UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Mr. DeLoach

FROM : A. Rosen

DATE: October 5, 1966

1 - Mr. DeLoach
1 - Mr. Rosen
1 - Mr. Malley
1 - Mr. Shroder
1 - Mr. Raupach
1 - Mr. Thompson
1 - Mr. Wick
1 - Mr. Conrad
1 - Mr. Sullivan

SUBJECT: THE OSWALD AFFAIR
BY LEO SAUVAGE

Warren Commission

SYNOPSIS

This book which is advertised as "an examination of the contradictions and omissions of the Warren Report," is an expansion of an article by the same French author in the March, 1964, publication of the American Jewish Committee. The book was originally published in France in July, 1965. Bureau files reveal Leo Sauvage previously appeared on a list of individuals employed by the French Communist Party. He has been employed by the New York Bureau of a French Socialist Newspaper and was a member of a small group close to Louis Dolivet, who was refused re-entry to the United States due to his suspected Communist and Comintern background.

In his book, Sauvage arrives at the conclusion that he finds "nothing to show that Oswald was the assassin of President Kennedy." In arriving at this conclusion, the following are typical examples of his distorted reasoning: (1) Chicken bones found near the window from which the death shot was fired could have been left by an accomplice. (The Commission report identifies the individual who left the chicken bones there as a building employee); (2) He questions the possibility that the rifle allegedly used by Oswald was capable of being fired with accuracy at a moving target in five or six seconds. (Actual tests in FBI Laboratory proved this to be possible); (3) He claims a number of essential witnesses were never interviewed in connection with the murder of Officer Tippit. (The Commission heard more than 13 witnesses concerning the Tippit murder, including

62-109090

FDT:emf
(10)

(SEE SYNOPSIS CONTINUED-OVER)

1 OCT 20 1966

61 OCT 31 1966

UNRECORDED COPY FILED IN

two eyewitnesses who heard the shot and saw the shooting and seven eyewitnesses who saw the flight of the gunman with revolver in hand and positively identified Oswald as the man they saw fire the shot or flee from the scene. It was established that the revolver in Oswald's possession had been purchased by him using the name of A. J. Hidell. Four expended cartridge cases found near the site of the Tippit killing were identified as having been fired in Oswald's revolver); (4) The fact that Oswald did not order any ammunition at the time he ordered the rifle proved that the idea had not come to him that he might really use it one day.

The author claims it was not established that Oswald owned a "lethal weapon" since "an unloaded weapon is not a lethal weapon." (Examination in FBI Laboratory firmly established Oswald's rifle as the murder weapon.)

The author referred to the "curious absence of fingerprints on the rifle" while apparently placing little credence in the palm print of Oswald found on the rifle and which is equally conclusive with fingerprints as a positive means of identification.

Sauvage is critical of the Dallas Police and the "incoherent, uncorroborating, or self-contradictory affirmations of District Attorney Wade in his press conference of November 24, 1963." He alleges that details of the FBI report were "leaked" to the newspapers before the report was sent to the Commission and states "as anyone in a city room knew, the leak had come directly from the FBI."

The author finally concludes that the assassination was the result of a plot by racial extremists, that Oswald was used as a scapegoat and that Jack Ruby was used as the executioner to get rid of the accused assassin.

OBSERVATIONS:

The Commission was created for the purpose of developing full facts concerning the assassination of President Kennedy. Approximately 25,000 interviews and re-interviews were conducted by the FBI alone and the results were furnished to the Commission. In addition, numerous

CONTINUED - OVER

interviews were conducted by other agencies and the Commission Staff. The case against Lee Harvey Oswald, however, will, in all probability, continue to be the subject of distorted speculation by journalistic charlatans such as communist inspired Leo Sauvage who seek to profiteer on the assassination of President Kennedy and to embarrass the United States Government. While the proof against Oswald is certainly clear and convincing, to any reasonably prudent opened-minded individual, the fact that no one saw Oswald pull the trigger and he died without making a confession are sufficient basis for a book of distortion such as "The Oswald Affair" by an unprincipled author such as Leo Sauvage. The book should be immediately recognized by any honest and discerning reader for what it is.

ACTION:

This is submitted for information.

