

Reports 3

March 24, 1964

Rankin

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~~MEMORANDUM FOR MEMBERS OF THE STAFF~~

FROM: J. Lee Rankin, General Counsel

You have received a proposed outline of our final report as prepared by Dr. Goldberg. Staff members wishing to comment on this proposal or to submit their own proposed outlines should do so at their earliest convenience, preferably by March 30. An early staff meeting will be scheduled shortly thereafter.

Even before we have agreed upon an outline for the report, however, the staff should be aware of its responsibilities in connection with the writing of the report.

The prime responsibility for the writing of each area of the report lies with staff members involved with that particular area. I believe that the lawyers most familiar with facts are in the best position to set these facts before the Commission for ultimate consideration.

Every factual statement set forth in the report should be documented in the form of a footnote references to supporting materials. Such supporting materials may appear in a supplement to the published report, or as Appendixes to be published subsequent to the report, or may be material which will not be published but which will be available to interested individuals.

To the greatest extent possible the report should set forth the procedures we have followed to reach a particular conclusion.

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For example, it would not be enough for the report to state that the ballistic tests show that Oswald's gun was used to kill Tippit.

The report should indicate the steps which the Commission itself took to confirm the initial FBI conclusion. A footnote reference could direct the reader to the details of the ballistics examinations which would appear elsewhere in the report or in Appendixes.

In the writing of your section of the report you should consider which exhibits you feel would be useful to appear in the report in the form of visual aids, and also give preliminary consideration to the question of which underlying materials should be published in the form of appendixes or supplements.

I feel we should also start to consider a time schedule for the report-writing portion of our work. I suggest that we aim toward April 10, 1964, as the date when lawyers in each area should have started the writing of a first draft, and that we establish May 10, 1964, as the target date for the submission of a finished first draft for my consideration.