

Phila. Bulletin 7/28/77

Oswald Was Alone, FBI Prober Says

By ROBERT W. KOTZBAUER
Of The Bulletin Staff

Two days after President Kennedy's assassination in Dallas, Nov. 22, 1963, Special Agent Robert P. Gemberling was put in charge of the FBI's Dallas investigation of that crime. He continued that responsibility until he retired last December.

In all that time, Gemberling said yesterday, he saw no evidence whatsoever of any conspiracy to kill Kennedy, or that Lee Harvey Oswald had been influenced in his action by persons either for or against Cuban dictator Fidel Castro.

Gemberling said he fully supports the 1964 Warren Commission finding that Oswald acted entirely on his own and was not the agent or informant of any foreign government or any agency of the U.S. Government.

And he discounted all rumors and so-called "new evidence," including statements by U.S. Sen. Richard S. Schweiker (R-Pa.) and Philadelphia's internationally famous prosecutor Richard A. Sprague, as politically motivated. Sprague has since resigned as counsel for the House Assassination Investigation Committee.

Since his retirement, Gemberling has been going about the country making speeches, at \$1,500 each, because he's alarmed, he said, about the high degree of disbelief, especially among young people, in the Warren Commission report.

Yesterday he addressed about 80 prosecutors and law students from four states attending a Prosecutors Institute at Wilmington, sponsored by the Delaware Law School of Widener College.

Gemberling said he neither sought FBI approval nor expected any reaction from the bureau for doing what he couldn't do while an agent. He said he feels that the facts must be put straight, and the rumors rebutted.

His speech is aimed at demolishing every conspiracy theory, from New

Orleans District Attorney James Garrison's "fishing expedition" in 1967, to recent conjecture that Fidel Castro ordered Kennedy's killing in retaliation for CIA attempts on his life. For example:

Sprague reported last April, according to Gemberling, that a nurse on duty at Dallas' Parkland Hospital, where Kennedy and Texas Gov. John Connally were taken, was prepared to disprove the Warren Commission's "one bullet theory"; that the same slug that went through Kennedy's throat also struck and wounded Connally.

It was Sprague's contention, said Gemberling, that the FBI had never interviewed the woman when in fact agents had not only talked with her but examined the bullet fragments and turned them over to the Warren Commission.

Also, said Gemberling, while the FBI made a "most serious error" in destroying a note that Oswald had left at its Dallas office two weeks before the assassination, that note had "nothing to do with the assassination."

Gemberling said the FBI did pursue the conspiracy theory from the beginning and did look into the possibility of foreign involvement, despite recent statements to the contrary, but that no evidence was ever turned up.

"The American people," said Gemberling, "should insist that the House committee make a positive (in contrast to a fence-straddling) report; and if they do, I know the committee will not find a conspiracy."

"I'm sick and tired of the unjust, unfair criticism of our (FBI) efforts to protect this country," he said.

Now You Know

Thomas Edison did not invent the light bulb, which was developed as early as 1860 by Sir Joseph William Swan. Edison perfected the device in 1879. — (UPI)