

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

April 27, 1964

BY COURIER SERVICE

Honorable J. Lee Rankin
General Counsel
The President's Commission
200 Maryland Avenue, N. E.
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Rankin:

The "Dallas Morning News," Dallas, Texas, had an article in its April 24, 1964, edition entitled "FBI Knew Oswald Capable of Act, Reports Indicate." The article, written by Hugh Aynesworth reported that "A source close to the Warren Commission told The Dallas News Thursday that the commission has testimony from Dallas police that an FBI agent told them moments after the arrest and identification of Lee Harvey Oswald on Nov. 22, that 'we knew he was capable of assassinating the president, but we didn't dream he would do it.'" A copy of the article in question is attached for the information of the Commission.

There is enclosed for the Commission an affidavit executed by Special Agent James P. Hosty, Jr., wherein Special Agent Hosty explains the purpose of his contact with the Dallas Police Department on November 22, 1963. Special Agent Hosty unequivocally denies ever having made a statement to Lieutenant Revill or anyone else that the FBI knew Oswald was capable of assassinating the President or that Oswald possessed any potential for violence. Special Agent Hosty specifically denies ever having made the statement as quoted in this article "We knew he was capable of assassinating the president, but we didn't dream he would do it." Special Agent Hosty points out that prior to the assassination of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy, he never had any information indicating potential violence on the part of Lee Harvey Oswald.

Sincerely yours,

Enclosures - 2

COMMISSION EXHIBIT 831

FBI Knew Oswald Capable of Act, Reports Indicate

By HUGH AYNESWORTH

© The Dallas Morning News, 1964

A source close to the Warren Commission told The Dallas News Thursday that the commission has testimony from Dallas police that an FBI agent told them moments after the arrest and identification of Lee Harvey Oswald on Nov. 22, that "we knew he was capable of assassinating the president, but we didn't dream he would do it."

In a memorandum to superiors on Nov. 22, Lt. Jack Revill, head of the Dallas police criminal intelligence squad, reported that FBI special agent James (Joe) Hosty had acknowledged awareness of Oswald in the basement of the City Hall at 2:05 p.m. Nov. 22. His remark was made as five officers brought Oswald in from Oak Cliff, Revill reported.

LT. REVILL appeared before Warren Commission investigators here several weeks ago. Police Chief Jesse Curry testified before the commission in Washington Wednesday. Neither would comment on their appearance or their testimony.

Chief Curry was reported to have been questioned about the incident and was said to have given the commission a photostatic copy of Lt. Revill's 5-paragraph memo. He also was said to have given the commission the name of a second Dallas police officer who supported Revill's statement and filled in other parts of the conversation between Revill and Hosty.

The second officer, V. J. (Jackie) Bryan, a member of

the criminal intelligence squad, also declined comment.

CHIEF CURRY had Lt. Revill's report in hand within hours of President Kennedy's death, even before all the facts and circumstances concerning Oswald were known.

Gordon Shanklin, special agent in charge of the Dallas FBI office, would make no comment.

The commission Thursday had not talked to agent Hosty, but The News' source said he anticipated that the agent would be called to testify.

CURRY WILL not show the report to reporters, nor will he comment on it or any other phase of the assassination.

"That's for the Warren Commission to talk about," the chief said.

Revill's memo is still in Chief Curry's possession.

In addition to mentioning that Hosty said the FBI knew Oswald was capable of such an act, the memo said Hosty told Revill other facts about the one-time Russia resident and admitted Marxist.

DALLAS POLICE officers watched several known extremists prior to the Kennedy visit and even sent representatives as far as 75 miles to interview others thought to be planning demonstrations.

Curry privately has told friends, "If we had known that a defector or a Communist was anywhere in this town, let alone on the parade route, we would have been sitting on his lap, you can bet on that." But he has refused public comment.

AFFIDAVIT

I, JAMES P. HOSTY, JR., being duly sworn, depose as follows:

I am a Special Agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, U. S. Department of Justice, and have been so employed since January 21, 1952.

