

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

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MR. TOLSON

DATE 5/19/64

cc Mr. Belmont  
 Mr. Mohr  
 Mr. Malley  
 Mr. Sullivan

FROM : A. H. Belmont

SUBJECT: DIRECTOR'S TESTIMONY BEFORE  
 THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON  
 ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY

Attached is a copy of the transcript of the Director's testimony before the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy. This transcript has been examined for accuracy, including misspellings and typographical errors on the part of the court reporter. It is noted that apparently the court reporter did not record the Director's testimony accurately in some instances. We have made as few changes as possible, in order to preserve the intent and accuracy of the Director's testimony.

This testimony was gone over by Messrs. Mohr, Malley, Branigan, M. A. Jones, Gheesling, Rogge, and me, on a word-by-word basis. In addition, Assistant Directors Sullivan, Rosen, DeLoach and Conrad have read the testimony and furnished their suggestions.

It is planned that I will personally go over these changes with Mr. Rankin of the Commission.

Enclosure

AHB:CSH (5)

*[Handwritten initials and signature]*

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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Vol. 44

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**PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION**  
**ON THE**  
**ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY**

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**Report of Proceedings**

**Held at**

**Washington, D. C.**

**Thursday, May 14, 1964**

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possibly could, that there is always the possibility at some future date that some evidence might come to the surface.

Mr. Hoover. That is, of course, possible, yes.

Rep. <sup>Ford</sup> Hoover. I want just to be sure that no leads, no evidence regardless of its credibility will be ignored, that it will be pursued by the Bureau or any other agency to make certain that it is good, bad or of no value.

Mr. Hoover. Well, I can assure you so far as the FBI is concerned, the case will be continued in an open classification for all time. That is, any information coming to us or any report coming to us from any source will be thoroughly investigated, ~~so~~ that we will be able to either prove or disprove the allegation ~~made by the person~~. We found in the course of our investigations <sup>that</sup> individuals have made statements, ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> yet, when we ~~tie them down or bear down on them to prove it A, B, C, D,~~ <sup>investigate</sup> ~~that the statement~~ they will frankly admit <sup>that</sup> it is an entire falsehood, ~~and~~ <sup>or</sup> that they don't know <sup>why</sup> ~~whether~~ they wrote the letter or why they made the statement.

But nevertheless we have the record and ~~we~~ generally in those instances <sup>we try to</sup> get a signed statement from that individual so it can be made a part of the record.

Rep. Ford. Under your authority from the President, the authority which gave you the FBI, the responsibility to conduct this investigation it is not an authority with a terminal point. It is an authority that goes on indefinitely?

circulated in the European Press, and this man came here and was, as I got it from some other sources, he took in some people here, some American journalists, and I am told that this man has a Communist background, and in addition to that is a most unreliable person. He has made these allegations that the Dallas Police force was involved in the assassination and so on.

Would you have any suggestions on how this Commission should deal with sort -- with this sort of thing?

Mr. Hoover. ~~I think that~~ We have received a request from the Commission to review that book and to make a report upon any portions of it that can be contradicted or substantiated by actual facts or documents.

I know Buchanan's background. He worked on the Washington Star and he was dismissed from the Washington Star because he was a member of the Communist Party. He spent <sup>much</sup> most of his time in recent years in France writing for French newspapers. and I <sup>have</sup> followed the articles that he has written <sup>about this matter only</sup> they are utterly what I would call "journalistic garbage." There is not a scintilla of truth <sup>most of</sup> to the things he has written in these articles and in <sup>his</sup> this book which I have had a chance to scan <sup>but</sup> haven't actually been reviewed yet. It is being reviewed by my research section. Some of the allegations are utterly fantastic. I often wonder <sup>where</sup> whether some of these individuals ~~are addicted to marijuana and~~ <sup>& why they</sup> get <sup>such</sup> some ideas ~~in their head~~, make such statements without ~~a scintilla~~ of foundation.

A small thing can often make a man break and come forward with a full confession. ~~interview~~ If he knows in advance that you have ~~got~~ certain <sup>evidence</sup> ~~things~~ <sup>will</sup> he ~~is going to~~ be on guard against answering those questions. <sup>of course,</sup> He is always advised of his rights <sup>and</sup> ~~fact~~ that he can have an attorney, ~~these things~~ <sup>we</sup> always make a point of <sup>this</sup>. We generally have ~~in our cases a physician,~~ a reputable physician of the community present in our office while the prisoner is there, <sup>to administer to him +</sup> ~~so~~ be able to testify <sup>that</sup> whether he has <sup>not</sup> been in ~~any de-~~gree hit or beaten ~~or anything of that kind on the third degree~~ <sup>subjected to</sup> ~~or by~~ <sup>methods.</sup>

~~So, that the medical testimony can be added and he~~ is examined when he comes in and he is examined <sup>before</sup> when we take him <sup>to</sup> ~~before~~ the Commissioner. Taking him before the Commissioner in a case like Oswald, would probably ~~have had to~~ have been done within ~~maybe~~ four or five hours. ~~We never go over that and~~ generally <sup>generally</sup> it is ~~always~~ <sup>we</sup> try to keep within an hour. <sup>arrest a prisoner</sup>

~~But~~ that makes it more difficult, you have ~~got~~ to work faster. But again I <sup>say</sup> am in favor of, ~~as I say,~~ having the <sup>procedures</sup> ~~processes~~ of the law enforcement offices <sup>as</sup> as tightly bound down as we can, with due respect for the interests of ~~society~~.

Of course, there must be an equal balance, ~~that~~. ~~But too~~ often, ~~we~~ <sup>of course,</sup> ~~for~~ years have had a rule against third <sup>methods,</sup> degree, but years ago ~~many~~ many police departments used the third degree. I think very few of them use it now because if they use it they <sup>violate</sup> ~~come under violation~~ of the civil rights statutes.

~~Lafayette Square.~~ That at least takes them away from being close  
to the gate at the White House. ~~But~~ I think there ought  
to be some control, ~~control~~ picketing, of course, is legitimate  
if it is orderly. Many times it doesn't continue <sup>to be</sup> orderly, and  
sometimes ~~these~~ pickets, as in this <sup>city</sup>, have thrown themselves  
on the pavement and the police have to come and pick them up or  
drag them away, and then, of course, the charge is made of  
brutality right away.

<sup>R</sup> ~~"You ought not handle them in that way." There have been~~  
~~Delegations of colored groups have~~ <sup>and of</sup> ~~of the colored groups~~ asking why I don't  
arrest a police officer for not ~~stopping~~ <sup>whom</sup> ~~from making him stop~~  
hitting some Negro <sup>whom</sup> that he is arresting in a sit-in strike, or  
lay-in strike or <sup>demonstration</sup> ~~that they have done~~ in some of these southern  
cities.

~~well,~~ We have no <sup>authority</sup> ~~right~~ to make an arrest of that kind.  
Under the authority the Bureau has we have to submit those <sup>complaints</sup> to the  
Department of Justice and <sup>if</sup> they authorize us to make ~~the~~ <sup>an</sup> arrest  
we will do it, ~~but we can't just go out and make a citizen's~~  
~~arrest so to speak, when there isn't being a felony committed.~~  
It is disorderly conduct at the most.

<sup>Those</sup> ~~that~~ in general are the contents of the recommendations  
I made and I will ~~have this placed on white paper and~~  
~~happen to be a copy of this memorandum~~ finish the Committee with  
~~then~~ a copy of this memorandum.

Mr. Rankin. Mr. Hoover, I would like to ask you in regard