

DFO 89-43, Serial 9532

Incomplete records, Oswald-FBI connection, "S179"

This Gemberling memo is entirely incomplete in its reflection of a telephone call not involving him but from "SAC William A. Branigan at FBI HQ" and SAC Shanklin in Dallas.

It is incomplete in not indicating in what files copies are to be filed and it is incomplete in the references to relevant files.

It is incomplete in deliberately eliminating the names of the reporters well-known to Gemberling. They are Hugh Aynesworth, who is no longer in Dallas, and Lonnie Hudkins, who has been at the Baltimore News-American for more than ten years. It is incomplete whether or not faithful to what Branigan said in stating only that "An article has been printed in the 'Washington Star'" when actually the article was earlier under Lonnie Hudkins byline in the Baltimore News-American and was quite specific with all names mentioned.

Ostensibly, this was the purpose "Mr. Branigan reflected (sic) that we do a file review and make available to him pertinent information relating to the allegations made about Oswald being an informant of the FBI."

All that Gemberling provided Branigan were references to Dallas airtel of 2/7/64 and two sets of pages in two consolidated reports by Gemberling, all three in the 100-10461 file, Serials 3196, 3200 and 4100. This cannot possibly be all because the stories reporting this rumor began to appear before the first of 1964 and because the Warren Commission had two official executive sessions and unofficial sessions, all prior to the time of the airtel.

While under FOIA I am limited to existing records, I am entitled to a good faith search which this does not reflect. Gemberling and all sorts of other people in Dallas and in FBI Headquarters know relevant records on this have not been provided.

I do have a separate specific request for all such records with which there has been no compliance at all.

# Memorandum

DATE: 6/5/75

TO : SAC, DALLAS (89-43) (P)

FROM : SA ROBERT P. GEMBERLING

SUBJECT: ASSASSINATION OF JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY  
DALLAS, TEXAS  
11/22/63  
MISCELLANEOUS-INFORMATION CONCERNING

OO: DALLAS

On 5/30/75, SAC WILLIAM A. BRANIGAN at FBI HQ telephonically advised SAC J. GORDON SHANKLIN as follows:

An article has been printed in the "Washington Star" that back in 1963, BILL ALEXANDER, Assistant Dallas County District Attorney was convicted that the FBI was taping his telephone though Agents denied this to his face. In order to find out, ALEXANDER supposedly arranged with two Journalist friends to spring a story so wild it would bring the FBI running if, indeed, they were listening in to telephone conversations. The three men arranged a conference call from ALEXANDER to the newspaper offices of "The Dallas Morning News" and "The Houston Post". According to Mr. BRANIGAN, this article reflected that as the conversation wandered on, ALEXANDER asked the two journalists "Do you remember what OSWALD'S payroll number was?" The man at "The Houston Post" said, "I think it was S-172." But ALEXANDER said, "No, I think it was S-179." The article indicates that sure enough, within one half hour, FBI Agents had shown up at all three men's desks, flashing their identification and asking what they knew about a Government payroll number for LEE HARVEY OSWALD. The number, of course, had been picked out of the air to produce just the reaction it did.

Mr. BRANIGAN reflected that we do a file review and make available to him pertinent information relating to the allegations made about OSWALD being an informant of

(1)-Dallas  
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FBI - DALLAS	



Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

DL 89-43

the FBI.

On June 2, 1975, the following references were cited to Mr. BRANIGAN for his review:

100-10461-3196, Dallas airtel to the Bureau dated 2/7/64.

100-10461-3200, report of SA ROBERT P. GEMBERLING dated 2/11/64 at Dallas, Texas, Cover Pages G through K.

100-10461-4100, report of SA ROBERT P. GEMBERLING dated 3/10/64 at Dallas, Cover Pages H through T.

The above is being made a matter of record in the event additional inquiries are received.

# Warren Paper Reveals Prob of Oswald-FBI Report

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Warren Commission discussed a report that Lee Harvey Oswald had worked as an FBI undercover agent for more than a year before the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, according to a recently declassified commission transcript.

Members of the commission, including the late Chief Justice Earl Warren and President Ford, who was then a Michigan congressman, discussed the report at a closed session on Jan. 22, 1964.

THE TRANSCRIPT remained classified top secret for 11 years until released to Harold Weisberg, an author who had filed suit under the Freedom of Information Act. Weisberg has written numerous books and

articles criticizing the Warren Commission investigation and its conclusion that Oswald, acting alone, shot and killed Kennedy in Dallas, Nov. 22, 1963.

A copy of the transcript was obtained by the Associated Press.

At the start of the meeting, J. Lee Rankin, general counsel of the commission, said he had been told by Wagoner Carr, Texas attorney general, that "the word had come out... that Oswald is acting as an FBI undercover agent and that they had the information of his badge which was given as number 159, and that he was being paid \$200 a month from September of 1962 up through the time of the assassination." Rankin said he had talked to Henry Wade, Dallas dis-

trict attorney, who told him the source of the report was a member of the press. "There is a denial of this in one of these FBI records, as you know," interjected the late Rep. Hale Boggs, D-La., another commission member.

"It is something that would be very difficult to prove out," answered Rankin. "There was events in connections with this that are curious, in that they might make it possible to check some of it out in time. I assume that the FBI records would never show it, and if it is true, and of course, we don't know. But we thought you should have the information."

LATER, RANKIN commented that he and Warren had discussed the report and "we said if that was true and it ever came out and could be established, then you would have people think that there was a conspiracy to accomplish this assassination, that nothing the commission did or anybody could dissipate."

The late Allen Dulles, former director of the Central Intelligence Agency and a member of the Warren Commission, questioned why the FBI would hire Oswald as an undercover agent.

"WHAT WAS THE ostensible mission?" asked Dulles. "I mean, when they hire someone they hire somebody for a purpose... Was it to penetrate the Fair Play for Cuba Committee? That is the only thing I can think of where they might have used this man... You wouldn't pick up a fellow like this to do an agent's job."

An unidentified speaker brought up the tension between the commission and the FBI and particularly its director, the late J. Edgar Hoover.

"That is somewhat an issue in this case, and I suppose you are all aware of it," said the speaker. Weisberg said that, in this transcript, Rankin is sometimes identified by name when he speaks and sometimes not. Warren paper is, EC 3210.

He speculated that the speaker in this case was Rankin.

"THAT IS that the FBI is very certain that Oswald is the assassin or was the as-

assin, and they are very explicit that there was no conspiracy, and they are also saying in the same place that they are continuing their investigation," the speaker said.

"Now in my experience of almost nine years," he continued, "it is hard to get them to say when you think you have got a case tight enough to convict somebody that that is the person that

committed the crime. In my experience with the FBI they don't do that... Why are they so eager to make both of those conclusions, both in the original report

and in their experimental report, what is such a departure. Now, that is just circumstantial evidence and it doesn't prove anything about this, but it raises questions."

(Indicate page, name of newspaper, city use circle.)

"The Dallas Morning News"  
Dallas, Texas

Page 201

Date: 5-18-75

Edition:

Author:

Editor: Tom J. Simmo

Title:

Character:

or

Classification:

Submitting Office: DALL

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