

The Attorney General

May 25, 1966

Director, FBI

- 1 - Mr. DeLoach
- 1 - Mr. Sullivan
- 1 - Mr. Branigan
- 1 - Mr. Lenihan
- 1 - Liaison
- 1 - Mr. Papich

THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON
 THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT
 JOHN F. KENNEDY

On May 23, 1966, a source who has furnished reliable information in the past advised that he learned that Fletcher Knobel, well-known journalist, is collaborating with Edward J. Epstein in writing a book on the "Report of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy." According to the source, Epstein allegedly has access to Federal Bureau of Investigation reports and is using material from these reports for the book. The source added that he learned that Wesley J. Liebelier, former Assistant Counsel to the President's Commission, has made such FBI data available to Epstein. According to our source, Knobel and Epstein plan to shed new light on the President's Commission's Report.

REC-31 62-109090-480

For your information, during the course of our intensive investigation of the assassination of the late President John F. Kennedy, numerous reports and other FBI data were made available to the President's Commission. Much of this data was later used by the Commission in part or in its entirety in the publication of its Report. We have also determined that FBI reports and other FBI documents which have been cleared for public disclosure and which are maintained by the National Archives are available to the public upon request. The National Archives, as a matter of policy, will reproduce for a nominal fee such cleared FBI reports upon request.

The above is being furnished for your information and for any action you might deem desirable. No further inquiries in this particular matter are contemplated by this Bureau.

1 - The Deputy Attorney General
 SJP:REL/rab (10)

NOTE: See memorandum Brennan to Sullivan, dated 5/24/66, captioned as above, prepared by SJP:REL/rab.

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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

- 1 - Mr. DeLoach
 - 1 - Mr. Sullivan
 - 1 - Mr. Branigan
- DATE: 5/24/66

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

TO : Mr. W. C. Sullivan

FROM : D. J. Brennan, Jr.

SUBJECT: THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON
THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT
JOHN F. KENNEDY
(WARREN COMMISSION)

Allen Dulles telephonically furnished the following information to Agent Papich on May 23, 1966.

Dulles had just received a phone call from Fletcher Knebel, well-known writer. Knebel informed Dulles that he was collaborating with one Edward J. Epstein in writing a book on the Warren Commission report dealing with the assassination of President Kennedy. Knebel indicated that this book would "throw a new light on everything." He did not elaborate but stated that Epstein had access to FBI reports. He explained that this access had been arranged through Wesley J. Liebeler, who had been a member of the Warren Commission working staff. Knebel was looking for Dulles' reaction and Dulles advised Knebel that he would be way out of line if he were using FBI reports. Dulles raised the question concerning legality and handling of classified information. Knebel made no further comment but did indicate that Epstein personally may have been in contact with Dulles in the past.

Shortly after, Dulles called again stating that he had checked his diary. He learned that Epstein had telephonically contacted him on September 27, 1965, explaining that he was a graduate student at Cornell University and that he was writing a thesis on the Warren Commission report. Epstein told Dulles that he had talked to other members of the Commission and he was interested in meeting with the former CIA Director. Dulles stated that he saw Epstein about three days later and they had a conversation concerning the work of the Warren Commission. The entire conversation was in general terms and he recalled that Epstein never expressed any personal views concerning the work of the Commission. He definitely gave no indication that he was planning to write a book.

SJP:REL/rab
(7)

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Enc.

5-25-66

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D.J.
[Handwritten signatures and initials]

Memorandum Brennan to Sullivan
RE: THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON
THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT
JOHN F. KENNEDY
(WARREN COMMISSION)

Dulles asked that we not contact Knebel or Epstein at this time and not identify Dulles as the source of this information. Dulles made the observation that the current atmosphere is such that he and the Bureau can easily be charged with "suppression." Dulles made it clear that he certainly was not restricting the Bureau from making any inquiry and he fully recognized that this might become necessary. He stated that if "the chips are down" and he is needed, he will be ready to cooperate with the Bureau.

Bufiles indicate that one Edward J. Epstein, born December 6, 1935, described as a student, residing at 121 Wright Road, Rocky Avenue Centre, New York, traveled as a tourist in the Soviet Union in 1958 (100-351585-3339).

Our files also indicate that in 1955 Edward J. Epstein, a student at Cornell University, complained that a telephone conversation between him and another student had been tape recorded by a member of an investigating committee connected with the Student Council of Cornell University. The Committee was looking into campus election irregularities. The facts were submitted to the Department for possible violation of unauthorized publication or use of communications and the Department declined prosecution (139-198).

OBSERVATIONS:

A large number of FBI reports and other documents were set out in part or in their entirety in the "Report of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy." In addition, it is to be noted that a large number of FBI reports prepared in connection with the assassination of the late President Kennedy are in possession of the National Archives and are available to the

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public. As a matter of policy the National Archives will not release material originating from the FBI without prior FBI approval, however, the above material was specifically reviewed by us for release. It is not known what documents Epstein allegedly may possess, but there is a definite possibility he may have documents which have been cleared for release to the public.

ACTION:

Enclosed for approval is a letter to the Attorney General advising him concerning this matter. He is being informed that the Bureau does not contemplate any further action.

175
Wesley
✓
OK
D. L.