

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Mr. Belmont

DATE: November 27, 1963

FROM : C. A. Evans

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY

Tolson	✓
Belmont	✓
Mohr	✓
Casper	✓
Callahan	✓
Conrad	✓
DeLoach	✓
Evans	✓
Gale	✓
Rosen	✓
Sullivan	✓
Tavel	✓
Trotter	✓
Tele. Room	✓
Holmes	✓
Gandy	✓

Deputy Attorney General Katzenbach telephoned last evening. He said that he recognized the tremendous task which faced the Bureau in getting out the reports in this matter. He asked, however, if we could give him some idea as to when they might be coming over to him. He particularly noted that he did not want his call regarded as any kind of a pressure for speed, because he knew it was more important to have them done right and this would take time. Nevertheless, he is trying to make plans to handle this in the Department. To this end he has assigned attorneys to review the published material, particularly the rumors and speculations that have been printed in the press. These are being compared with those contained in telegrams and letters received in the Department.

In this regard, Katzenbach has noted that there are many extremes. For example, he said one telegram had been sent to the Department by a private citizen stating that Oswald must have had accomplices in killing the President because Oswald was not a sufficiently talented marksman to have committed the crime alone. Katzenbach recognized that obviously no report can resolve minutia of this kind but he cited it as the extremes to which the speculation has gone.

One of the dangers which Katzenbach sees is the possibility that the state hearing to be held in Texas may develop some pertinent information not now known. In an effort to minimize this, he is having Assistant Attorney General Miller confer with the state officials in Texas in an effort to have them restrict their hearing to the proposition of showing merely that Oswald killed the President, together with any inquiry the state feels necessary as to the activities of local authorities. He hopes to avoid the state hearing going into the question of motive or trying to resolve the communist angle. He, of course, at this time does not know how successful these efforts will be.

As a sidelight, Katzenbach said he had learned on an extremely confidential basis that Abe Fortas, the Washington lawyer, had been in

- 1 - Mr. Mohr
- 1 - Mr. DeLoach
- 1 - Mr. Rosen
- 1 - Mr. Sullivan

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touch with President Johnson and had argued against the idea of having a Presidential Commission look into the Kennedy assassination. Fortas' argument to Johnson was that for the President to announce the formation of such a commission would merely suggest that there was evidence of something other than Oswald alone killing Kennedy and thus build up public speculation. Fortas' second argument to President Johnson was that the formation of such a commission would cause a reflection on the FBI. Fortas, of course, is no friend of the Bureau and there would appear to be some obvious underhanded motive in his using us in his argument, although we don't know what this is.

Certainly something sinister here
ACTION TO BE TAKEN:

It is suggested Katzenbach be informed that everything humanly possible is being done to resolve the issues here and to get together a comprehensive report which we expect to have in the Department's hands for review over the coming weekend.

W/C give no time table for one in the Bureau has not advised me what report may be expected. I personally must go over it. But it is some changes may be necessary. Katzenbach - looks straight up - stand that competence of thoroughness must come first. Already today the Bureau and had much