

FBI

Date: 11/5/66

Transmit the following in _____
(Type in plaintext or code)

Via AIRTEL _____ REGULAR MAIL _____
(Priority)

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (62-109060)
FROM: SAC, BALTIMORE (89-30)
SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT
JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY,
11/22/63, DALLAS, TEXAS
MISCELLANEOUS - INFORMATION CONCERNING

Shyloer

NR ALIFTON FILE
PER MR. TOLER
SERVICE UNIT
11/8/66
6-11-66

At 6:25 p.m. on November 2, 1966, Mr. DAVID LIFTON, Graduate Student, University of California, telephonically contacted SA JAMES W. SIBERT while on Annual Leave at Telephone Number 912-263-4793, Quitman, Georgia. LIFTON, who was calling from Los Angeles, California, had placed a call to the agent's residence at Hyattsville, Maryland, where the operator was given the number where he could be reached at Quitman, Georgia.

LIFTON stated he was a graduate student at the University of California, was doing a research paper, and had read an account of President KENNEDY'S autopsy paper by Agents SIBERT and FRANCIS X. O'NEILL, which appeared in a book entitled, "The Second Oswald". He stated he had also read accounts in another book entitled, "Inquest". LIFTON stated he wanted to ask some questions regarding this autopsy.

LIFTON was advised that none of his questions could be answered. He then asked where he should direct an inquiry, and stated his question related to the statement made in the Agents' account that "It was apparent that a tracheotomy had been performed, as well as surgery of the head area." LIFTON stated he desired to know which person among the medical personnel present had made this statement. SA SIBERT again informed LIFTON that no comment could be made concerning the autopsy; and if he desired to write a letter regarding such information, it should be addressed to the Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington, D. C. He advised that he intended to write such a letter as soon as possible.

3 - Bureau
1 - Baltimore

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Approved: _____
Special Agent in Charge

Sent _____ M Per _____

BA 89-30

LIFTON advised that he was disappointed that the Agent could not answer his question, since he considered this question to be of paramount importance.

On November 4, 1966, Bureau Supervisor KENNETH RAUPACH was advised that LIFTON had made the above call to SA SIBERT and was directing a letter to the Bureau, concerning his inquiry.

11818 1/2 De Witt Street
Los Angeles, Calif., 90049
November 9, 1966

Mr. Tolson
Mr. Belmont
Mr. Mohr
Mr. Wick
Mr. Casper
Mr. Callahan
Mr. Conrad
Mr. Felt
Mr. Gale
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Sullivan
Mr. Tavel
Mr. Trotter
Tele. Room
Miss Holmes
Miss Gandy

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D.C. 20535

Dear Sir,

Last week, I contacted F.B.I. agent James W. Sibert, Jr. by phone where he was vacationing in Georgia. I am engaged in research on the Warren Commission's Report, and wanted to ask Mr. Sibert some questions concerning an F.B.I. report written by him and agent Frances X. O'Neill, Jr. entitled: "Autopsy of Body of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy". (This report is "Commission Document 7" at the National Archives; at the bottom of page one is indicated "File # 89-30", presumably an F.B.I. designation).

This F.B.I. report says that the President's body was removed from the casket and was placed on the autopsy table. The report then states:

"Following the removal of the wrapping, it was ascertained that the President's clothing had been removed and it was also apparent that a tracheotomy had been performed, as well as surgery of the head area, namely, in the top of the skull." (emphasis added)

My question was: precisely what did these two agents, Sibert and O'Neill, witness which enabled them to make this statement in their F.B.I. report? Did one of the autopsy doctors present or any other doctor present point out that head surgery had been done on the President? Which doctor said so? If the agents involved did not rely on any doctor's statement as the basis for this statement in their report, what direct observations or other criteria enabled them to make this statement? In short, precisely what did these two agents witness which formed the basis for their comments regarding head surgery in their F.B.I. report?

