

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Mr. Moore

DATE: 1-20-76

FROM : J. H. Campbell

SUBJECT: BOOK REGARDING ASSASSINATION
OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY
BEING WRITTEN FOR "READER'S DIGEST"
BY EDWARD JAY EPSTEIN

- Assoc. Dir.
- Dep. AD Adm.
- Dep. AD Inv.
- Asst. Dir.:
- Admin.
- Comp. Syst.
- Ext. Affairs
- Files & Com.
- Gen. Inv.
- Ident.
- Inspection
- Intell.
- Laboratory
- Plan. & Eval.
- Spec. Inv.
- Training
- Legal Coun.
- Telephone Rm.
- Director Sec'y

John F. Kennedy
J. H. Campbell

Kenneth O. Gilmore, Managing Editor of the "Reader's Digest," telephoned yesterday afternoon to advise that the "Reader's Digest" has contracted with Edward Jay Epstein to write a book concerning the November, 1963, assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Gilmore said that the book will be a definitive, factual work which will evaluate, and hopefully put to rest, recurring myths surrounding the Kennedy assassination.

According to Gilmore, Epstein has already begun interviewing persons who are knowledgeable of various areas of the Kennedy Assassination. Gilmore's purpose in calling was to request the Bureau's cooperation in (1) seeing Epstein when Epstein is in Washington later this month or early in February, (2) furnishing Epstein copies of previously issued statements and/or press releases concerning the Assassination, and (3) giving consideration to requests which Epstein may make for other information.

INFORMATION IN BUFILES:

Gilmore, who is very well known to the Bureau, was Washington Editor of the "Reader's Digest" prior to his being named Assistant Managing Editor (and subsequently Managing Editor) at the magazine's Pleasantville, New York, headquarters approximately three years ago. He and two other "Reader's Digest" officials (John Barron and William Schulz) met with Director Kelley in July, 1974.

- 1 - Mr. Moore
- 1 - Mr. Gallagher
- 1 - Mr. McDermott
- 1 - Mr. Mintz
- 1 - Mr. Wannall
- 1 - Mrs. [redacted]
- 1 - Telephone Room

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Gilmore
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Epstein, who was born in December, 1935, wrote a Master's Degree thesis at Cornell University dealing with the Warren Commission's findings -- which Master's Degree thesis was published in 1966 under the title "Inquest." "Inquest" is based in large part on interviews with members of the Warren Commission and its staff which revealed that no single member of the Commission heard all of the testimony regarding the Kennedy Assassination and that the average member of the Commission heard 45 percent of the testimony. "Inquest" also indicates that there was bitter disagreement among the Commission working staff about the credibility of witnesses, about the quality of evidence compiled by Government agencies, and about the ultimate wording and conclusions of the Warren Report.

In 1971, Epstein wrote an article for "The New Yorker" magazine in which he refuted charges made by attorney Charles Garry that 28 Black Panthers had been killed by police in a national scheme to commit genocide against the Black Panther Party. He also argued this issue on a national television program with Garry.

In an article entitled "Did the Press Uncover Watergate?" in the July, 1974, issue of "Commentary," Epstein wrote that "it was...because of the pressures put on the conspirators by Judge John Sirica, the grand jury, and Congressional committees that the cover-up was unraveled" and that "it was not the press which exposed Watergate; it was agencies of government itself."

OBSERVATIONS:

The Kennedy Assassination has, of course, been the subject of recent interest on the part of Congressional Committees, as well as Freedom of Information Act requests. It also is the focal point of continued interest on the part of news media; and a book dealing factually with the Assassination, as well as the rumors and conjecture which persist, would serve a worthwhile purpose.

RECOMMENDATION:

That this memorandum be returned to the Research Section so that Mr. Gilmore can be telephonically advised (914-769-7000 ext. 2021) that Epstein should feel free to contact us while he is in Washington late this month or early next month, at which time we will be glad to consider

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whatever questions or requests he may have. During that visit, a copy of Deputy Associate Director Adam's October 21, 1975, testimony before the House Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, which deals with the Kennedy Assassination, will be given to Epstein.

1/15/76

OK

*Epstein's summary
of the testimony of
Deputy Associate Director
Adam*

*Epstein's summary in
1/27/76
is advised
1/27/76*