

JFK assassination records appeals
Disciplining of FBI agents

Harold Weisberg 1/28/80

There has been partial and I believe unfair disclosure of the disciplining of FBI agents in the JFK case. Former Inspector General Gale testified to this before the House subcommittee. I am not aware of the detail nor of whether all the names were disclosed. I am aware that there may be legitimate privacy considerations of which I may have no knowledge. However, this is an important part of the history, particularly as it relates to the functioning of the FBI in those days. I therefore think there should be maximum possible disclosure and there has not been.

Some of the names are public, like those of case agents Kasak and Hasty and Supervisor Howe. (Kasak resigned rather than accept what he regarded as unfair punishment.)

I know of no legitimate offense that can be attributed to any of those agents. Rather does the available information indicate that out of fear of being embarrassed FHEU insisted on unfair punishment, to which it could always later refer to clear itself from criticism. (The actuality is disclosed in the internal Hasty note-destruction investigation, that FBI was witting and lied, transferring punishment to those who were not in authority, on the question of Oswald having a known pre-disposition toward violence.)

These records, particularly the IG's report, are not in the records provided. It is this that I appeal, to get all the records public, in fairness to those men and in the interests of history and future scholarship. I have no personal interest in this for my own work or writing but I do regard it as an important matter.

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

October 1, 1964

MR. TOLSON:

I have noted Mr. Gale's memorandum recommending disciplinary action relative to a number of Bureau personnel in the field and at the Seat of Government in connection with the Oswald case.

I understand the reason for Bureau insistence on perfection in handling our work and I would have it no other way. However, I believe that as in all other matters involving Bureau policy, the affect of disciplinary action should be weighed against the results that flow from it. In this particular case I think we are making a tactical error by taking this disciplinary action in this case at this time. The Warren Commission report has just been released. It contains criticism of the FBI. We are currently starting aggressive steps to challenge the findings of the Warren Commission insofar as they pertain to the Bureau. It is most important, therefore, that we do not provide a foothold for our critics or the general public to seize upon to say in effect "See, the Warren Commission is right, Mr. Hoover has taken strong action against personnel involved in this case and thus admits that the Bureau was in error."

As you are aware, the Dallas papers have printed a story relative to action taken against Agent Kaack of New Orleans and Agent Howe of Dallas. I understand that Agent Hosty has just been transferred. While we can say that this transfer was necessary because his usefulness at Dallas was at an end, I think the timing of his transfer is most unfortunate because it is timed with the release of the Commission report. An interval of two months say, in my mind, would have made a world of difference.

I heard over the radio last night an interview with Secretary Dillon of Treasury, during which he was asked whether action was contemplated against Secret Service Agents in connection with the Oswald case. His reply in effect was a careful check had been made of the activities of the Agents, it had been determined that no action was warranted and none would be taken. In effect, then the Treasury Department is providing no handhold for further critical remarks about Secret Service. I have no doubt that Dillon's statement will be used to contrast the action taken by the Bureau and the conclusion reached by the press and the public will not be that the FBI is running a tighter more efficient organization, but rather that the FBI admits it was wrong in the Oswald case.

ADDENDUM BY MR. TOLSON 10/1/64:

Most of the administrative action recommended deals with administrative derelictions with respect to the Security Index, the prompt submission of reports, etc. and not the Oswald case per se.

Sutton 216

10/1/64

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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : W. C. Sullivan *S*

