



Gerald Ford's Little White Lie

Classifying executive sessions of the Warren Commission meant little to one of the commission members, Representative Gerald Ford, who took the transcript of the January 27th meeting, blue-penciled all the parts of it that could have embarrassed anyone and used it as a basis for the first chapter of his book about Oswald, *Portrait of the Assassin*. Then he lied about it in his confirmation hearings for vice-president before the Senate Judiciary Committee on November 5th, 1973:

The chairman: Now, Mr. Ford, it has been stated that as a member of the

Warren Commission, you voluntarily accepted the constraints which all the members of the commission accepted, providing that you would not publish or release any proceedings of the commission.

You did, however, in association with another, publish a book and provide material for a 'Life' magazine article on the proceedings of the commission. Do you feel this was a violation of your agreement?

Mr. Ford: To my best recollection, Mr. Chairman, there was no such agreement, but even if there was, the

book that I published in conjunction with a member of my staff . . . we wrote the book, but we did not use in that book any material other than the material that was in the 26 volumes of testimony and exhibits that were subsequently made public and sold to the public generally.

The National Archives declassified the top-secret January 27th meeting seven months later, on June 12th, 1974, —eight years after Ford used the transcript in his own book.

—R.B.K