

Foreword

On November 29, 1963, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed Executive Order No. 11130, creating a Commission "to ascertain, evaluate and report upon the facts relating to the assassination of the late President John F. Kennedy and the subsequent violent death of the man charged with the assassination." By the same Executive order, the President appointed seven Commissioners: Earl Warren, Chief Justice of the United States; Richard B. Russell, Democratic Senator from Georgia; John Sherman Cooper, Republican Senator from Kentucky; Hale Boggs, Democratic Congressman from Louisiana and House Majority Whip; Gerald R. Ford, Republican Congressman from Michigan; Allen W. Dulles, former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency; and John J. McCloy, former High Commissioner of Germany. The President designated Chief Justice Warren as the Commission's Chairman. The findings of the Commission, based on an examination of all the facts, are set forth in the separate volume entitled "Report of the President's Commission on the Assassination of President Kennedy."

An essential part of the investigation conducted by this Commission has been the securing of sworn testimony from witnesses possessing information relevant to the inquiry. This testimony has been taken under the authority of Senate Joint Resolution 137 (88th Cong., 1st sess.), enacted by Congress on December 13, 1963, which conferred upon the Commission the power to administer oaths and affirmations, examine witnesses, receive evidence, and issue subpoenas. Under the procedures adopted by the Commission, some witnesses have appeared before members of the Commission, others have been questioned under oath on depositions by members of the staff, and others have provided affidavits to the Commission. Beginning with its first witness on February 3, 1964, the Commission under these procedures took the testimony of approximately 550 witnesses and received more than 3,100 exhibits into evidence.

The testimony and exhibits obtained by the Commission are printed in this and the succeeding volumes, organized in the following order:

- (1) Testimony before members of the Commission, in the order in which it was taken.
- (2) Testimony by sworn deposition or affidavit, grouped into four general subject categories; the medical attention given to the President and the Governor, identification of the assassin of President Kennedy, the background of Lee Harvey Oswald, and the killing of Lee Harvey Oswald by Jack L. Ruby on November 24, 1963.
- (3) Exhibits introduced in connection with the testimony before the Commission in numerical order.
- (4) Exhibits introduced in connection with sworn depositions and affidavits, grouped alphabetically by name of witness.
- (5) Other exhibits introduced before the Commission in numerical order.

The transcripts of this testimony, prepared by qualified court reporters, were reviewed by members of the Commission staff and, in most instances, by the witness concerned. Editing of the transcript prior to printing in these volumes was confined to correction of stenographic errors and punctuation, and minor changes designed to improve the clarity and accuracy of the testimony. In the few cases indicated, brief deletions have been made of material which might be considered in poor taste and is clearly irrelevant to any facet of the Commission's investigation. All the original transcripts prepared by the court reporters, of course, have been preserved and will be available for inspection under the same rules and regulations which will apply to all records of this Commission.

Each volume contains a brief preface discussing the contents of the volume. In addition, each volume of testimony contains a table of contents with the names of the witnesses whose testimony appears in the volume, and the numbers of the exhibits introduced in connection with that testimony. Each volume of exhibits contains a table of contents with short descriptions of the exhibits reproduced in the volume. Volume XV contains a name index setting forth all references to persons (other than Lee Harvey Oswald) appearing in the Hearings volumes and an index setting forth all references to Commission exhibits and Deposition exhibits in these volumes.