FROM : F. J. Baumgardner *FJB*

SUBJECT: DREW PEARSON BROADCAST
STATION WTOP, WASHINGTON, D. C.
6:40 P.M., OCTOBER 17, 1964

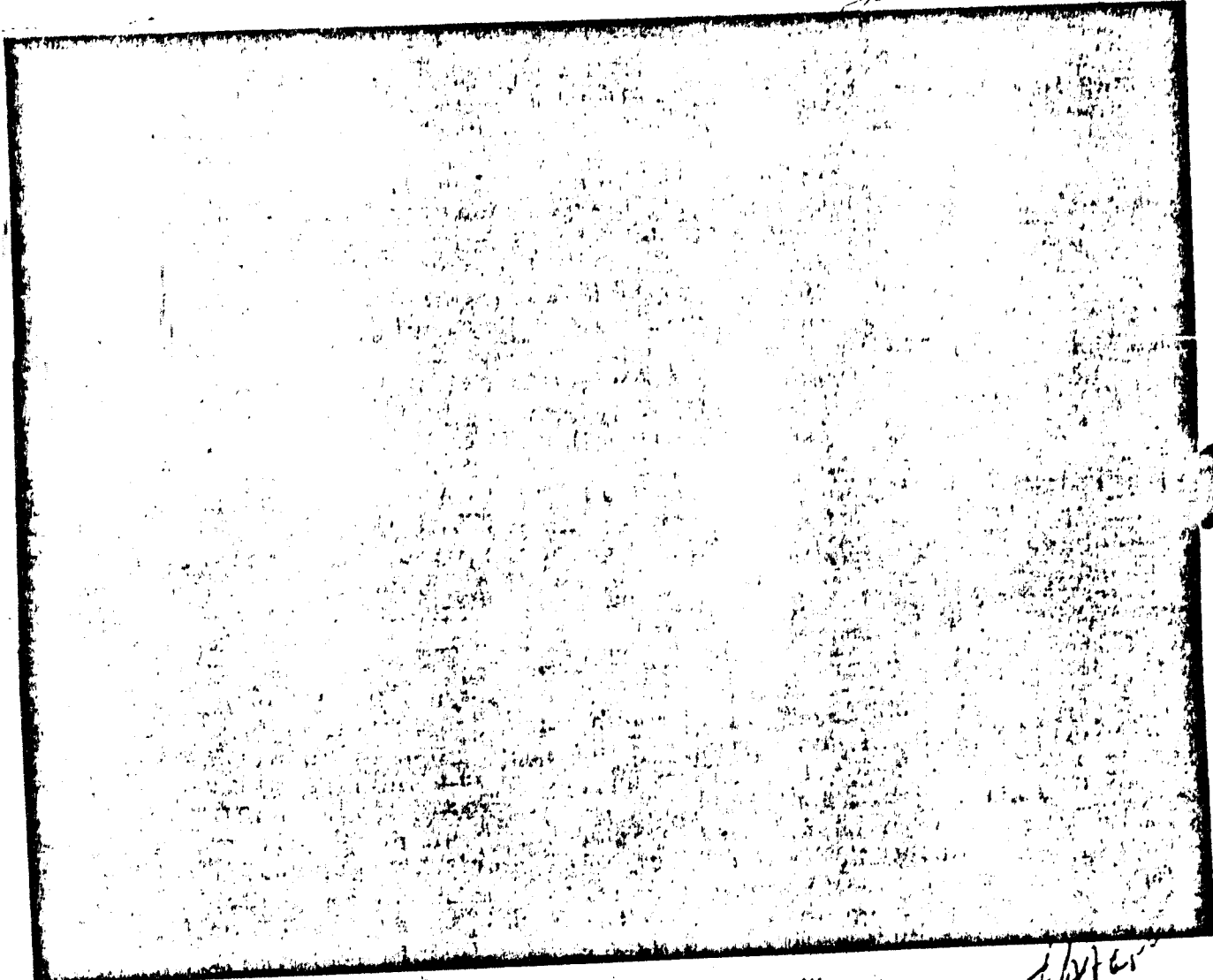
DATE: October 19, 1964

- 1 - Belmont
- 1 - DeLoach
- 1 - Mohr

- 1 - Sullivan
- 1 - Rosen
- 1 - Callahan
- 1 - Shroder
- 1 - McGowan
- 1 - Baumgardner
- 1 - Martin

Tolson *[initials]*
 Belmont *[initials]*
 Mohr *[initials]*
 Casper *[initials]*
 Callahan *[initials]*
 Conrad *[initials]*
 Felt *[initials]*
 Gale *[initials]*
 Rosen *[initials]*
 Sullivan *[initials]*
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 Trotter *[initials]*
 Tele. Room *[initials]*
 Holmes *[initials]*
 Gandy *[initials]*

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PERS. REC. UNIT

Entron 216

Memorandum to Mr. Sullivan
Re: DREW PEARSON BROADCAST
STATION WTOP, WASHINGTON, D. C.
6:40 P.M., OCTOBER 17, 1964

Congratulations to J. Edgar Hoover for disciplining four FBI Agents involved in errors of judgment in the assassination of President Kennedy. James P. Hosty, Agent who failed to warn Secret Service that Lee Oswald was in Dallas, has been suspended for 30 days without pay. Three other Agents received letters of censure.

Comment - The following is a summary of administrative action taken in connection with the Oswald case on October 5, 1964, involving Agents of the Dallas Office:

James P. Hosty, Jr. - Suspended for 30 days effective 10-6-64, placed on probation, transferred to Kansas City.

Kenneth C. Howe - Letter of censure, placed on probation, transferred to Seattle Office.

James W. Anderton - Letter of censure and placed on probation.

Vincent E. J. Drain - Letter of censure and placed on probation.

ACTION:

For information.