It appeared to me that Messrs. Sibert and/or O'Neill would most probably be the best people to answer this question and to provide the elaboration requested inasmuch as they witnessed the autopsy proceedings and wrote the report which contains the above statement. Presumably, they also took some sort of notes during the autopsy since there is such a wealth of detail in their report (such as a long list of names of those present) despite the fact that this report was not dictated until November 26, 1963, four days after the autopsy. The answer to my questions, therefore, would probably involve the agents consulting any notes made at the time, or their respective memories, or both. That is why I called Mr. Sibert.

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Mr. Sibert pointed out to me on the phone that he could not discuss this matter with me, and that I would have to direct my inquiry to the headquarters office in Washington. I agreed to follow Mr. Sibert's advice and direct my questions in this letter to you.

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Since neither of these agents were called as witnesses before the Warren Commission, there is nothing in the twenty-six volumes or in the material publicly available at the National Archives that I am aware of that could answer the above questions. For this reason, I am directing the inquiry to you, with the hope that it can and will be answered as soon as possible.

I thank you for any cooperation you are able to extend to me in this matter.

Respectfully yours,

David S. Lifton
David S. Lifton

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

Tolson	_____
DeLoach	_____
Mohr	_____
Wick	_____
Casper	_____
Callahan	_____
Conrad	_____
Felt	_____
Gale	_____
Rosen	_____
Sullivan	_____
Tavel	_____
Trotter	_____
Tele. Room	_____
Holmes	_____
Gandy	_____

TO : Mr. DeLoach *[Signature]*

DATE: November 16, 1966

FROM : A. Rosen *[Signature]*

- 1 - Mr. DeLoach
- 1 - Mr. Rosen
- 1 - Mr. Malley
- 1 - Mr. Shroder
- 1 - Mr. Raupach
- 1 - Mr. Wick

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT
JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY
DALLAS, TEXAS
NOVEMBER 22, 1963

PURPOSE:

To advise a citizen's letter has been received asking questions relating to observations of our Agents who attended the autopsy of President Kennedy. Acknowledgment letter attached.

BACKGROUND:

11818 1/2 Dorothy Street

A letter has been received from David S. Lifton of Los Angeles, California, who indicated he telephonically contacted Special Agent James W. Sibert, Jr., while SA Sibert was on vacation. He indicated he wanted to ask Mr. Sibert some questions concerning an FBI report written by SAs Sibert and O'Neill concerning the autopsy performed on President Kennedy on 11/22/63. Mr. Lifton referred to an FBI report indicating that the report said the President's body was removed from the casket and was placed on the autopsy table. He then quoted the following information contained in the report:

"Following the removal of the wrapping, it was ascertained that the President's clothing had been removed and it was also apparent that a tracheotomy had been performed, as well as surgery of the head area, namely, in the top of the skull." (emphasis added)

Mr. Lifton is referring to the FD-302 submitted by Sibert and O'Neill dated 11/26/63, which sets forth information orally furnished to them by the autopsy physician.

Briefly, Mr. Lifton wants to know what our Agents witnessed which formed the basis for their comments regarding the head surgery performed on the President, and in substance, requested an elaboration regarding the autopsy.

Enclosure *sent 11-17-66*

KMR:pah

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[Handwritten notes and signatures]
 Shroder
 Raupach
 Wick
 [Signature]

Memorandum to Mr. DeLoach
RE: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT
JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY

When these questions were asked of SA Sibert, he advised that he could not comment on this matter and referred Mr. Lifton to Bureau Headquarters. The Baltimore Division submitted an airtel to the Bureau which revealed that SA Sibert had been contacted by Mr. Lifton. Lifton, a graduate student of the University of California, is doing a research paper and had read an account of President Kennedy's autopsy report by SAs Sibert and O'Neill which appeared in the book, "The Second Oswald," written by Richard H. Popkin. Lifton also indicated he had read an account in another book entitled, "Inquest," written by Edward J. Epstein.

Mr. Lifton's letter is one of several letters that have been received asking for information, and although his letter is being acknowledged, he will be referred to information which was furnished to the President's Commission and subsequently made available to the National Archives.

Based on information furnished, Mr. Lifton was not identified in Bureau files.

ACTION:

Attached for approval is a letter to Mr. David S. Lifton.

