

Ford secretly gave information to FBI on JFK probers

WASHINGTON — Gerald Ford promised to keep the FBI secretly informed of the activities of the Warren Commission almost immediately after it was organized in 1963 to investigate the assassination of President Kennedy, FBI files show.

Then House Republican leader and one of the commission's seven members, Ford made the offer in a Dec. 12, 1963, conversation with Cartha D. DeLoach, FBI assistant director, which Ford requested be kept "in the strictest of confidence."

Headed by Chief Justice Earl Warren, the commission had held its first meeting only a week earlier, on Dec. 5, but it was already embroiled in internal bickering, according to a two-page memo DeLoach submitted to his superiors after the meet-

ing in Ford's office on Capitol Hill.

Made public this week along with more than 58,000 other pages about the Kennedy assassination from FBI files, the memo by DeLoach continued:

"Ford indicated he would keep me thoroughly advised as to the activities of the commission. He stated this would have to be on a confidential basis; however, he thought it should be done."

"Well handled," FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover jotted down on the report.