

MEMORANDUM

February 13, 1964

TO: Files

FROM: Melvin A. Eisenberg

SUBJECT: Second Staff Conference (January 24, 1964)

Mr. Rankin began the conference with a general discussion of the background of the Commissioners; their prestige, and their competence.

He then discussed the staff's functions. He stated that our client is The Truth. In answer to a question by Mr. Ball he stated that if an answer could not be determined from the paper records we could bring the relevant witnesses here.

He emphasized that members of the staff should not discuss anything with other Government agencies until they knew everything thoroughly.

He pointed out that everything we do will be examined with more skill than anything else ever done by any of the staff members. The Commission's report will be examined by the entire United States and will be examined for the next 50 years.

He stated that after each of the staff members has acquainted himself with his own area, the staff will begin to discuss each other's area. He requested members of the staff to begin developing matters for immediate inquiry, but emphasized that no information should be requested that has already been given us. All requests to other agencies should go through Mr. Willens and Mr. Shaffer,

Mr. Shaffer and  
Mr. Jenne were not  
at this meeting.

File - Home  
2/25/64

He then discussed a target date. He stated that on the near side it would be difficult to release the report before the trial of Ruby had been completed. On the far side, he hoped to see the report released before the Presidential campaign, since once the campaign started it was very possible that rumors and speculation would spring up again. He therefore set a target date of June 1, with the understanding that the Commission could not issue a report until it was satisfied that it had reached the truth.

The Chief Justice concluded by discussing briefly our position as to Mark Lane and Melvin Belli. This is, that we have no original documents, and that if Belli or Lane were entitled to production they had to move against the persons holding the originals. As to Lane's request for public hearings, the Chief Justice did not want to force anyone to be a witness at a private hearing against his or her will, and if a particular witness rejected a closed hearing there would either be no hearing or a public hearing, probably the latter.

*Noted & filed - 1/20/64  
2/25/64*