

Memorandum

TO : MR. TOLSON

DATE: JUNO 2, 1964

FROM : MR. BELMONT

SUBJECT: THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION

Tolson
 DeLoach
 Mohr
 Casper
 Callahan
 Conrad
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On the afternoon of June 2, 1964, Mr. Malley and I discussed the Director's testimony before the President's Commission with Mr. Rankin. You will recall we went over the transcript and clarified some typographical errors, etc., and thereafter left a copy with Mr. Rankin.

Mr. Rankin had only three points which he felt required further attention:

1. Page 6514. In connection with the Director's testimony on persons connected with front organizations, the Director stated that merely because a man belongs to a subversive organization does not mean he is black-listed and is a menace to his country for life. If he belongs to 20 of them, it shows he is either very gullible, or dumb or he is a menace. "That has been my attitude in regard to Government service where you find a Government employee who belonged to one or two, maybe in his early days. I think then there is a grave doubt as to whether he is a security risk."

Mr. Rankin felt this could be clarified to make the point the Director intended. He suggested possibly this be revised to read: "That has been my attitude in regard to Government service where you find a Government employee who belonged to one or two, maybe in his early days; I don't believe this makes him a security risk." Mr. Rankin made it clear, however, that he was not trying to put words in the Director's mouth; that this testimony would be made public and consequently it should state just what the Director means it to state.

To avoid questions from the public, I suggest the following wording would be preferable: "That has been my attitude in regard to Government service where you find a Government employee who belonged to one or two, maybe in his early days. I don't believe this necessarily makes him a security risk. Rather, this would be dependent on the degree of his activity in the front group and his purpose and intent in associating himself with it."

- AMB: [Handwritten initials]
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 - 1 - Belmont
 - 1 - Mohr
 - 1 - DeLoach
 - 1 - Sullivan

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2. Page 6544. Mr. Rankin noted that at the beginning of the testimony (Page 6493) the Chief Justice outlines the areas in which the Director will be asked to testify. One of them is the failure to include the name and information concerning Special Agent Hosty in the initial report of the Oswald address book. However, Mr. Rankin never got around to asking the Director about this during the testimony. Mr. Rankin thought we should include the Director's comment on page 6544, where the Director is discussing the fact that Hosty's name, office telephone number and license number were in Oswald's memorandum book.

We suggest that the following be inserted as a paragraph after the second line on page 6545: "Incidentally, those items in Oswald's notebook requiring investigative attention were first set out in an investigative report of our Dallas Office dated December 23, 1963. This report was not prepared for this Commission but rather for investigative purposes and, therefore, the information concerning Hosty's name, telephone number and license number was not included in the report. This information was reported in another investigative report of our Dallas Office dated February 11, 1964, in order that there would be a complete reporting of all items in Oswald's memorandum book. Both of these investigative reports were furnished to this Commission."

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3. Page 6568 to 6571. Mr. Rankin agreed with the changes we had made in the testimony concerning wording in our appropriation bill relative to a provision for the protection of the President. However, Mr. Rankin noted that on page 6570 we had eliminated one brief question by Representative Ford and the Director's answer as not being pertinent. He agreed with this. He did say he would go over this with Representative Ford to make sure Mr. Ford also agreed, although he had no doubt that Mr. Ford would be in agreement.

Mr. Rankin again stressed that the testimony of witnesses before the Commission will be made public and both the Director's and Belmont's testimony will be regarded as policy statements of the Bureau. He said that he had no questions as to the policy enunciated in the testimony and as a matter of fact he felt that the testimony would do the Bureau a great deal of good in the eyes of the public because it presented the Bureau's sensitivity to the rights of the individual and to the necessity of operating strictly within the law, which was an area of Bureau policy that

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had not previously been publicized. He reiterated that this testimony presented the Bureau in a light that would be new to many persons.

I told Mr. Rankin that the Bureau followed the policy that our actions spoke louder than our words.

Mr. Rankin said that he thought the Director was opposed to the FBI taking over the functions of Secret Service. I told him that this was correct, that the FBI had enough to do without taking over such responsibilities. Rankin said that some of the members of the Commission were of the opinion that Secret Service should be transferred over to the FBI and, as a matter of fact, he had noticed publicity to the effect that once the elections were over in November, the White House intends to transfer the functions of Secret Service to the FBI. I reiterated that I was sure that the Director would be opposed to such a move and I asked Rankin whether he had any solid basis beyond newspaper publicity that the White House intended such a move. He said he did not have but that he knew the respect with which the President regarded the Director and he thought it was probably the basis for the newspaper comments, although he had no facts on which to base his opinion.

ACTION:

If you agree, we will make the above changes in the testimony and furnish them to Mr. Rankin informally.

2. It is suggested that Mr. DeLoach be alert to insure that the views of the Bureau on any possible transfer of Secret Service functions to the FBI are known in proper quarters.