

Norman Redlich

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Foto - Redlich

Norman Redlich (November 12, 1925 - June 10, 2011) was an American lawyer and academic. As a lawyer he is best remembered for his pioneering work in establishing a system of pro bono defense for inmates in New York State who did not have the finances for a lawyer. He was also a staff member of The President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy, known unofficially as the Warren Commission. He played an instrumental role in developing the Single bullet theory. In 1960 he joined the faculty of the New York University School of Law, where he was later Dean from 1974 to 1988.^[1]

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Early life and education

Born in the Bronx in 1925, Redlich was the second and youngest child born to Pauline and Milton Redlich. His parent were Jewish and they owned a small company which manufactured gardening and plumbing equipment. He served in the United States Army during World War II; after which he earned his B.A. degree from Williams College in 1947, and his L.L.B. degree from Yale Law School in 1950. He then worked for his parents company for most of the 1950s while simultaneously pursuing further graduate work at New York University. He received his LLM from the NYU law school in 1955. He joined the faculty at NYU in 1960.

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Warren Commission Years

In 1963, J. Lee Rankin appointed Redlich as a special assistant on the Warren Commission. He was credited with disproving the Belin Theory, which related to a city bus ticket in Lee Harvey Oswald's pocket helping him escape to Mexico. However, controversy arose when Gerald Ford provided J. Edgar Hoover with a probe into Redlich's past and found that he was on the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, which defended very controversial cases, including those of political activists and communists that the ACLU and other rights group did not.

Following a leak to right-wing politicians, on May 5, 1964, Ralph F. Beermann accused Redlich of defending Cuba on various issues. This incident and the ECLC ties led many to consider Redlich a communist sympathizer.

Later years

In 1972, he was named as corporation counsel of New York City by then-mayor John Lindsay. In 1975, Redlich became dean of NYU Law School. From 1977 to 1999, Redlich was a member of the Vermont Law School board of trustees. In 1993, he received the highest award given to lawyers by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, the Whitney North Seymour Award. In 1996, he was awarded the Robert J. Kutak Award, given annually by the American BAR association's educational department to those who it feels have made outstanding contributions in the field of legal education.

Redlich was chairman of the American Jewish Congress national governing council.^[2] He was also a member of the executive committee of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, and a member of the board of directors of The New Press.^[3] He died on June 10, 2011.^[4]

Miscellaneous

- Redlich has authored several books on law