

FBI's JFK File

Revealed

WASHINGTON (UPI) — J. Edgar Hoover questioned whether Lee Harvey Oswald alone assassinated John F. Kennedy, and ordered his agents to check vague, tantalizing evidence of a Cuban conspiracy. FBI documents disclosed yesterday.

But the Cuban leads apparently proved uncheckable, and there seemed to be nothing else in the 40,000 pages of FBI documents released yesterday that would invalidate the Warren Commission's main findings.

File Highlights, Page 60.

Namely, that Oswald — whom Hoover called a pro-Castro "nut" — acted alone in killing Kennedy in Dallas Nov. 22, 1963, and that Jack Ruby acted alone in killing Oswald two days later.

The bureau, under a Freedom of Information suit, released half of its moderately censored assassination files in a flood yesterday morning. It planned to release another 40,000-plus pages in January.

Initial scrutiny of the first batch — a half-ton stack of 25,000 unedited memos and raw investigative reports, including ru-

Continued Back Page, Col. 1

FBI Reveals Its Files on

Continued from Page 1

memos and false leads — suggested Hoover ordered an immediate, all-out effort to identify Kennedy's killer and follow all conspiracy leads.

It also showed Hoover was very sensitive to innuendo that the FBI had been derelict in not recognizing Oswald as a potential assassin, and issued handwritten orders to muzzle an agent — James Hosty of the Dallas bureau — who had been quoted as saying the bureau knew beforehand Oswald was capable of killing the president.

"Tell Dallas to tell Hosty to keep his mouth shut," Hoover

scrawled at the bottom of an interoffice memo dated April 24, 1964. "He has already done irreparable harm."

Main points disclosed by the files released yesterday:

• Hoover advised President Lyndon Johnson within hours of Kennedy's death that he believed Oswald, who was arrested quickly, "probably" fired the fatal shots.

• Although Hoover never had any doubts Oswald was the lone triggerman, however, he and Secret Service Chief James Rowley both saw possibilities of a conspiracy from the outset.

• Hoover's own suspicions fo-

cused quickly on possibilities of a Castro Cuban plot because the FBI had obtained letters purportedly written to Oswald from an unidentified person in Cuba, praising his abilities as a sharpshooter and apparently urging him to kill Kennedy "to please the Cubans' 'chief.'"

• Hoover confided in Johnson about these letters — apparently never authenticated, and never given the Warren Commission — 20 days after Kennedy's killing. He persuaded Johnson to quash a Justice Department proposal that the government tentatively identify Oswald as the lone assassin, without conspirators, and Ruby as Oswald's lone killer.

the JFK Assassination

• Voluminous supporting FBI documents make clear, however, that agents concluded after investigating hundreds of tips that Oswald did act alone in killing Kennedy, even though he "frantically" denied any involvement, according to one memo.

• Similar documentation also makes clear the bureau concluded that Ruby, by himself, shot Oswald. Agents quoted him as saying he did the deed "in a moment of insanity." There was considerable fretting, but no real explanation, over how Ruby managed to walk right up to Oswald in the basement of the Dallas police department.

• The FBI documents occasionally mention CIA participation in the probe, but include no samples of CIA assistance.

Indication of Hoover's conspiracy suspicions occurs at more than one point in the material — including a memo written hours after the slaying — but is most clearly stated in a staff memorandum he wrote Dec. 12, 1963.

In it, he described a meeting he had had with Johnson concerning a Justice Department proposal that an interim statement be issued identifying Oswald as the lone assassin, without "foreign or subversive" support and with no links to Ruby.

"I flatly disagreed," Hoover wrote.

He said Johnson sided with him.

"I said I personally believe Oswald was the assassin," Hoover wrote, but added: "The second aspect as to whether he was the only man gives me great concern."

In conclusion, he said, "I urged strongly that we not reach conclusion Oswald was the only man."

Hoover also said he, too, believed Oswald had never known Ruby, but said the government could not yet say so positively.

OAKLAND
TRIBUNE
DEC. 3, 1977
GAM EDITOR