

APPARENT DELETION OF MATERIAL RELATING TO SA HOSTY FROM AN FBI REPORT
ON OSWALD'S NOTEBOOK

Synopsis: As is well known, Hosty's name and related material did not appear in an early FBI report listing most of the contents of Oswald's notebook. From the numbering of the pages in that report, it appears probable that, contrary to Hoover's testimony, this material was not merely omitted but deleted.

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Harold Weisberg and I are both studying material relating to the possibility that Oswald was an FBI informant, and to the Commission's reaction to such allegations. The importance of the appearance of the Hosty material in Oswald's notebook, and its omission from a relevant FBI report, is indicated by the fact that Hoover himself was asked about this matter when he testified. (5H98 et seq.) Hoover's explanation, in essence, was that the report was an investigative report and did not purport to be a complete listing, and that a supplemental listing was prepared without prompting from the Commission. This whole explanation is at best unconvincing. (See, e.g., Accessories After the Fact, Ch. 8.) As Sylvia Meagher noted, the pertinent affidavit by SA Gemberling was not published. I have obtained this affidavit and other relevant material, which I will not discuss in detail here (noting only that it does not make Hoover's explanation more convincing) except in connection with one point that seems not to have been previously noticed.

Gemberling stated in his affidavit that around December 14, 1963, he instructed SA Kesler to review the Oswald notebook for leads. Kesler prepared a 30 page memo "on multilith, the first page of which was on office memorandum form." The Hosty material was not included "inasmuch as the identity of Special Agent Hosty was known to both Special Agent Kesler and myself and was not lead information."

Gemberling said that in connection with the preparation of his report of 12/23/63 (CD 205) "it was my decision to have page one of Special Agent Kesler's memorandum retyped on plain multilith in order that the retyped page one and the subsequent 29 pages of his memorandum could be used as an insert in my report. This was done solely to avoid necessity for retyping the contents of the entire memorandum for a report.... (I)t should be noted that pages 672 through 701 of my report of December 23, 1963, contain the contents of Special Agent Kesler's memorandum and that pages 673 through 701 bear the typewritten page numbers of Special Agent Kesler's original memorandum." (Emphasis added.)

Page 672 of CD 205 has, in the upper left, "1 / DL 100-10461 / JTK:gmf:mam ." ("/" denotes a new line.) All but one of the remaining pages have only the file number "DL 100-10461" in the upper left, with the page number from Kesler's memo (2 through 30) at the bottom center of the page, with hyphens. (E.g., "- 19 -"; cf. CE 2465.) The only exception is page 696 (page 25 of the original), which has "25 / DL 100-10461" in the upper left -- in conformity with the one page that was admittedly retyped, page 1. This page 25 happens to be the one on which the Hosty material should have appeared. (It has other material from that notebook page.) The amount of blank space is consistent with the removal of the Hosty material.

It is possible, of course, that this one page was originally typed with the exceptional numbering format. (There may have been several typists, since at least two different typewriters were used.) From the "4" and "n" it is clear that the retyped page 1 was not done on the same machine as page 25; I have not found any differences in type face between page 25 and pages 7-8, 13-24, and 26-30; a third machine was used for pages 2-6 and 9-12. The format does suggest that pages 1 and 25 were typed by the same person. Page 25 could have been retyped for some innocent reason -- perhaps SA Gemberling spilled coffee on the original. However, certain of us marginal paranoids might prefer to believe that the page was retyped to remove the embarrassing Hosty material, SA Gemberling's affidavit to the contrary notwithstanding.

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