



UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY
WASHINGTON

November 25, 1963

OFFICE OF
THE DIRECTOR

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. William Moyers

SUBJECT: World Reaction to Oswald's Slaying

The Communists are making a determined effort to attribute the assassination of President Kennedy to a rightist conspiracy, and the killing of Lee Oswald by Jack Ruby has given them new ammunition.

The press of the free world has headlined the killing, evidenced doubt about Oswald's guilt, and given some credence to the theory of a conspiracy.

The Russian news agency TASS said today: "The 'mysterious' murder of Lee Oswald, accused of assassinating President Kennedy, cuts the ground from under the anti-communist, anti-Soviet, and anti-Cuban hysteria which the yellow press is trying to whip up in order to distract attention from the real perpetrators of the abominable crime . . . The whole thing is obviously a crude provocation. Americans have long become accustomed to southern police always trying to put the blame for crimes by racists, and their own crimes, on 'communists' and 'foreign agitators.' "

The line is being followed by the Communist satellites, including Cuba, and by Communist papers in the Free World.

First reports by wire and telephone from major world capitals give the following pattern of reaction:

Mexico City. Headline treatment, criticism of U.S. police methods, and a report that Ruby got near Oswald by paying off the

police at his bar. The Daily Excelsior editorialized, "Was there fear that Oswald would talk and compromise persons or institutions interested in the death of the political chief of the most powerful country on earth? Does all this reveal a network of people whose motivating force was the sacrifice of Kennedy?" Novedades wrote, "There will always be doubt as to Oswald's guilt."

Stockholm. Sweden's domestic radio service said, "Those responsible for Oswald's safety and solving the assassination of President Kennedy appear, to say the least, in strange and even negative light."

London. Oswald's killing was given heavy front-page play, with large pictures of the actual shooting. The Guardian said: "This grotesque episode is piling more confusion on the shame of Dallas." The Daily Herald wrote: "Lynch law has followed assassination. The corruption of high tragedy by the personal vengeance of a Dallas club owner has brought total fantasy to the American scene." The London Times reported that people at the scene cheered the shooting of Oswald. The Daily Express described Dallas as a "schizophrenic" city, "a rich breeding ground for the lunatic fringe -- the city without a soul." The communist Daily Worker said the shooting "is bound to increase the already strong belief that something is very rotten in the Texas town of Dallas."

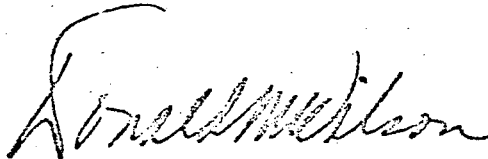
Santiago, Chile. Oswald's shooting was given sensational treatment. Ultimas Noticias speculated on the reasons for the "great facility" with which Ruby was able to approach Oswald. El Mercurio hinted that the killing "involved more than a man taking justice into his own hands."

Paris. The two largest evening papers today are out with head-lined questions. Paris-Press, under the banner "A Tragic Doubt," asks whether Oswald was really guilty, whether there was a conspiracy, and whether he was killed to keep him from talking. France Soir also says that the killing of Oswald raises questions, whether he was alone, why Ruby shot him, why the police did not prevent the shooting, and whether Ruby knew Oswald.

Buenos Aires. Heavy straight news coverage, with the exception of a cartoon captioned "Now we will have to assassinate the assassin of the assassin."

Bonn. Large headlines, and much speculation over the implications of the slaying. Some papers made a point of Oswald's denial, and of the failure of the police to prevent his shooting. Several writers said the killing will help the Soviets with their propaganda line.

Cairo. The important daily, Al-Jumhuriyah, said of the shooting, "This probably goes to show that Oswald was the actual killer, otherwise no one would have taken the trouble to kill him in order to bury his secrets with him. Moreover, the strong denial of the American communist party of having anything to do with the killer, Castro's statements denying any relationship between Cuba and Oswald, and Pravda's charges that enemies of East-West rapprochement are behind the assassination are not mere bubbles in the air."



Donald M. Wilson
Acting Director