My attention has been called to an article appearing on the front page of the "Dallas Morning News," of April 24, 1964, captioned, "FBI KNEW OSWALD CAPABLE OF ACT, REPORTS INDICATE," written by HUGH AYNESWORTH, which reads in part as follows:

"A source close to the Warren Commission told The Dallas News Thursday that the commission has testimony from Dallas police that an FBI agent told them moments after the arrest and identification of Lee Harvey Oswald on Nov. 22, that 'we knew he was capable of assassinating the president, but we didn't dream he would do it.'

"In a memorandum to superiors on Nov. 22, Lt. Jack Revill, head of the Dallas police criminal intelligence squad, reported that FBI special agent James (Joe) Hosty had acknowledged awareness of Oswald in the basement of the City Hall at 2:05 p.m. Nov. 22. His remark was made as five officers brought Oswald in from Oak Cliff, Revill reported . . ."

The article refers to "Lt. Revill's five-paragraph memo" concerning the above-mentioned incident and also stated

that a second officer, V. J. (JACKIE) BRYAN, of the Dallas Police Department had "supported REVILL's statement and filled in other parts of the conversation between REVILL and HOSTY . . ."

The article continues that "in addition to mentioning that HOSTY said the FBI knew OSWALD was capable of such an act, the memo said HOSTY told REVILL other facts about the one-time Russia resident and admitted Marxist . . ."

On November 22, 1963, at approximately 3:00 PM, I arrived at the Dallas Police Department for the purpose of sitting in on an interview of LEE HARVEY OSWALD. When I arrived at the basement of the Dallas Police Department, I met Lieutenant JACK REVILL, whom I know to be the head of the Intelligence Unit of the Dallas Police Department. Lieutenant REVILL advised me that he "had a hot lead" on the assassination of President KENNEDY and that a man whose first name was LEE was the only employee of the Texas School Book Depository who had not been accounted for. I then told Lieutenant REVILL that LEE HARVEY OSWALD had already been arrested about one hour previously by the Dallas Police Department and was at that time in the office of Captain WILL FRITZ, Homicide Bureau, Dallas Police Department, being interrogated.

-2-

COMMISSION EXHIBIT 831—Continued

To my knowledge, this was the first time that Lieutenant REVILL knew of OSWALD's arrest.

I further advised Lieutenant REVILL that OSWALD had defected to Russia and had returned to this area in 1962, and that OSWALD was employed at the Texas School Book Depository. I also advised Lieutenant REVILL that OSWALD was at that time the main suspect in the assassination of President KENNEDY.

The above constitutes the entire contents of my conversation with Lieutenant REVILL which took place on the stairway from the basement to the third floor at the Dallas Police Department, during which time both Lieutenant REVILL and myself were running up the stairs and not facing each other. There were numerous people going up and down the stairs at the time of my conversation with Lieutenant REVILL and the noise level was very high, making it very difficult to hear anything. Although I know Detective V. J. (JACKIE) BRYAN, of the Dallas Police Department, by sight, I do not recall seeing him on this occasion or ever having a conversation with Lieutenant REVILL in BRYAN's presence, or having a conversation with Detective BRYAN.

I unequivocally deny ever having made a statement to Lieutenant REVILL or anyone else that the FBI knew OSWALD was capable of assassinating the President or that OSWALD possessed any potential for violence.

I specifically deny ever having made the statement as quoted in this article, "We knew he was capable of assassinating the President, but we didn't dream he would do it."

In fact, prior to the assassination of President JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY, I never had any information indicating potential violence on the part of LEE HARVEY OSWALD.

My conversation with Lieutenant REVILL on November 22, 1963, lasted not more than a minute and a half. Furthermore, I did not reach the Dallas Police Department until approximately 3:00 PM, November 22, which was after OSWALD had been brought to the Dallas Police Department, identified, and was in Captain WILL FRITZ's office. As stated above, my purpose in going to the Dallas Police Department was to sit in on an interview with LEE HARVEY OSWALD and I commenced this assignment at 3:15 PM, according to my wrist watch.

James P. Hosty, Jr.
JAMES P. HOSTY, JR.
Special Agent
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Sworn to and subscribed before me on this 25 day
of Apr, 1964.

Walter Harris
Notary Public
Dallas County, Texas