

Thousands of JFK assassination files finally released - will bombshells emerge?

Material not expected to rebut Warren commission conclusion that president was killed by Lee Harvey Oswald acting alone

Historians and conspiracy theorists have been given an early Christmas present: the release from US National Archives of 13,173 documents relating to the official investigation into the 1963 assassination of President John F Kennedy.

From barely legible memos filled with the crabby handwriting of CIA agents, through reports on secret meetings with Russian diplomats, to painstaking detective work on the movements of Lee Harvey Oswald, the trove of documents will keep JFK assassination obsessives busy for months. Few expect bombshells among the pile, however.

The newly declassified materials are unlikely to disturb the conclusion of the 1964 Warren commission charged with getting to the bottom of the outrage. It found that Oswald, a former Marine and communist who defected to the Soviet Union, had killed Kennedy, acting alone, by firing three shots as the 46-year-old Democratic US president rode in an open-top limousine through Dealey Plaza in Dallas on 22 November 1963.

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