

January 16, 1975

Mr. David Belin
Herriek, Langdon, Belin and Harris
300 Hone Federal Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Dear Mr. Belin:

I write you concerning a matter which I believe to be of the gravest importance to the American people, namely your qualifications as the executive director of President Ford's commission to investigate domestic activities of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Almost four years ago you and I carried on a lengthy, detailed and often stormy correspondence concerning your work as a staff lawyer for the Warren Commission, which investigated the assassination of President Kennedy in 1964. In 1973 a book written by you entitled November 22, 1963: You Are the Jury was published, dealing with the assassination. Among other things, I believe that our correspondence, by itself and considered in connection with statements in your book, demonstrates conclusively that you knowingly and deliberately lied in your book, that you intended to profit from these lies, and that you knowingly and deliberately concealed information tending to exculpate Lee Harvey Oswald in President Kennedy's assassination.

However, that correspondence is not now available to the American people because you stated to me, in no uncertain terms, that you would not allow me to use or disclose any portion of the correspondence without your express written consent under conditions which made your consent most unlikely. At that time I informed you that I did not consent to allowing you to suppress any letters which I wrote to you, and I still maintain that position.

At this point in history, when it is so vital to the American people to be able to judge your ability for the vital position of public trust to which you have been appointed, I believe that the entire record of our correspondence should be made public. I would regret it if you forced me to disclose only my half of the correspondence, but if you leave me no choice, I would do that.

Let me give you one example of how our correspondence and your book clearly reveal that you are not worthy of the trust which has been placed in you:

The Warren Report concluded that Oswald shot the President from the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository at 12:30 p.m., and that no one could be found who had seen Oswald for 35 minutes before the shooting, that is, after 11:55 a.m. As I pointed out to you in our correspondence, the statement that no one had seen Oswald for 35 minutes before the shooting was false, to your knowledge as a staff lawyer: one witness questioned by you said he saw Oswald on the first

floor at 12:00 noon, and another witness, Mrs. Carelyn Arnold, told the FBI that she thought she saw Oswald on the first floor at about 12:15 p.m., just the same time that a gunman was being observed on the sixth floor. Both of these pieces of information are excluded from the Warren Report, and in fact Mrs. Arnold was never questioned by the Commission or the staff and her FBI report was not published with the Commission's evidence. When I presented you with this information and asked you how you could give your approval to the Warren Report when it contained such statements which you knew to be directly contradictory of suppressed evidence, you told me, and here I must unfortunately paraphrase, that the chapter drafts of the Report which you wrote never made the statement that Oswald was not seen in the 35 minutes prior to the shooting, and that in light of these two witnesses, the Report was incorrect in this respect. However, at page 232 of your book, written two years after your letter to me, you write "No employee of the TSED Company is known to have seen Oswald again [after 11:55 a.m.] until after the shooting." Your book entirely omits any reference to the witnesses who did claim to see Oswald during this period, and your letter to me is unequivocal that you were aware of this evidence and of the total falsity of the statement you later published commercially.

This is not an isolated example. In fact, I believe that the total record of our correspondence gives abundant evidence that you are wholly unfit for the important investigative position to which you have been appointed because it reveals that you seem to have no respect for the truth and that you would not hesitate to cover up information.

So that the American people can have the total record before them and make their own evaluations, I hereby request your express written consent to reveal, complete and verbatim, the whole of our correspondence. If you wish to hide this information, I will not feel bound in any way from disclosing any letters which I have written to you, and I repeat that I have never felt so bound.

Regardless of your decision on our correspondence, I respectfully submit that the only decent and honorable course for you is to disqualify yourself from any involvement with the Rockefeller Commission and allow a more qualified and worthy investigator take charge of this important function.

Although he has been appointed to the Commission and presumably must devote his full efforts to investigating the CIA, former Solicitor General Erwin Griswold will be in residence as a professor at the Holland Law Center at the University of Florida for one month, beginning this week. I expect to meet personally with Dean Griswold at the end of the week and present a copy of this letter to him.

In the meantime, I truly hope that you will act toward full disclosure and as the national honor and integrity demand.

Sincerely yours,

Howard Reffman
912 SW 7th Ave., Apt. 3
Gainesville, Fla. 32601

cc. Vice President Nelson Rockefeller
The Honorable Erwin Griswold
Rep. Michael Harrington
Sen. William Proxmire
Rep. Robert L. Leggett
Sen. John Sparkman
Mr. Jack Anderson
Mr. Seymour Hersh
Mr. Benjamin Bradlee
The Philadelphia Inquirer
The Philadelphia Evening Bulletin
The Miami Herald