS OCCURS AT MORE THAN ONE POINT IN THE MATERIAL -- INCLUDING A MEMO WRITTEN HOURS AFTER THE SLAYING, -- BUT IS MOST CLEARLY STATED IN A STAFF MEMORANDUM HE WROTE DEC. 12, 1963.

IN IT, HE DESCRIBED A MEETING HE HAD HAD WITH JOHNSON CONCERNING A JUSTICE DEPARTMENT PROPOSAL THAT AN INTERIM STATEMENT BE ISSUED IDENTIFYING OSWALD AS THE LONE ASSASSIN, WITHOUT FOREIGN OR

SUBVERSIVE" SUPPORT AND WITH NO LINKS TO RUBY.  
"I FLATLY DISAGREED," HOOVER WROTE, WITH THE PROPOSAL TO GIVE  
THOSE CONCLUSIONS OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT APPROVAL SO QUICKLY.  
HE SAID JOHNSON SIDED WITH HIM.  
"I SAID I PERSONALLY BELIEVE OSWALD WAS THE ASSASSIN," HOOVER  
WROTE BUT ADDED: "THE SECOND ASPECT AS TO WHETHER HE WAS THE ONLY  
MAN GIVES ME GREAT CONCERN."  
HE SAID HE CONFIDED TO JOHNSON "THAT WE HAVE LETTERS, NOT IN THE  
(EARLY FBI) REPORT BECAUSE WE WERE NOT ABLE TO PROVE IT, WRITTEN TO  
HIM FROM CUBA REFERRING TO THE JOB HE WAS GOING TO DO, HIS GOOD  
MARKSMANSHIP AND STATING TO WHEN IT WAS ALL OVER HE WOULD BE BROUGHT  
BACK TO CUBA AND PRESENTED TO THE CHIEF."  
BUT HE SAID HE FURTHER ADVISED JOHNSON "THAT WE DO NOT KNOW IF  
THE CHIEF WAS (FIDEL) CASTRO AND CANNOT MAKE AN INVESTIGATION  
BECAUSE WE HAVE NO INTELLIGENCE OPERATION IN CUBA; THAT I DID NOT PUT  
THIS IN THE REPORT BECAUSE WE DID NOT HAVE PROOF OF IT AND DID NOT  
WANT TO PUT SPECULATION IN THE REPORT."  
IN CONCLUSION HE SAID "I URGED STRONGLY THAT WE NOT REACH  
CONCLUSION OSWALD WAS THE ONLY MAN DID NOT INDICATE WHETHER THE BUREAU  
WAS EVER ABLE TO DEVELOP MORE INFORMATION ON THESE LETTERS OR WHAT  
HOOVER MAY HAVE TOLD THE WARREN COMMISSION ABOUT THEM BEFORE THAT  
PRESIDENTIAL BODY PUBLISHED ITS OWN VOLUMINOUS REPORT... NAMING  
OSWALD THE LONE ASSASSIN... NEARLY A YEAR LATER HOOVER NEVER KNOWN RUBY.  
HOOVER ALSO SAID HE, TOO, BELIEVED OSWALD HAD NEVER KNOWN RUBY.  
BUT SAID THE GOVERNMENT COULD NOT YET SAY SO POSITIVELY.  
MORE

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X X X SO POSITIVELY. SOME CONSPIRACY THEORISTS HAVE ARGUED THAT CASTRO HAD KENNEDY KILLED IN RETALIATION FOR CIA PLOTS AGAINST THE CUBAN LEADERS OWN LIFE. OTHER THEORIES ACCUSE ANTI-CASTRO CUBANS, OTHER RIGHT-WING FORCES, THE SOVIETS, THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE, THE CIA AND THE FBI ITSELF AS THE CONSPIRATORS. ADDRESSING LINGERING QUESTIONS OVER WHETHER THE CIA HAD COOPERATED FULLY IN THE INVESTIGATION, HOOVER NOTED IN A MEMO WRITTEN FOUR DAYS AFTER THE KILLING THAT CIA DIRECTOR JOHN MCCONE HAD CALLED TO BE SURE I AM SATISFIED THE CIA IS GIVING ALL THE HELP THEY POSSIBLY CAN.

"I ASSURED MR. MCCONE WE HAD THE VERY BEST SUPPORT WE COULD POSSIBLY EXPECT FROM THE CIA. CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATION SHOWED THE CIA NEVER TOLD WARREN COMMISSION THERE HAD BEEN U.S.-BACKED PLOTS AGAINST CASTRO'S LIFE. THE DOCUMENTS RELEASED WEDNESDAY SEEMED TO OFFER NO PARTICULAR SUPPORTING EVIDENCE FOR ANY CONSPIRACY THEORIES.

BUT THEY DO SHOW HOOVER AND ROWLEY, THE SECRET SERVICE CHIEF OF THAT DAY, BEGAN THINKING CONSPIRACY IMMEDIATELY. IN A STAFF MEMORANDUM HE TIMED OFF ONE HOUR AND 51 MINUTES AFTER THE 12:30 P.M. KENNEDY SHOOTING, HOOVER SUMMED UP A TELEPHONE CONVERSATION IN WHICH HE AND ROWLEY DISCUSSED CONSPIRATORS BANGING F.B.O.M. THE CUBANS TO THE KU KLUX KLAN.

"MR. ROWLEY STATED HE WAS ALSO THINKING OF SUBVERSIVE ELEMENTS -- MEXICO, CUBA," HOOVER WROTE. "I THEN MENTIONED THE KLAN ELEMENT. NONETHELESS, HOOVER NEVER APPARENTLY ENTERAINED ANY DOUBTS THAT OSWALD HAD PULLED THE TRIGGER -- REGARDLESS OF WHO MAY HAVE PUT HIM UP TO IT -- AND STATED, IN HIS VERY FIRST PROGRESS REPORT WRITTEN

"I THOUGHT VERY PROBABLY WE HAD IN CUSTODY THE MAN WHO KILLED THE PRESIDENT IN DALLAS, BUT THIS HAD NOT DEFINITELY BEEN ESTABLISHED. SUMMARYING OSWALD'S BACKGROUND AS A FORMER "FAIR PLAY FOR CUBA UNION FROW 1959 TO 1962 AND HIS CREATION OF A FAIR PLAY FOR CUBA COMMITTEE," HOOVER CONCLUDED OSWALD "WOULD BE IN THE CATEGORY OF A

NUT AND THE EXTREMIST PRO-CASTRO CROWD. HOOVER ALSO MOVED FAST TO REBUT CLAIMS OSWALD DID NOT HAVE THE MARKSMANSHIP EXPERTISE TO HAVE SHOT KENNEDY FROM THE SIXTH FLOOR OF THE TEXAS SCHOOLBOOK DEPOSITORY BUILDING AS THE PRESIDENT'S OPEN LIMOUSINE MOVED PAST.

IN THE DEC. 12 MEMO, HE SAID HE ADVISED THE WARREN COMMISSION OSWALD HAD PERFORMED WELL IN MARINE CORPS RIFLE TRAINING AND HITTING KENNEDY WASN'T ANYTHING HE COULD NOT DO. 10.50 P.F.S.