

RELEASED PER P.L. 102-500 (JFK ACT)
NARA WDP DATE 7/8/00

April 10, 1964

MEMORANDUM

TO: J. Lee Rankin

FROM: Norman Redlich

SUBJECT: Commission and Staff Action for Completion of Investigation.

As a result of a conference with Mr. Willens I am presenting herewith a list of the principal areas requiring Commission or staff action in order to complete our investigation and start the drafting of a report.

I. PROMPT DECISION ON COMMISSION TRIP TO DALLAS.

It is difficult to schedule Commission witnesses until a decision is reached on the exact date of the Dallas trip. I would not be unhappy if you were to find that the entire Commission was unable to make the trip at one time. I say this because a one-day trip by the full Commission will draw a great deal of press comment and may subject us to the criticism that the Commission is merely performing a whirlwind on-the-spot investigation. Separate trips by two or three members of the Commission might be more useful to the members of the Commission and might create a public impression of a more careful on-sight Commission investigation.

If a visit by the full Commission is more practicable, I would not argue against it. The above comments are merely intended to point out to you that the failure to make the necessary arrangements for such a trip would not, in my opinion, create a serious problem.

II. MAJOR DECISIONS IN THE RUBY AREA.

The Commission should reach a prompt decision as to the questioning of Ruby. On Friday, we received a letter from Eileen Kaminsky (Ruby's sister) saying that Jack wanted to appear before the Commission. I suggest an early conference between you, Mr. Willens and me on this question.

A second major decision to come from the staff men in the Ruby area deals with possible witnesses before the Commission. I am assuming that there will be no such witnesses, but Mr. Willens will check with Mr. Hubert on this after they return from Dallas.

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III. THE SCHEDULING OF WITNESSES BEFORE THE COMMISSION

Depending on final plans for the proposed Dallas trip, the Commission should be able to hear the testimony of Agents Sorrells, Lawson, and Bouck of the Secret Service sometime during the week of April 13. In light of the proposed trip I do not feel we can consider other witnesses during this week.

During the week of April 20, we could hear the following witnesses before the Commission:

April 20 Mr. Cole of the Treasury Department and Mr. Catigan of the FBI who are experts in the area of questioned documents including fingerprints. Also Mr. Chaneyfelt of the FBI who will testify concerning the photo of Oswald with a rifle on Neeley Street.

April 21 Captain Fritz, Chief Curry, Lt. Carl Day

The above three Dallas police officers appear to have played the most important role in the early investigation. They should provide information concerning the initial investigatory steps and the reasons why the Dallas police proceeded along certain lines. It has also been suggested that District Attorney Wade be called before the Commission. Mr. Willens and I feel that a decision should be deferred pending further discussion with Ball and Belin.

April 22 Among the possible witnesses for this date could be (1) Senator Yarborough (2) additional witnesses in the area of Presidential protection, depending on what action the Commission takes in this area.

April 23 Governor Connally

April 27 (or any time during that week) - Marina Oswald

This schedule would enable us to complete the taking of testimony by the end of April, with the bulk of it occurring during the week of April 20.

IV. A DECISION ON THE QUESTIONING OF PROMINENT PUBLIC FIGURES

As soon as possible we should agree upon a course of action with regard to Mrs. Kennedy, Mrs. Connally, and President and Mrs. Johnson. I understand that some type of decision has been made that the President will merely provide a statement, as will Mrs. Johnson.

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It was felt, therefore, that the same procedure should be followed for Mrs. Kennedy and Mrs. Connally. I feel that this would be a mistake, since those who were actually in the President's car can give us important information which will help determine some basic facts about the assassination. We can justify treating Mrs. Kennedy and Mrs. Connally differently from President and Mrs. Johnson simply on grounds that Mrs. Kennedy and Mrs. Connally were actually in the President's car, and the Commission feels that the testimony of everyone in the President's car is important to our investigation.

It is possible that Mrs. Connally might be able to accompany her husband on April 23. Mrs. Kennedy could be questioned by Mr. Rankin and one or more members of the Commission at a time and place to suit her convenience.

V. COMPLETION OF EXAMINATION OF THE FILMS OF THE ASSASSINATION AND FURTHER INVESTIGATORY WORK RESULTING THEREFROM.

Mr. Eisenberg and I are working with Mr. Specter, Mr. Belin, the FBI and the Secret Service on this project. We plan to view the slides on Tuesday, April 14. We have examined Governor Connally's clothing and sent it to the FBI Lab for tests on the question of exit and entry holes.

We hope to be able to have the help of Governor Connally in viewing both the films and the slides when he is here on April 23.

Mr. Eisenberg is preparing a schedule of steps to be taken after the film examination. Briefly, we plan to verify our conclusions as to the location of the car at the time of the third shot by taking new pictures with same cameras of a car in the location which we determine from our examinations. We will compare these films with the films taken at the time of the shooting and if our examination has been correct, the two pictures should have identical surroundings.

Moreover, we are planning to ask the FBI Lab to supply us with dummies which will be marked by the Bethesda physicians with the exit and entry points of the first bullet that hit President Kennedy and the bullet that hit Governor Connally. We will then line these dummies up in positions which simulate the location in the car in an effort to determine whether the shooting could have followed the pattern which we now believe to have occurred.