

FBI Preparing Release Of File on JFK's Death

The Dallas Times-Herald

WASHINGTON — Nearly 14 years after President Kennedy's murder in Dallas the FBI is preparing to make public its massive "assassination file" containing all the material it gathered during its investigation of the case.

FBI officials said the first segment of the voluminous 80,000-page JFK file, covering the initial six months of the agency's probe, will be made available this month while the remainder is scheduled for public release in December. The disclosures are in response to more than 50 requests for the material under the Freedom of Information Act.

Critics of the official version of events surrounding the Nov. 22, 1963, slaying in Dallas have sought access to the FBI's raw files almost from the day the Warren Commission concluded Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, killed the president. Others have been intrigued by what the FBI developed, which was not included in the Commission's 1964 report.

According to FBI officials, much of the data included in the assassination file already has been revealed through the testimony of witnesses before the Commission and in documents used as exhibits in its 26-volume report. The trial of Dallas nightclub owner Jack Ruby, Oswald's killer, brought out still more, they said.

However, these officials explained the FBI's internal file also includes reports on certain aspects of the assassination which were discarded during the course of the investigation. These included reports on possible leads which were never verified, speculation about the meaning of certain facts and theories about the killing which later were disproved in the view of FBI agents.

An FBI spokesman said the bureau had been working on the file's preparation for 2½ years. Last summer, 15 additional agents were assigned to the effort. He declined to name individuals who had filed requests for the material.

The disclosure, however, will not include documents the Warren Commission classified which are still sealed in the National Archives, the spokesman said. Nor will it include references to data the FBI received from other federal sources such as the Central Intelligence Agency or the Secret Service.

Under provisions of the Freedom of Information statute, the FBI is permitted to delete the names of informants and any references to classified material. One FBI source said a large number of the pages will be blank because of deletions.

While FBI personnel involved in the project maintain there has for the most part been little opposition to disclosing particulars of the investigation, a number expressed concern that portions of the file may be misinterpreted if taken out of context.

Atlanta Journal (1/3/77)

'There may be some material that hasn't already come to light . . . but certainly nothing that would alter the fundamental conclusions of the Warren Commission.'

—Retired FBI Agent

This is especially true, one FBI official said, concerning "speculative" reports in which FBI agents may have theorized about Oswald's travels or other such aspects only to reject it after further investigation. "Selective reading on some part like that would be very misleading," the official said. Robert P. Gemberling, a retired Dallas FBI agent who coordinated and analyzed the investigative effort throughout the Kennedy probe, said according to his knowledge of the assassination file there will be no sensational revelations.

"There'll not be any earthshaking revelations at all," Gemberling said. "There may be some material that hasn't already come to light in one way or another but certainly nothing that would alter the fundamental conclusions of the Warren Commission."

He said the only instances he knew of that had not been revealed concerned the use of informants and perhaps double agents whose identities the FBI still wants to protect.

"The main problem, and I'm sure this will happen, is that people are constantly referring to 'new' information that the FBI or someone else withheld from the Commission," Gemberling said. "People don't know where to look in the Warren Report to find things, and they don't realize we covered these items back in 1963 and 1964."

Private assassination researchers also appear to be awaiting the release of the file with no expectations of sensational revelations.

Paul Hoke, a Berkeley, Calif. researcher and co-author of "The Assassinations—Dallas and Beyond," said his primary interest is in the FBI's knowledge of Oswald before the Kennedy assassination. Oswald was a defector to Russia who became the subject of an FBI security investigation after his return to the U.S. in 1962.

"The reason I'm so eager to see what they have on that aspect is that the FBI seemed so reluctant to tell the Warren Commission about it," Hoke said. "A group of FBI inspectors who studied the FBI's actions in this area seemed to have left open the question of whether he (Oswald) might have been an agent for a foreign intelligence group."

Kennedy Files Due Release

WASHINGTON (UPI) — The FBI announced Wednesday it will soon release most of its raw investigative files on the John F. Kennedy assassination, and a former Dallas agent predicted the material will put an end to conspiracy theories.

"Frankly, this will make the House Assassinations Committee put up or shut up," said Robert Gemberling, a retired FBI agent who coordinated the bureau's role in the presidential assassination probe.

"And it will put an end — I hope — to all this conspiracy business by some members of the public and the press," Gemberling said in a telephone interview from his Dallas home. "There wasn't any conspiracy to kill Kennedy."

In Washington, an FBI spokesman said the bureau, in response to a barrage of Freedom of Information requests, was readying for release more than 80,000 pages of raw investigative data from its long-secret files on the Nov. 22, 1963 assassination.

Gemberling predicted there would be no earthshaking revelations in them.

Fla. Times Union

11-3-77

FBI to Release Raw Files on Kennedy Death

Washington — (UPI) — The FBI is preparing to make public the bulk of its raw files on the 1963 assassination of President John Kennedy, a spokesman said.

In response to more than 80 requests made under the Freedom of Information Act, the FBI is readying more than 80,000 pages for release in two segments late this month and in January, the spokesman said.

The first release will cover the first six months of the FBI's investigation into Kennedy's murder in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963, he said. Preparation of the files for release has taken 2½ years, he said.

The Warren Commission announced after its extensive inquiry into Kennedy's death that it concluded Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone in shooting the President.

"Frankly, this will make the House

Assassinations Committee put up or shut up," said Robert Gemberling, a retired FBI agent who coordinated the bureau's role in the presidential assassination probe.