

January 21, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

From: Howard P. Willens

Re: Staff meeting of January 20, 1964

On the above date members of the staff who were on duty attended a staff meeting at which the Chief Justice was present. In addition to the Chief Justice, Mr. Rankin and myself, the following persons were present: Messrs. Hubert, Ball, Redlich, Stern, Specter, Griffin, Belin, Shaffer, Eisenberg and Slawson. At the beginning of the meeting the Chief Justice accounted the reasons why he undertook the job as Chairman of the Commission. He described his initial reluctance to do this when the Solicitor General and the Deputy Attorney General asked him to do so. Then he accounted his conversation with President Johnson, which changed his mind. He stated that the President was very concerned regarding the international repercussions of the assassination and called upon the Chief Justice to help. The Chief Justice stated that he felt under those circumstances he had no alternative. He stated that the President had instructed him to find out the whole truth and nothing but the truth and that is what he intended to do.