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**Subject:** FYI #3

TO all, here's the story on the NARA Wednesday May 13, 1998 release. These people were clueless as to the "newsworthiness" of anything until Maloclm Blunt pointed them to the Russian Funds file and to John Newman. I wish we could manipulate the media as successfully as this more often. -Joe  
MAY 14, 02:41 EDT FBI Monitored Bank Transactions By DEB RIECHMANN Associated Press Writer WASHINGTON (AP) -- The FBI secretly monitored private bank transactions flowing between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War -- an operation that uncovered \$25 Lee Harvey Oswald's mother sent her son who had defected, according to newly declassified documents. Evidence of the government's program to track bank transfers and interview Americans sending money to people behind the Iron Curtain surfaced Wednesday when the National Archives released 17,000 pages of FBI records relating to the assassination of President Kennedy. The records were first gathered in the 1970s by a special House committee that re-investigated the death of Kennedy, who was shot on Nov. 22, 1963 while riding in a motorcade through downtown Dallas. Oswald, the suspected Kennedy assassin, was killed in a Dallas jail a few days later. Marguerite Oswald's attempt to send money to her son in 1960 had previously been revealed, but the FBI kept concealed how it knew about it. The bureau apparently was eager to suppress the existence of a sensitive and possibly illegal program that tracked private banking transactions between individuals in the two countries. John Newman, in his 1995 book "Oswald and the CIA," was first to suggest that the FBI might have been monitoring money transfers to the Soviet Union. Newman, a former intelligence officer who now teaches history at the University of Maryland, also suspected that the FBI's desire to keep that a secret led the bureau to withhold disclosure of its earliest contacts with Oswald's mother. "The reason why they go to Marguerite is because she is sending him this money," Newman said in an interview. "It looks like the FBI was involved in monitoring bank transfers and by chance, the Oswalds fell into this." Key pieces of what the government knew about Oswald had to be suppressed because of the monitoring, not because they related to some assassination conspiracy, Newman said. "Oswald's files were very sensitive because they were monitoring a lot of people's bank accounts," he said. "It was possibly illegal -- something they surely didn't want anybody to know about." Several memos about the monitoring program ended with this cautionary note: "It is to be noted that the above information was furnished on a strictly confidential basis, and cannot be made public, except upon the issuance of a subpoena." Without a word to his widowed mother, Oswald, after being honorably discharged by the Marines, defected to the Soviet Union in October 1959. In December, worried about his well-being, Mrs. Oswald sent him a check at the Metropole Hotel in Moscow. But he returned it in January 1960 with a note, scratched on a

**Body:**

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