DETAILS
CONTINUED - OVER

Rosen to DeLoach Memorandum
RE: THE OSWALD AFFAIR

DETAILS:

The Book

"The Oswald Affair" is an expansion of a speculative article by Leo Sauvage, printed under the same caption in the March, 1964, issue of "Commentary," a publication of the American Jewish Committee. In a memorandum concerning this article prepared from A. Rosen to Mr. Belmont on 4/27/64, (attached) it was pointed out that this was similar to other articles being written by foreign authors having background of communist sympathies. Since it was not felt that we had the responsibility of furnishing The President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy (hereafter referred to as The Commission) with every piece of inaccurate, speculative, commentary on the assassination, a copy of the article was not furnished to The Commission.

The book ("The Oswald Affair") was originally published in France and came to our attention in July, 1965, when a copy of the book was furnished to the Bureau by the Legat, Paris. In the International Edition of the "New York Times" on 6/23/65, it was pointed out that Sauvage, the author, had advanced an unsubstantiated hypothesis that the murders of President Kennedy and his suspected assassin, may have been the result of two separate plots. The Times article stated the book presented no new evidence. It was recommended and approved that this 442-page book not be translated since there was no reason to believe it contained any new material (See memo, A. Rosen to Mr. Belmont dated 7/14/65, attached). The current book in English was published in 1966 by the World Publishing Company, Cleveland, Ohio.

The Author

Leo Sauvage, according to information in Bureau files, was born in Nancy, France 2/23/13, and has been employed as a correspondent and chief of the New York Bureau of "Le Populaire," a French Socialist newspaper. In 1951, information was developed that Sauvage was a member of a small group close to Louis Dolivet, who was refused re-entry to the United States due to Dolivet's suspected Communist and Comintern background (100-23792-143). On 9/27/56, a confidential source abroad advised the name of Leo Sauvage appeared on a list of individuals employed by the French Communist Party (64-200-231-1559). The March, 1964, issue of the "Commentary" described Sauvage as an author and New York correspondent for "Le Figaro" for nearly fifteen years.

CONTINUED - OVER

Rosen to DeLoach Memorandum
RE: THE OSWALD AFFAIR

The Review

Even though the author reaches page 285 before openly stating his conclusion that "no matter how I turned the case around to see it from every angle, I find nothing to show that Oswald was the assassin of President Kennedy," one does not have to read this far to know that this is the theme of his book. On page 236, Sauvage states "Personally, I don't see why it should be necessary for a reporter to limit himself to reproducing dispassionately, everything said or done as if nothing affected him leaving all comment to the editorial writers." Throughout the book, the author furnished his personal "comment" in a very generous way.

In the first chapter, the author engages in much speculation as to whether Oswald had sufficient time to reach the lunchroom on the second floor of the Depository Building following the assassination and before he was seen by Officer Baker of the Dallas Police Department and Mr. Roy Truly, the building manager. The author concludes, it is a fundamental principal of the American law that any uncertainty should be interpreted to the advantage of the accused and the only conclusion of the Warren Commission is that "Oswald could have fired the shots and still have been present in the second floor lunchroom when seen by Baker and Truly."

Chapter two entitled "The Chicken Bones Mystery" is devoted to lengthy speculation concerning some partly eaten chicken and some chicken bones found on the sixth floor of the Depository Building which created an inference that an accomplice of the assassin of President Kennedy had left them there. (Page 644 of The Commission Report comments concerning this speculation and sets forth the findings of The Commission that the chicken lunch had been eaten on November 22, 1963, by Johnnie Ray Williams, an employee of the Texas School Book Depository, who after eating his lunch, went to the fifth floor where he was when the shots were fired.)

In Chapter three, the author engages in more speculation as to whether the rifle allegedly used by Oswald was capable of being fired with accuracy at a moving target in five or six seconds. (The Commission's Report in pages 194, 195 sets forth results of actual tests made by experts which proved a skilled person could fire three accurately aimed shots with this weapon in five seconds.)

