

TESTIMONY BEFORE HOUSE GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION AND INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS
SUBCOMMITTEE--NOVEMBER 11, 1975

DAVID BELIN

p. 5 "Almost everything we had on the Warren Commission was marked Top Secret."

"I would have to say that it was over-extensive to the extent that most of the matters before the Commission really had nothing to do with what you would ordinarily think of as Top Secret information."

p. 6 "I think perhaps the reason it was classified Top Secret was that they did not want things to leak out of the Warren Commission hearing rooms."

Belin says that he "knew of no such independent classifying authority that the Warren Commission had."

p. 7 Belin says he knows of no authority for Ward and Paul to classify.

p. 9 "It was a standard joke within the members of the staff that we were having access to documents that were marked Top Secret at a time when none of us had security clearances."

p. 11 ". . . the public's right to know far overrides any considerations of what might be considered breaches of national security."

p. 12 Abzug asks about the 302 files on "9" Ruby interviews "when he was an informer for the Bureau?" Wants to know where they are.

p. 21 "Did the Warren Commission ever have access to those documents?" [Abzug refers here to the autopsy x-rays and photographs]

"To the best of my knowledge they were not introduced as evidence in any of the hearings."

"I was not given access to them when I asked for them."

DR. JAMES B. RHOADS

p. 41 Rhoads is accompanied by Dr. Marion Johnson, Steven Garfinckel of the Office of Legal Counsel of the GSA, and William Brown, Executive Director of the Classification Bureau.

p. 49 Speaking of the classification stamp on the January 27, 1964, Warren Commission executive session transcript, Dr. Johnson says: "The Department of Defense applied that on the basis of the marking on the package of the reporter's notes."

"The Department of Defense stenotypist prepared the transcript from the reporter's notes and presumably the stamp was applied."

"You mean the stenotypist has authority to classify ~~Top~~ Secret?"

"I do not know."

Garfinckel: "This particular transcript was the only one that came to the Archives' custody in stenotype form."

p. 50 "It had never been transcribed by the Warren Commission because of statements to the effect that they did not want it preserved."

"When we received a Freedom of Information request for access to that particular transcript we were unable to answer the request and to review the document without knowing what it said."

"We contacted the Department of Defense in order to find a stenotypist who had a Top Secret clearance because the stenotype copy which we had was marked Top Secret. When we sent it to the Department of Defense the stenotypist merely was applying the Top Secret classification marking that appears on the stenotype form."

Abzug: "You just testified that some request was made for this particular transcript, and that it really had not been transcribed prior to the request. When was the request?"

I'm sure testified years earlier

- p. 50 Garfinckel: "The request was in 1974."
- p. 57 Abzug asks if anyone requested that the January 21 transcript be kept in raw form. Johnson: "Not to me." Rhoads: "I know of no such request." Abzug: "How about the rest of you?" Garfinckel and Brown remain mute, make no response.
- p. 58 Marion Johnson says that two or three numbered documents are missing.

"Which are they?"

"The Texas AG's file."

"What else is missing?"

"Some documents in the correspondence file which we have not been able to locate. I cannot specify them without rechecking over correspondence with the surgeons."

Allen Dulles files are at Princeton University. Gerald Ford files are to go to the University of Michigan.

- p. 64 Rhoads: "The assumption is that the members of the Commission were honorable men and did not take with them the file copies or record copies of official Warren Commission records."

- p. 71 Rhoads on January 27 transcript: "I think we were not aware until fairly recently of the fact that there was not a completely regularized grant of authority to the Warren Commission to classify. We assumed they had the authority, and for a number of years proceeded on that basis."

- p. 73 "If we find material--and we do find it frequently--where there are classification markings and there is no information in there that is, that ever should have been classified, then we strike out those markings."

- p. 80 Rhoads on January 27, 1964 transcript: "We assumed that it had been classified pursuant to 10501."

- p. 81 "But you know that it was not. You testified to that effect."

by me earlier

after my requests?

Not in response to me.

p. 81 "When did you find that out?"

Marion Johnson: "When the Weisberg case came up."

Rhoads has the authority to declassify.

p. 85 "I think I have authority ~~with~~ regard to any of the internal records of the Warren Commission, where the information is not derived from other classified materials not originally in the Warren Commission."

What year?
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