

How FBI Spied on Warren

Washington

The FBI spied on and resented the Warren Commission's Kennedy assassination work, and the commission, in turn, suspected Lee Harvey Oswald had been an FBI agent, newly released files disclosed yesterday.

The nearly 60,000 pages of FBI assassination files show the bureau considered then-Representative Gerald Ford as its informant inside the Warren panel, and that J. Edgar Hoover kept a bitter feud going with Chief Justice Earl Warren on grounds his commission lacked confidence in the FBI.

Hoover was insulted and infuriated by an early Warren Commission belief — apparently cleared up quickly — that the FBI had sent Oswald to Russia as an agent in 1959; by its accusations the bureau was leaking information to the press; and by its conclusion the FBI should have told the Secret Service what it knew about Oswald before John F. Kennedy went to Dallas.

Calling the final Warren report "seriously inaccurate in so far as its treatment of the FBI is concerned," the director lamented in one staff memo:

"The bureau will never live this down and will (be) viewed as a second rate outfit henceforth."

"We could not arrest every crackpot without creating a police state," Hoover said in another defensive rebuttal of allegations his men were derelict in not protecting Kennedy from Oswald.

Described himself as "outraged" at the Warren Report's criticisms on that score, Hoover took his gripe right to President Lyndon B. Johnson and noted in a file memo dated Oct. 20, 1964:

"The president stated that he was sympathetic with my views and that he intended at an early date to find the opportunity to publicly reaffirm his faith and confidence in the FBI and its director."

Railing at critics who ranged from Warren to Justice Department officials and such conspiracy theorists as comedian Dick Grego-



J. EDGAR HOOVER
'Outraged' at criticisms

ry, Hoover made plain he took great pride in the FBI's Kennedy probe and its fast conclusion — only days after the killing — that Oswald acted alone, without conspirators from Cuba or anywhere else.

"We have left no stone unturned in this particular phase of our investigation," he said, in a file note, concerning the bureau's findings that Oswald had no Cuban connection whatsoever.

At a point early in the assassination probe, when the nation was assuming the FBI and the commission were working hand in glove, Hoover refused the panel's request that it maintain the commission's evidentiary exhibits.

The hostility and discord underlying the Kennedy assassination probe came to light with the release of 50,604 pages of censored FBI investigative files and 8150 pages of its memos to the Warren Commission.

Like the previous batch of 40,000 pages released in December, the new flood corroborated the Warren panel's finding that Oswald alone killed Kennedy and Jack Ruby alone killed Oswald.

They showed Hoover recommended that finding to the commis-



EARL WARREN
Suspicion of FBI role

sion about two weeks after the Nov. 22, 1963, Kennedy murder in Dallas. And, like the earlier files, they illuminate the nation's greatest murder probe with rich tidbits of detail.

The new files recall, for example, that Oswald's wife, Marina, locked him in the bathroom of their Dallas apartment in April of 1963 when he began ranting about his intention to kill Richard Nixon, whom he mistakenly thought to be in town that day. Hoover speculated the Oswalds must have mixed Nixon up with Vice President Lyndon Johnson, who was in Dallas.

Commission

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The new materials also continue the saga of the FBI's exhaustive pursuit of tips and leads, no matter how bizarre, from such informants as a mentally unstable "mystery woman" in Cuba, a drunken Aztec Indian and a Bavarian cab driver.

More ominously, however, they show Hoover and his men warred privately with anyone who challenged their competence or exclusive authority over the Kennedy probe, calling Deputy Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach a liar, scoffing at investigations carried out by Texas officials and New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison and battling with the Warren Commission over news leaks.

None of that, however, deterred the Warren panel from endorsing the no-conspiracy finding recommended to them by Hoover in his first report to the newly formed commission.

Dated Dec. 7, 1963, it said; "The FBI has made an exhaustive investigation into whether Oswald may have conspired with or been assisted by any person, foreign or domestic, in carrying out this dastardly act.

"No evidence has been uncovered indicating that any person, including Dallas night club owner, Jack Ruby, was involved with Oswald in the assassination of President Kennedy."

The FBI-commission rivalry stemmed in part from the leak of Hoover's original report to the press, with each side accusing the

other, and from the suspicion of Warren Commission members that Oswald had been acting as an FBI spy during his sojourn in the Soviet Union from 1959 to 1962.

The files show the FBI somehow obtained the transcript of a confidential "emergency meeting" the Warren panel held on Jan. 11, 1964, to discuss, in the words of an FBI analyst, "information to the effect Lee Harvey Oswald was a bureau informant" in Russia.

"The discussion shows that members of the commission felt the bureau would not admit that Oswald had been an undercover agent," the FBI review said — thereby undermining the commission's confidence in the bureau's investigation.

The FBI memo said Hoover eventually convinced the commission "Oswald was not an informant or agent of the FBI ... and was never paid any amount of money by the FBI in any regard."

Ford's role as a trusted bureau informant within the panel was described in a series of memos filed by Hoover deputy Cartha DeLoach in December 1963, when the commission had just been formed.

On December 12, DeLoach said Ford, then a Republican congressman from Michigan, had called him to his office "in the strictest confidence," expressed displeasure at the way Warren was running things and "indicated he would keep me thoroughly advised as to the activi-

How Hoover Found Sartre

Washington

J. Edgar Hoover typically began an FBI inquiry in June, 1964, when he read a newspaper report that the famous French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre had joined the "Who Killed Kennedy Committee."

The clipping identified Sartre only as an author.

Hoover promptly scribbled a memo:

"Find out who Sartre is."

New York Times

ties of the commission ... on a confidential basis."

One week later, on December 19, DeLoach said Ford briefed him on a private commission meeting the day before at which the panel discussed the news leak of Hoover's confidential December 7 progress report.

Other documents show Hoover successfully blocked Warren's first choice for commission chief counsel.

The Warren panel, in turn, challenged the FBI's performance on some occasions including the leaking allegations and the Oswald suspicions.

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