

my work in various areas, and you can judge if the CIA's response reflects a committment to unraveling the coverup.

The main CIA response is probably a letter of April 29, 1975 (their Item 1088). I assume the Committee has a copy, hopefully without deletions. I gather that you do not have access to the Committee's files; I do feel that a review of this document would be worth the Senator's personal attention.

You could particularly look at my analysis of a false CIA statement to the FBI (section III.A.1 of the memo) and the CIA's failure to explain the mystery photo for over a month after the Warren Commission's specific request (section III.A.2.c). We now know that someone in the CIA suggested "waiting out" the Commission on this. (CIA Item 250; Item 449 also shows evasiveness.) If the CIA has not admitted and explained their withholding on this matter, I would certainly not trust anything they have given you recently.

I have given you some reasons for my concern about the revival of the stories about Castro's involvement. The more I examine Rocca's memo to the Rockefeller Commission (Item 451), the worse it looks. As I said in my April 3 letter, Rocca concluded that Castro's warning against Kennedy was "an act of singular irresponsibility" without any reference to the CIA's 1963 attempts to kill Castro - and this was in a memo to a Commission which ducked the whole issue of CIA assassination plots. It is odd that the CIA included a disclaimer noting that the memo was just one man's work. Rocca included a very strained interpretation of Nelson Delgado's testimony about a civilian visitor to Oswald at their Marine base after he corresponded with the Cuban Consulate in 1959. The visitor was more likely from American intelligence than (as Rocca concluded) a Cuban. Of course, I don't know what is in the (presumably more sensitive) deleted pages of this memo. In any case, if what the CIA is giving you is as arguable as what the Rockefeller Commission got just a year ago, there is real potential for mischief.

There are other reasons to be skeptical of CIA help. What happened to the Pike Committee and Schorr may have been a carefully orchestrated effort to discredit both. On March 15, CIA officials were quoted as saying that 99% of the recent public disclosures "were handed to Congress 'on a silver platter'" in an internal CIA report. In the notes I sent you on January 23, I commented on the possible deceptive intent of the 1967 CIA report about a gap between two phases of the plots to kill Castro. Given the Pike Committee's problems, the part of the Rockefeller Commission record which is available, and the continued withholding of much of the CIA's file, it would really surprise me if the Church Committee is getting full cooperation.

Original reports indicated that the mandate of the Schweiker-Hart subcommittee was to look into agency withholding from the Warren Commission. I hoped that you would document this rather well-established premise and use it as the basis for a call for full public investigation of the assassination. Matters such as Oswald's links to the FBI were certainly relevant as a possible reason for a coverup, even if Oswald was innocent. Of course, nobody will object to a good and productive investigation which goes beyond the original scope. However, I think it might be a mistake to get into some but not all of the other important questions - that is, the evidence of Oswald's innocence, the physical and medical evidence, the actions of the Dallas Police, and the murder of Oswald. In such areas, the accumulated expertise of the critics should be fully and formally used. It would, I feel, be a serious error if the investigation focuses on Oswald's motivation or possible external direction (e.g., by Castro or the KGB) while assuming his guilt, especially if the leads are provided by the CIA or the FBI and the investigation is carried to its conclusion in private.

I know you share some of my concern, and I hope my fears are completely groundless, but I do want to put my position on the record and ask that you pass it on to the Senator (and to the Committee staff, as appropriate).

Sincerely,

Paul
Paul L. Hoch