CONTINUED - OVER

In Chapter four, the author questions the findings of the FBI Laboratory that one bullet and two fragments were identifiable by markings as having been fired from Oswald's rifle. To support this questioning, Sauvage, on page 66, writes that he has "no intention of questioning the technical competence of Frazier" (referring to SA Robert A. Frazier of the FBI Laboratory) but he concludes "I do have the right to remind them, however, that none of the police manuals I have checked seems inclined to admit the possibility of positive identification in conditions comparable to those indicated above." Beginning on page 91 in discussing the murder of Officer Tippit, Sauvage referred to an inquiry conducted in Dallas by George and Patricia Nash, described as "two young research assistants" at Columbia University, Bureau of Applied Social Research and contended that they named a number of essential witnesses who were never questioned or contacted by The Commission. Sauvage stated that the "most amazing negligence" as revealed by the Nashes was the absence of any effort on the part of the FBI or The Commission to question Clayton Butler, the ambulance driver, and Eddie Kinsley, his assistant, who arrived on the scene of the Tippit murder minutes after it had happened. Since they took him away before the police arrived, they could have provided such indispensable details as the exact position of the body, according to Sauvage. It is further alleged the FBI and The Commission similarly neglected to question Frank Wright, who lived in a ground-floor apartment on Tenth Street.

While the FBI had no jurisdiction in the murder of Officer Tippit, (this was investigated by the Dallas Police Department) we have previously considered the findings of the Nashes and there was no reason to believe that the remote possible witnesses suggested by them could furnish any information of value which had not been established through other sources. More than 13 witnesses testified before The Commission concerning the Tippit murder. On page 174 of The Commission's report it is reported that witnesses who testified included two eyewitnesses who heard the shots and saw the shooting and seven eyewitnesses who saw the flight of the gunman with revolver in hand and positively identified Oswald as the man they saw fire the shots or flee from the scene. It was further established that the revolver in Oswald's possession had been purchased by him using the alias of A. J. Hidell.

The book is most critical of The Commission for its failure to allow Mark Lane to represent Oswald before The Commission claiming that this deprived him of the right to cross-examine Oswald's accusers.

CONTINUED - OVER

The author's reasoning, perhaps reaches its lowest point of obfuscation when writing about the rifle used by Oswald in the assassination of President Kennedy. Sauvage admits it was proved that Oswald owned a rifle but claims that since he did not order any ammunition at the time he ordered the rifle, the idea had not come to him that he might really use it one day. The author goes on to say that the investigators did not even prove that Oswald owned the "lethal weapon" since "an unloaded rifle is not a lethal weapon." (It is noted that the examination in the FBI Laboratory determined that the three empty cartridge cases found near the window from which the shots were fired had been fired in the rifle owned by Oswald. It was also determined that a bullet found on the stretcher and two fragments found in the automobile in which President Kennedy was riding had been fired from the rifle owned by Oswald. This information is reported on page 18 of the FBI report.)

The author referred to the "curious absence of fingerprints on the rifle." He apparently placed little credence in the fact that the Commission's Report contains testimony by an FBI expert who identified the latent print lifted from a portion of the rifle as the right palm print of Oswald (page 123 of the Commission's Report). It is, of course, well established that a palm print is just as conclusive as a fingerprint as a means of positive identification.

Sauvage is critical of the Dallas Police and the "incoherent, uncorroborated, or self-contradictory affirmations of District Attorney Wade in his press conference of November 24, 1963." The author further alleges that details of the FBI Report were "leaked" to the newspapers before the report was sent to The Commission and states "as anyone in a city room knew, the leak had come directly from the FBI."

After concluding that Oswald was not the assassin of President Kennedy, Sauvage makes a prefunctory analysis of various theories and finally settles on the conclusion "of all the possible objectives in the assassination, I find only one that the organizer of the plot could reasonably have expected to achieve: the defense of white supremacy in the South." The author contends that these "racial extremists," tried to divert suspicion using Oswald as a scapegoat and this was followed by another plot to get rid of the accused assassin using Jack Ruby as the executioner.

In a final chapter to Sauvage's American edition of his book under the title "American Postscript" he makes reference to a "special introduction" by Harrison E. Salisbury

 CONTINUED - OVER

to a paperback edition of The Commission's Report in which Salisbury referred to Sauvage and others as "mythmakers" who did not consider The Warren Report a "hard rock basis of fact." Sauvage added that if Salisbury has a chance to correct his "special introduction" to The Warren Report someday, he hopes Salisbury will not forget to include among his list of "mythmakers" the man "who, according to the Warren Commission must be the greatest mythmaker of all: J. Edgar Hoover." Earlier in the chapter Sauvage had made reference to his allegation that the FBI leaked its report to the newspapers before it was given to The Warren Commission and he presumed the Warren Commission for this reason had been displeased with the FBI.