

Secret memo tags Oswald as killer

By EARL GOLZ

Top FBI officials had concluded in a secret memorandum only hours after Jack Ruby murdered Lee Harvey Oswald that it was "clear that Oswald is the man who killed the president."

The memorandum was written Nov. 24, 1963, by Alan H. Belmont, assistant to FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, and in charge of the FBI investigation of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The document is among 40,000 pages of classified FBI material on the assassination to be released to the news media Wednesday.

BELMONT'S MEMO to Clyde A. Tolson, FBI associate director, says two FBI supervisors were being sent to Dallas that day to go over "the written interview and investigative findings of our agents in the Oswald matter so that we can prepare a memorandum to the attorney general (Robert Kennedy) . . . to set out the evidence showing Oswald is responsible for the shooting that killed the president."

"We will show that Oswald was an avowed Marxist, a former defector to the Soviet Union and an active member of the FPCC (Fair Play for Cuba Committee), which has been financed by (Fidel) Castro," Belmont wrote. "We

will then show the background of Oswald, when and where he was born, et cetera, and then the story of what happened when the president was shot and subsequently until Oswald was picked up in the theater."

Belmont, who is now dead, also noted that U.S. Atty. Gen. Robert Kennedy's No. 2 man, Nicholas Katzenbach, wanted to publicly release a statement saying, "We are now persuaded that Oswald killed the president; however, the investigation by the Department of Justice and the FBI is continuing."

KATZENBACH'S aide wanted the FBI to put out the statement, Belmont's memo said, but Cartha D. DeLoach, FBI assistant director, refused, stating the FBI was "opposed to any statement being put out along this line."

Belmont also wrote that he had told J. Gordon Shanklin, special agent in charge of the Dallas FBI office, that Katzenbach was sending Assistant U.S. Atty. Gen. Herbert J. Miller to Dallas "to speak to the mayor to see if he can keep the chief of police (Jesse Curry) and Lt. (Will) Fritz off television and radio."

Two days later, on Nov. 26, Katzenbach wrote President Lyndon Johnson's aide Bill Moyers that "facts should be made public to satisfy the people that the facts have been told and a statement to that effect be made now. The public should be satisfied that Oswald was the assassin and speculation about his motive ought to be cut off."

PRESIDENT JOHNSON on Dec. 6 organized a 9-member commission headed by Chief Supreme Court Justice Earl Warren to conduct an investigation of the assassination to determine who killed Kennedy.

Three days later, on Dec. 9, Katzenbach wrote the Warren Commission recommending that it "immediately state that the FBI report (delivered that day) clearly shows Oswald was a loner."

The commission finally concluded that Oswald was the lone assassin, but that conclusion was not made public until September of 1964, 10 months later.

Shanklin, the Dallas FBI chief in 1963 who directed the investigation locally, said he had not seen the Belmont memo.

Shanklin, now in private law practice, noted that Katzenbach was concerned about Curry and Fritz appearing on television and radio "and quoting evidence" when at the same time he was "talking to us (FBI) to do it."

"AS FAR AS I am concerned, I never have commented," Shanklin said. "You know, all during the time if somebody asked me if (Oswald) is guilty or not guilty, that's none of my business. I think it's prejudicial . . ."

"When people say this was not a complete investigation, that's the most thorough investigation ever conducted in the world . . . We ran out every possible lead that you could possibly think of and we developed no evidence of a conspiracy. That's as far as you can go."