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PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION

ON THE

ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY

Washington, D. C.

Friday, September 18, 1964

The President's Commission met pursuant to call at 10:00 a.m.

in the Hearing Room, Fourth Floor, 200 Maryland Avenue, Northeast,

Washington, D. C., Chief Justice Earl Warren, presiding.

PRESENT:

Chief Justice Earl Warren, Chairman

Senator Richard B. Russell, Member

Senator John Sherman Cooper, Member

Representative Gerald R. Ford, Member

Representative Hale Boggs, Member

Allen W. Dulles, Member

John J. McCloy, Member

J. Lee Rankin, General Counsel

The Chairman. The Commission will be in order.

The Commission has a number of matters to consider and decide in preparation for the completion of its final report and the closing of its affairs.

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This first page of the faded executive session transcript is a duplication of the court reporter's work, even to the continuation of his registration. However, casual comparison with samples of the actual work of the official reporter shows that not to be authentic.

Commission."

Mr. Rankin: "I don't think the country is going to be satisfied with the mere statement from, not to use Mr. Hoover's name, but just examine about any intelligence agency that Oswald wasn't hired, in light of this kind of an accusation, a rumor.

"I think that the country is going to expect this Commission to try to find out the facts as to how those things are handled to such an extent that this Commission can fairly say, 'In our opinion, he was or was not an employee of any intelligence agency of the United States.'"

It was the consensus of all seven men that the only way to proceed was to conduct extensive and thorough hearings of as many witnesses as was necessary to exhaust not just this rumor but dozens of other rumors. Where doubts were cast on any United States agency, independent experts would be hired and the investigation conducted in such a way as to avoid reliance on a questioned authority. No matter what the cost in time or money, every facet of the events in Dallas had to be explored. The Commission drew up an exhaustive list of witnesses and collected for analysis all pertinent books and magazines and newspaper articles. The staff compiled a directory of names of all persons said to have had any part in the matter. Then began months of hearings, hours of taking sworn testimony, which led from one skein of facts to another. Seldom has a crime appeared to be more complicated and mysterious. Never has a crime been so thoroughly investigated. From that investigation comes this biography of an assassin.

T164.13
T175.2

T164.13ff: Omission of following discussion:
[The Chairman.] But on the other hand, I don't want to be unfriendly or unfair to him.
My own judgment was that the most fair thing to do would be to try to find out if this is fact or fiction.
Mr. Rankin. What I was fearful of was the mere process will cause him to think, in light of these people being here and all, and the meetings of the Commission, that we are really investigating him.
The Chairman. If you tell him we are going down there to do it, we are investigating him, aren't we?
Mr. Rankin. I think it is inherent.
The Chairman. If we are investigating him, we are investigating the rumor against him, we are investigating him, that is true.
I don't want to belabor the thing at all.

Skips to T175.2, in the middle of a paragraph.

It was suggested by one of the Commissioners that it would be helpful to Members of the Commission if they each had a page proof of Chapter I of the proposed Report as soon as it is obtained from the Public Printer for their examination. The General Counsel was thereupon instructed to make arrangements for delivery of such page proof to each of the Commissioners promptly upon receipt of the same from the Public Printer.

A Motion was made, seconded and carried that there be provided 100 copies of the Report and Hearings bound in buckram for the Commissioners to distribute as they may determine and that in addition 500 copies of just the Report be provided for such distribution.

A Motion was made, seconded and carried that leather bound copies of the Report and Hearings with the names of the proposed recipients stamped on them in gold be provided for the President and such persons as he might select, for members of the Kennedy family in accordance with the direction from the White House, and for the Commissioners.

A Motion was made, seconded and carried that one set of the Report and Hearings with the proposed recipient's name stamped in gold be furnished each of the staff members who have been with the Commission a substantial period of time in the work of the investigation and preparation of the Report.

identities we are making to the FBI and the Secret Service and everybody else. We would like you to have that. That will give you a really good picture along with the synopsis you have as to what we think might be some further guidance in this further picture.

Is that the kind of thing, Senator Cooper, that you had in mind, would that be helpful?

Sen. Cooper. Yes, I know we have to finish the agenda but I thought after that even at this point, there have been questions raised in your own mind about --

Mr. McCloy. About direction.

Sen. Cooper. And in our own mind, I have one or two it might be well to discuss it.

Mr. McCloy. Let me ask you about this raw material business that is here. What does it consist of? Does it consist of the raw material of the autopsy? They talk about the colored photographs of the President's body -- do we have those?

Mr. Rankin. Yes, it is part of it, a small part of it.

Mr. McCloy. Are they here?

Mr. Rankin. Yes. But we don't have the minutes of the autopsy, and we asked for that because we wanted to see what doctors said about something while he was saying it, to see whether it is supported by the conclusions in the autopsy and so forth, and then we have volumes of material in which people have purported to have said, or say to various agencies certain things, they are not sworn.

If any of the Commissioners read this fake transcript so long after the Commission's life ended there was nothing he could have done. He would have seen that this and succeeding pages are selective paraphrases, not verbatim transcriptions. It was in this way that Senator Russell's objections to the Report were expunged from the record.

This is page 35 of the Executive Session of 1/21/64. Despite later contrary pretenses, Rankin is here explicit in saying the Commission did have "the colored photographs of the President's body", the autopsy pictures. This means there was never any need for the fake sketches used as "evidence" (see p. 130). There is no evidence that "minutes" ever existed.