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C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 7486

JOINT EMBASSY/USIS MESSAGE

1. SUBSIDIARY OF PUBLISHING HOUSE OF JONATHAN CAPE HAS PUBLISHED AND IS DISTRIBUTING LATEST IN SERIES OF HOME AMUSEMENT KITS KNOWN AS "JACKDAWS," THESE ARE ESSENTIALLY COLLECTIONS OF MATERIALS PERMITTING USERS TO RECONSTRUCT THE EVENT INVOLVED. LATEST JACKDAW IS ENTITLED "THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY" AND CONTAINS AMONG OTHER MATERIAL CARDBOARD MODEL OF DEALEY PLAZA, PHOTOGRAPHS OF ASSASSINATED PRESIDENT'S BLOOD-STAINED CLOTHING, PHOTOSTAT OF AUTOPSY DESCRIPTIVE SHEET, WARREN COMMISSION EXHIBIT NUMBER 385 SHOWING MEDICAL ILLUSTRATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S NECK WOUNDS, FULL-SIZED PICTURE OF OSWALD'S MURDER RIFLE AND FULL PAGE ADVERTISEMENT FROM "AMERICAN RIFLEMAN" FROM WHICH HE ORDERED WEAPON BY MAIL, COPY OF "WANTED FOR TREASON" ATTACK ON KENNEDY CIRCULATED IN DALLAS PRIOR TO ASSASSINATION. THERE ARE ALSO A NUMBER OF NARRATIVE

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SHEETS DISCUSSING VARIOUS ASPECTS OF EVENT INCLUDING ONE CALLED "UNANSWERED QUESTIONS " THIS LATTER DRAWS HEAVILY UPON MARK LANE'S "RUSH TO JUDGEMENT."

2. THE FOLLOWING QUOTATION IS FAIRLY TYPICAL: "PERHAPS THE MOST FAR REACHING ASPECT OF THE KENNEDY ASSASSINATION WILL BE THAT IT MARKED THE POINT WHERE THE WESTERN WORLD NO LONGER TRUSTED ITS GOVERNMENTS TO TELL THE TRUTH. ALREADY THE NUREMBERG TRIALS OF WORLD WAR II HAD PROCLAIMED THAT OFFICIAL ORDERS COULD NO LONGER BE AN EXCUSE FOR GRAVE MORAL CONDUCT AND INDIVIDUALS FOUND THEY NEEDED A CODE OF BEHAVIOR. THE WARREN REPORT SEEMED TO SHOW THAT NO GOVERNMENT COULD BE RELIED UPON TO PROVIDE ONE."

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3. THE WHOLE OF THE KIT IS ENCLOSED IN A FOLDER CARRYING THE US PRESIDENTIAL SEAL -1/2 INCHES IN DIAMETER.

4. THE FOLLOWING ACKNOWLEDGEMENT IS INCLUDED IN THE CONTENTS SECTION OF THE KIT: "THE AUTHORS AND PUBLISHERS WISH TO THANK THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS WHICH HAVE ASSISTED IN THE COMPILATION OF THIS JACKDAW. UNLESS OTHERWISE CREDITED, ALL EXHIBITS AND PHOTOGRAPHS HAVE BEEN REPRODUCED FROM MATERIAL SUPPLIED BY UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AGENCIES."

5. THIS IMPLIED ENDORSEMENT IS PARTICULARLY OBJECTIONABLE SINCE THE WHOLE EFFECT OF THE KIT IS TO SUPPLY EXHIBITS, PICTURES AND TEXT TENDING TO DISCREDIT THE WARREN COMMISSION REPORT AND GIVE GREATER CURRENCY TO PUBLISHED ATTACKS ON THE REPORT.

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6. THE ONLY MATERIAL FURNISHED BY USIS LONDON WAS ONE FORMAL PHOTOGRAPH OF THE WARREN COMMISSION WHICH WAS REQUESTED BY LETTER WHICH DID NOT CONTAIN AN EXPLANATION OF THE CONTEXT IN WHICH IT WOULD BE USED. THE PHOTOGRAPH IS USED IN THE KIT WITH A USIS CREDIT LINE. A USIS OFFICER WAS ASKED BY TELEPHONE IF PERMISSION COULD BE GIVEN FOR USE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SEAL. THE ANSWER WAS "NO" BUT THE SEAL WAS USED NEVERTHELESS.

7. THE KIT WAS COMPILED AND DESIGNED BY MICHAEL RAND, HOWARD LOXTON AND LEN DEIGHTON, THE LATTER, OF COURSE, IS THE WRITER OF SPY-THRILLERS. LOXTON IS LISTED AS A DIRECTOR OF JACKDAW PUBLICATIONS, LIMITED.

8. JACKDAWS ARE AN ESTABLISHED PUBLISHING FEATURE BY THE COMPANY WHICH DESIGNATES ITSELF AS "FOUNDED AND DISTRIBUTED BY JONATHAN CAPE LIMITED." APPROXIMATELY 50 HAVE APPEARED OR ARE IN PREPARATION. SUBJECTS HAVE RANGED FROM "THE PLAGUE AND FIRE OF LONDON" TO "SPANISH INQUISITION." "THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY" IS ON A MUCH MORE CURRENT THEME THAN ANY WHICH HAVE GONE BEFORE.

9. THE EMBASSY IS CONCERNED NOT ONLY AT THE BAD TASTE OF THIS PUBLICATION BUT ALSO AT THE DAMAGE IT DOES TO THE AMERICAN IMAGE IN BRITAIN. THE EMBASSY IS ON AN INFORMAL BASIS EXPLORING WITH THE FOREIGN OFFICE STEPS WHICH MIGHT BE TAKEN TO LIMIT OR HALT DISTRIBUTION. EMBASSY HAS BEEN TOLD ON INFORMAL BASIS,

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HOWEVER, THE PRELIMINARY VIEW OF FONOFF LEGAL OFFICE IS THAT PUBLICATION DOES NOT CONTRAVENE BRITISH LAW. NO FORMAL PUBLIC

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PROTEST IS CONTEMPLATED AT THIS TIME FOR FEAR THAT IT WOULD PROVIDE PUBLICITY FOR THIS DISTASTEFUL PUBLISHING VENTURE.

10. THE DEPARTMENT IS REQUESTED TO PROVIDE ANY GUIDANCE WHICH MAY BE USEFUL. PERMISSION IS ALSO REQUESTED TO OBTAIN LEGAL COUNSEL ON THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THERE IS ANY CONTRAVENTION OF BRITISH LAW INVOLVED IN THE PUBLICATION.

1. BRITISH REPORT 500 COPIES OF KIT HELD UP BY US CUSTOMS. COPY ENROUTE TO WELD OF USIA AND OTHER COPIES CAN BE OBTAINED IF NEEDED BY DEPARTMENT. GP-4. KAISER
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