

FBI Uneasy About Dallas Report

By Drew Pearson

There was a very important backstage byplay when the FBI submitted its report to the Presidential Commission in investigating the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

Real fact was that J. Edgar Hoover, 69-year-old director of the FBI, wanted to publish the report immediately.



This would have got the first jump on a Commission which actually is investigating the FBI. It's also reported the Secret Service, between the two at Dallas, and any inefficiency by either.

What the public doesn't realize is that for the first time since the days of Warren Harding the FBI itself is under investigation. The FBI is not accustomed to being investigated. It's accustomed to do the investigating itself and has become one of the most powerful and feared agencies of Government. Most newspapermen and most Congressmen do not criticize the FBI.

President Johnson knew the FBI would be in for investigation and also knew the sacrosanct position of the FBI when he went to great pains to pick a Presidential Commission of unimpeachable integrity to probe the Dallas tragedy.

What the White House

knew, just from reading the newspaper accounts, was that the FBI had either fallen down on its part of the job in Dallas or else was not cooperating with the Secret Service. There has long been a certain amount of friction between these two agencies, one of which gets the major headlines; the other, the Secret Service, which goes about its business without seeking publicity.

FBI Checked Oswald

But in the train of tragic events leading up to the assassination of President Kennedy, it is an indisputable fact that the FBI did interview Lee Oswald, the suspected assassin, in advance. Despite this, it did not report him to the Secret Service.

The date on which the FBI interviewed Oswald at first was reported to have been Nov. 16, just six days before the tragedy. Later reports indicate the date may have been Oct. 16.

However, what is certain is that the FBI at first tried to cover up the fact that it had interviewed Oswald at all and asked one of Oswald's friends not to admit to the press that the FBI had been around to see him.

It would appear to have been a shocking oversight to permit an unstable, irrational young man who had lived in

lars favoring Fidel Castro, and quite recently had taken a trip to Mexico to contact the Cuban Embassy, to remain both unwatched and unreported to the Secret Service when the President of the United States passed through the city in which he lived and past the building in which he worked.

It's now established that the FBI had kept tabs on Oswald after he came back from Russia last year, interviewed him last August when he was passing out pro-Castro leaflets in New Orleans, and checked on him again when he returned to Dallas. They even checked twice with Mrs. Ruth Paine, the lady who was looking out for Mrs. Oswald while pregnant, Oswald being away most of the time.

The FBI learned from Mrs. Paine even that Oswald was working at the Texas School Book Repository, a state agency located along the usual parade route through Dallas.

Despite this, the FBI neither kept Oswald under scrutiny when President Kennedy passed through Dallas, nor did it give his name to the Secret Service. These are some of the amazing facts about the preliminary probe of the Dallas tragedy which explain why the FBI wanted to get its version of the story out to the news-

papers ahead of the study by the Presidential Commission.

Warren Gets Rebuffed

When Chief Justice Earl Warren reported to his eight colleagues on the Supreme Court that he was heading a Commission to probe the Dallas tragedy, he caught juridical hell.

All of his fellow justices upbraided him, except Justice Arthur Goldberg, who was recently Secretary of Labor.

The Chief Justice, defending himself, told in detail of the almost pleading scene between him and President Johnson. When the President first started talking, Warren started shaking his head.

"I see you shaking your head," said the President. "And I know what you're thinking. I also know what you did as a young lieutenant in World War I when your country drafted you. I'm not going to draft you. But I want you to be just as good a soldier now when your country needs you just as much as it did then."

Warren finally yielded. Having done so, and having braved the critical fire of his own colleagues, he was not about to let J. Edgar Hoover decide the facts in the tragedy of Dallas even before the Presidential Commission could start work.

Drew Pearson will predict President Johnson's choice for Vice President in next year's election—over WTOP radio at 6:40 tonight.

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