

JUL 23 1964

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
U.S. Department of Justice
Washington, D.C. 20535

Dear Mr. Hoover:

It has been alleged that the palmprint lifted from Oswald's rifle by the Dallas police is false. This allegation is supported by the statement that the FBI told the press in an off-the-record briefing session on November 23 or 24 that there was no palmprint on the rifle. Will you please notify us whether at any time the FBI told or let it be known to the press that there was no palmprint on the rifle.

Your continued cooperation with the Commission is appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

J. Lee Rankin
General Counsel

AGoldberg/smh
7-23-64

SEE CE 2584. NOTE DATES.

1/5/70

Re Rankin-Hoover 7/23/64, palmprints.

As I mentioned in the long letter immediately upon getting this package from you, I had checked into this as far as I then could in the spring of 68. I am certain I sent Sylvia a copy of that FBI interview with Day (but I've just checked her book and there is no reference to it). This was before I was trying to keep any organized files (if I may without making you snigger use this description), so it is not in my cards and it is not under my large "rifle" file, not under Day. It must, therefore, be in FM, the appendix.

My recollection is that it is roughly of the time of those Curry phone reports I use in WWII. This triggered my recollection. I checked WWII (39) and the date is 9/8/64. I tell you note dates. If Hoover and Co were so confident in July, why did they feel that just before the report was issued they needed a further statement from Day, who just refused to give it and got away with it. In any event, I have it, and the first time I unpack FM's appendix I'll check there and if it is there I'll copy for you or cite to you. The whole thing hangs, as I recall it, on an imperfection picked up in the print. Without it there is no evidence Oswald ever touched that gun. And despite the JH letter, CE2584, until they "spotted" this transferred flaw, the FBI had no reason to believe the print was real and, without doubt, did cast suspicions to the press. More, that palmprint didn't exist when the FBI got it, Day having "lifted" or removed it.

This copy, the Goldberg variation, bears no EC identification. When you can, if you'd tell me what it is, I'll so mark it. I'll file it under "rifle" until then.

Brave Goldberg/Rankin, asking not for a definitive answer, was there a print or wasn't there, but only did you spill the beans?

HW