OK
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✓
RHS
JRM
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TRR

VCO:-

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November 17, 1966

- 1 - Mr. DeLoach
- 1 - Mr. Rosen
- 1 - Mr. Malley
- 1 - Mr. Shroder
- 1 - Mr. Raupach
- 1 - Mr. Wick

Handwritten signatures:
 [Signature]
 [Signature]

EC 32

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ST-107

Mr. David S. Lifton
 11818 1/2 Dorothy Street
 Los Angeles, California 90049

Dear Mr. Lifton:

With reference to your communication of November 9, 1966, this is to advise that all the material developed by the FBI in connection with our investigation of the assassination of former President Kennedy was turned over to the Warren Commission for its consideration and the results of our inquiry into this matter were subsequently made available to the National Archives by the Warren Commission.

In view of the foregoing, it is suggested answers to any questions you may have concerning the work performed by the Warren Commission or the FBI would be available through review at the National Archives.

Sincerely yours,

Assassination of President
 J. Edgar Hoover
 John F. Kennedy
 John Edgar Hoover
 Director

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 COMM-FBI

KMR:pah
 (8)

NOTE: See memorandum A. Rosen to Mr. DeLoach dated November 16, 1966, KMR:pah, captioned as above.

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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC, BALTIMORE (89-30)

FROM : SAs FRANCIS X. O'NEILL, JR. and
JAMES W. SIBERT

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT JOHN
F. KENNEDY, 11/22/63
DALLAS, TEXAS
MISCELLANEOUS - INFORMATION CONCERNING

DATE: 6/29/66

The following information is being submitted to the file as a matter of record.

During of 5/30/66 - 6/3/66 Bureau supervisor KENNETH RAUPACH, telephonically contacted SA JAMES W. SIBERT at the Hyattsville Resident Agency advising that a "Special" was being conducted at the Bureau in connection with an article which appeared in the newspapers relating to events that took place during the autopsy on 11/22/63 at the Navy Medical Training Center, Bethesda, Maryland.

Mr. RAUPACH asked if any member of the KENNEDY family had appeared in the autopsy room during the time that the autopsy was in progress making a request that the findings of such autopsy be kept confidential. He was advised that at no time during the autopsy did either ROBERT F. KENNEDY or the President's wife appear at the autopsy room and that it was understood that these two individuals were in the tower at the Medical Center. RAUPACH was advised that one of the Senior Medical Officers had made the statement prior to the termination of the autopsy that "what had gone on in this room tonight should remain confidential and should not be discussed outside of that room".

RAUPACH also questioned as to whether or not the measurements as set forth in FD 302s submitted by SAs SIBERT and O'NEILL had actually been measurements furnished by the Pathologist or had been represented conclusions reached by the Agents. He was informed that all figures set forth in such FD 302 had been obtained from the Pathologist performing the autopsy.



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89-30-262

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Later in the week a telephone call was received from the Bureau supervisor FLETCHER THOMPSON, who advised that he had additional questions pertaining to captioned matter and stated that he desired to know whether or not at least one agent was present in the autopsy room during the time that the autopsy was in progress and until it was completed. He was advised that such was the case and that if one agent was out of the room it was understood and followed that the other agent was present at all times and that at no time were both agents out of this room from the time that the autopsy began until it was terminated.

Mr. THOMPSON also asked if the Pathologist conducting the autopsy had made any mention of a bullet passing out of the neck at the point that the tracheotomy had been preformed at Parkland Hospital, at Dallas, Texas. He was advised that no such statement was made and that in fact the Pathologist was quite concerned concerning injury in the back and could not find a point of exit for this bullet neither could he find the projectile. Mr. THOMPSON was further advised that at that time Agent SIBERT had telephonically contacted SA CHARLES L. KILLIAN in the Firearms Section at the Bureau at which time it had been ascertained that a bullet had been found on a stretcher in the Parkland Hospital and this information was relayed to the Pathologist conducting the autopsy who stated that in all probability this accounted for no bullet being found in the body in the back region and that such had probably been worked out by cardiac massage which had been performed when the President was on a stretcher at Parkland Hospital.

