

# Did Hoover Forge Portrait?

WASHINGTON, D.C. (LNS)—Recently declassified documents reveal that former CIA director Allen Dulles, when asked by the Warren Commission if Lee Harvey Oswald could possibly be employed by the FBI, replied that the directors of the FBI and the CIA would lie to anyone except the President to protect the identity of their undercover agents.

Critics of the Warren Commission raised important questions at the time about the truth of J. Edgar Hoover's testimony that "I can most emphatically say that at no time was he [Oswald] ever an employee of the Bureau in any capacity." But now Dulles' declassified statement that "I think under any circumstances Mr. Hoover would say certainly he didn't have anything to do with this fellow," raises further doubts about the truth of Hoover's testimony.

The formerly top secret documents are contained in a book called *Whitewash IV* by Harold Weisberg, which was published on November 22, the eleventh anniversary of Kennedy's death. Dulles' comments were part of an extraordinary discussion by Warren Commission members on whether J. Edgar Hoover and John A. McCone, then director of the CIA, would truthfully answer questions about whether Lee Harvey Oswald had ever worked for either of their agencies.

A story alleging that Oswald had been working as an informant for the FBI since 1962, that he was on the FBI payroll at \$200 a month on the day he was arrested, and that Oswald had been assigned informant number 179, appeared in the *Houston Post*, written by reporter Lonnie Hudkins. The full Commission was made aware of this "dirty rumor" in a "tense and hushed" special emergency session on January 22, the only account of which has been related in Gerald Ford's book *Portrait of an Assassin*. (Ford was a member of the commission.)

On January 27, the Commission met to determine how to proceed. "The Commission itself had no grounds at the moment," Ford wrote, "for rejecting or accepting [the rumor]. Members simply knew that the whole business was a most delicate and sensitive one involving the nation's faith in its own institutions and one of the most respected federal agencies." Critics of the Commission have pointed out that at this point the Commission's mandate to ascertain and report the facts of the crime came into conflict with the Commission's second stated purpose—to maintain public confidence in American institutions.

The day following the Commission meeting, counsel Lee Rankin discussed the story with Hoover who immediately assured him that "any and every informant" was known to FBI headquarters and that "Oswald had never been an informant of the FBI." But, the declassified conversations reported in Weisberg's new book raise serious doubts about the credibility of all these statements.

Reporter Hudkins was not among the 552 witnesses before the Commission, nor was he questioned by the Commission

## Carl Dusty, Henry Woody?

Film facts: Dustin Hoffman has accepted the Carl Bernstein role in *All the President's Men* (Robert Redford plays Woodward)... Woody Allen may play Henry Kissinger in an upcoming Daryl Zanuck production... Jane Fonda is reportedly interested in directing a film based on

the woman's sex fantasies bestseller *My Secret Garden*... Marlon Brando may retire from movies after his *Wounded Knee* epic (which also stars McQueen, Streisand, Fonda, Newman, and Marvin, all working for scale —profits to American Indian causes).

staff. Instead, Leon Jaworski, who had been employed as Special Council for the State of Texas after the assassination, was asked to speak informally to Hudkins about the "rumor." Jaworski reported back to the Commission that "there was absolutely nothing to the story" and that it was "sheer speculation based on nothing but Hudkins' imagination." The Commission then decided that Hudkins' testimony was unnecessary.

There is significant evidence, though, that contradicts Jaworski's reported findings. Henry Wade, the Dallas District Attorney who had first brought the story to the attention of the Commission, had information that Oswald's address book contained the telephone number and license-plate number of Dallas FBI agent James Hosty. The Commission had received the list of names in Oswald's address book, but agent Hosty's name had been omitted from the list by the FBI.

Wade also had information that a government voucher for \$200 was found in Oswald's possession. In addition, a Western Union employee had claimed that Oswald was periodically telegraphed small amounts of money. Wade also thought that Oswald's practice of setting up postal box "covers" each time he moved—a practice Wade himself had used as an FBI agent—was an "ideal way" to handle undercover transactions.

Although reporter Hudkins was never interviewed by the Commission, the Secret Service did interview him. In Secret Service Report #767 submitted to the Commission, Hudkins told Secret Service agents that the information for his story came from Allan Sweatt, the chief of the criminal division of the Dallas sheriff's office.

Allan Sweatt, too, was never questioned by the Commission.



Director Colby here tells me, 'Sure the CIA's sneaky, but compared to the rest of the world we don't use that much intelligence.'