

September 21, 1964

MEMORANDUM

To: Howard Willens

From: W. David Slawson

Subject: Confidential information in Commission files

Mrs. Hennigan and I have noticed occasionally in the process of making exhibits out of Commission Documents that the description of a Commission Exhibit will not note that the exhibit is Confidential but that when you look at the Commission Document itself it bears a "Confidential" or "Secret" stamp. I also have noticed on one occasion that the zerox copies of a Commission Document will have accidentally included a piece of paper from another document. When this happens, of course, a slip of paper marked "Confidential" or "Secret" can often be hidden inside of a Commission Document which is apparently completely innocent.

In view of these possibilities for accidentally disclosing "Confidential" information, I recommend that before our files go to Archives some clerks look at every piece of paper in them to see if it has been stamped "Confidential" or "Secret." Anything so stamped should then be considered Confidential or Secret unless a specific authorization to the contrary can be found.

In addition, occasionally only the first and last pages of the Commission Document will bear a "Confidential" or "Secret" stamp and only intervening pages will have been made into a Commission Exhibit. Examination of the exhibit itself, therefore, is no indication that Confidential material may not have been included. I would suggest that the Commission Document reference for each exhibit be checked against the list of Commission Documents composed by Mrs. Lippard, which indicates whether Confidential material is included.

All State Department documents which bear a security classification can be checked with Mrs. Hennigan. She has my "Clearance" file from the Department of State which designates what previously classified documents may be released for publication or released after certain portions of them have been censored. The procedure Mrs. Hennigan and I adopted

For the Department of State documents which require partial censorship is that we preserve one uncensored copy and make one or more censored copies. The idea here is that the censored copy can be made into an exhibit or otherwise kept in a public file. In particular, we have prepared a complete censored duplicate of the large State Department file, Commission Document Nos. 1114 and 1115, which can be put in a nonsecret file. Finally, there are certain clearance problems which are still pending. This includes confirming from oral clearances we received from CIA and a clearance from the Department of State on Sergievsky as well as a clearance from the Western German Republic on Anton Erdinger. Mrs. Hennigan is conversant on these pending problems.

Mr. Rankin asked that I bring this to your attention.

WDSlawson/smh  
9-21-64

cc: Mr. Rankin  
Mr. Willens