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May 7, 1964

Hon. J. Lee Rankin
President's Commission on the
Assassination of President Kennedy
200 Maryland Avenue, N.E.
Washington, D.C.

Dear Lee:

I read yesterday's article in the Daily News concerning the attacks on Norman Redlich with the greatest dismay, and I am taking the liberty of writing you now even though you must be wholly immersed in exacting and important work. I hope you will understand.

It seems to me little short of an outrage that, ten years after the supposed demise of Senator McCarthy, a man's reputation can be sullied and his patriotism called into question upon allegations of the kind made against Norman. From all I can gather, he is being vilified on two grounds: (1) that he publicly urged the abolition of the House Un-American Activities Committee, and (2) that he is on the National Council of the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee. The first charge would put in the dock the thousands of persons (including myself and dozens of other law professors) who have taken the position that HUAC is operating inconsistently with the tenets of a free society. The second charge seems equally groundless not only because the nature of the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee has never been authoritatively determined, but, more important, because it brands a man as unfit to serve his country because, as a dedicated lawyer, he has taken the Bill of Rights seriously by supporting unpopular persons and causes.

I have worked with Norman on many matters over a period of three years and have come to know him well. We have had disagreements, sometimes rancorous ones, yet I have never deviated from the opinion that he is a man of honesty, brilliance, and devotion to what I understand are the finest purposes of the nation.

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I am writing now to endorse Norman Redlich, even though he should need no endorsement from me. It would give me the greatest satisfaction and pride if the Commission would respond to those now attacking him by standing up for him. The consequences would be to clear him and the air of charges that are a sorry vestige of an unhappy era in our history.

With warm personal regards,

Respectfully,



Norman Dorsen
Associate Professor of Law

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