

INTERVIEWS: LFK

JHW	NOV 29 '49	JHW
	NOV 29 '49	
	JAN 5 1950	

FEB 24 1950

02005
Cornell University
Civil Liberties

November 16, 1949

Telephone conversation between LFK and
George Sokolsky on November 16, 1949

The office of John D. Rockefeller, 3rd, reported that they had telephoned Mr. Sokolsky, who was unavailable, and that they had therefore left a message with his secretary to the effect that the RF would be glad to furnish him with the facts.

Having heard nothing from Sokolsky, I called him. I told Sokolsky that:

- (1) Public announcement of our grant was made with the release of our annual report last June.
- (2) When we made a grant, we did it on the twin basis of our belief in the value of the project and the responsibility and capacity of the auspices, in this case Cornell University.
- (3) I pointed out that if the Foundation were to go beyond that and concern itself with the administration and conduct of the project, it would involve us in a highly improper relationship in terms of financial pressure and so forth.

0
200
Foundations,
Criticism of

To all of this, Sokolsky agreed wholeheartedly. He then raised the question of Gellhorn, and I read over the telephone extracts from Professor Cushman's communication to us. Sokolsky broke in in the middle and said "that is a pack of lies--now listen to me." He proceeded to read a list of Gellhorn's communications and doings as long as your arm, a dozen or fifteen at least. He then said "the information I am giving you is from the files of Congress and the FBI. Mr. Gellhorn is now busy interviewing all the witnesses who appeared before the Dies Committee. He is obviously sympathizing with them, muddying the waters," and, in Sokolsky's judgment preparing a report that is anything but objective. Sokolsky then said "I intend to wait for the publication of the report and then blow it sky-high together with the support for such a project."

Thinking that if there were definite information it would be better for us to have it than not to have it, and that it would be difficult for us to get it at first-hand, I asked Sokolsky if he would like to send us a copy of his information. He replied "Certainly, my only interest is to protect the public,- I'll have my staff bring the file up to date and send it to you within a week."