

*Mark Lane*

February 27, 1964

*W. F. Willens*

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. J. LEE RANKIN, General Counsel

From: Howard F. Willens

Re: Interrogation of Mark Lane

Attached is a proposed letter requesting Mark Lane to appear before the Commission next week. I believe that Mr. Lane's testimony should be obtained at this time for the following reasons:

1. We are aware that Mr. Lane is making numerous speeches to the effect that he has information indicating that Lee Harvey Oswald is not the assassin of President Kennedy and that the Commission has not requested this information. Although I think our earlier letter amounts to a request for this information, I think we should make an explicit request for all documents possessed by Mr. Lane regarding the assassination of President Kennedy and ask from him a full and complete statement regarding the results of his investigation into this matter. To some extent, at least, this will undercut Mr. Lane's future presentations although I grant that he will still be free to maintain that the Commission is not giving due weight to the information he has brought to our attention.

2. As I have indicated to you previously, I believe that this action should be taken directly by the Commission rather than by Mr. Craig of the ABA. I understand from you that the Commission is willing to hear Mr. Lane and that Mr. Craig agrees that this would be preferable to any contact by him with Mr. Lane on behalf of the Commission.

3. I think that we should obtain these materials from Mr. Lane at this time so that appropriate investigation of any new leads can be conducted by the appropriate agency or the Commission. If we were to delay until the end of our investigation it would give Mr. Lane additional reason:

to question the bona fides of our effort.

4. I think that this material should be collected now and testimony of Mr. Lane elicited regarding these materials so that they can be made available to Mr. Craig and to Messrs. Ball and Dolin. I think that Mr. Craig should use the appearance of Mr. Lane before the Commission and the resulting testimony and documents as a way of beginning his work as defense counsel for Lee Harvey Oswald. I think this may serve to focus his efforts more than might otherwise be the case. I also think that these materials should be made available to Messrs. Ball and Dolin, since we have all agreed that the appointment of Mr. Craig in no way diminishes the responsibilities of the Commission staff to protect Lee Harvey Oswald's reputation and rights to the fullest extent possible. I think that Messrs. Ball and Dolin, after they receive these materials, should be directed by you to investigate them most fully through every available means.

As an administrative matter, if our proposed schedule of testimony is approved by the Commission then next week is perhaps the best time to handle Mr. Lane since no extensive preparation by members of the staff is necessary.