Mr. THOMPSON again asked if any member of the KENNEDY family had requested that the results of the autopsy be maintained confidential and was informed that no mention had been made by any members of the Military or other personnel attending the autopsy, that the KENNEDY family had requested that the results of the autopsy be held in confidence, however one of the Senior Members had stated that and cautioned individuals in attendance at the autopsy that this matter should not be discussed after leaving this room.

BA 89-30

On June 10, 1966 ASAC JOHN J. McDERMOTT of the WFO telephonically contacted SA O'NEILL and advised that he had been requested by JAMES MALLOY, Number One Man of Division 6, to contact either SA O'NEILL or SA SIBERT and ascertain whether or not any member of the KENNEDY Official Party, who were at the Bethesda Naval Hospital on November 22, 1963, had requested that the results of the autopsy performed on the body of the President be maintained secret.

Mr. McDERMOTT was advised that no member of the official KENNEDY party entered the autopsy room nor did any member of the official party request that the findings of the autopsy be maintained secret.

He was advised that the Admiral in charge of the hospital at the conclusion of the autopsy requested all members who had attended the autopsy to keep the findings of the autopsy confidential.

ASAC McDERMOTT further inquired whether at any time both SA SIBERT or SA O'NEILL were out of the autopsy room. He was advised that at no time did SAs SIBERT and O'NEILL leave the autopsy room together. At all times during the course of the autopsy one of the agents was present.

ASAC McDERMOTT also asked whether the information contained in the FD 302s submitted by SAs SIBERT and O'NEILL concerning the autopsy were the conclusions of the Agents and all was actual information obtained from the Pathologist who are in attendance at the autopsy. Mr. McDERMOTT was advised that the agents submitted no conclusions of their own and that all information furnished in the FD 302 was obtained from the Pathologists who were in attendance at the autopsy.

Mr. McDERMOTT further was advised that the agents assisted in carrying in the Presidential casket into the autopsy room and were present in attendance at all times until the autopsy was complete and the morticians were preparing the body for burial.

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : SAC, BALTIMORE (89-30)

DATE: 10/13/66

FROM : SA JAMES W. SIBERT

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT
JOHN F. KENNEDY, 11/22/63,
DALLAS, TEXAS
MISCELLANEOUS - INFORMATION CONCERNING

At approximately 5:45 p.m., on 10/7/66, Mr. FLETCHER THOMPSON, SOG, telephonically contacted the Hyattsville RA, at which time he asked SA SIBERT if at any time during the autopsy any member of the KENNEDY family appeared or sent word to the autopsy room that the autopsy report was to be kept confidential.

Mr. THOMPSON was advised that at no time while the autopsy was in progress did either ROBERT KENNEDY or Mrs. JOHN F. KENNEDY make their appearance. Furthermore, from the time that agents arrived at the National Navy Medical Training Center, Bethesda, until the autopsy was completed, no individual present made any remark indicating that a member of the KENNEDY family had requested that the autopsy report be kept confidential.

Mr. THOMPSON was again informed that one of the senior medical officers prior to the termination of the autopsy had informed all present that "What has gone on in this room tonight should remain confidential and should not be discussed outside of this room."

Mr. THOMPSON was again advised that the autopsy had definitely been terminated when agents departed for the Laboratory and, in fact, the body had been turned over to members of the Gawler Funeral Home, who appeared following the completion of the autopsy.

Furthermore, information set forth in the FD 302 of agents SIBERT and FRANCIS X. O'NEILL, JR. relating to autopsy findings as stated by Dr. HUME were based on the conclusions reached by Dr. HUME concerning locations of points of entry of bullets and Dr. HUME was not aware that a bullet had emerged through the neck at the point where the tracheotomy incision had been made at Parkland Hospital, Dallas, Texas.

1 - Baltimore
JWS: ~~mmmm~~

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Mr. THOMPSON advised it was his understanding that a lengthy television special will soon be scheduled which will involve the authors of the various books written on the subject of the president's assassination who will appear on such program.

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