

12 February 1979

Hoch
Dear Paul,

Thanks for your letter of the 7th, which was my first indication that an "investigative plan" was being formulated for the AIB, much less that I was being allocated a number of "assignments". Since this is a total surprise, you will understand that I had made no commitment to take part in such an exercise, and do not feel able to make such a commitment at this time.

Your draft is certainly comprehensive and offhand I do not find any omissions or needed revisions, except that there is no specific item on the autopsy.

I find names on your distribution chart which are new to me--that is, I have never heard of Jeff Meek, Ted Rubinstein, Steve Soder, Brad Sparks, or Fred Webre. It has not been my usual preference to work by committee, the more so when a number of participants are complete strangers to me. And, while I have regard and admiration for much of the work of the AIB, I do not recall that I have ever agreed to be co-opted, and I am not very comfortable with the urgency that animates much of its work.

My own tentative thoughts about the HSCA's Report and supporting volumes were that I would obtain them, study them with care and deliberation, and then decide if I want to do a book, a monograph, a magazine article, or nothing at all.

I am concerned that any work that will be done on the HSCA's Report--whether by group effort or individually--will be done to some extent in the dark. I mean by this that the 90,000 FBI documents release is virtually untapped. Some very significant material has turned up in the thousand-odd documents which have been distributed and studied, among which is the Bronson film, for example, and I do think it is vital for the flow of this documentation to be resumed.

You are probably aware that I have a strong distaste for media events, whether the Gallery seminar of a few weeks ago or the forthcoming one in St. Petersburg. I did work with the AIB on the publicigation of the Bronson film, and while AIB did a first-class job on it, it remains to be seen whether in the last analysis it will redound to the credibility of the critics. Certainly, the case was overstated.

To recapitulate, I would, as the expression goes, like to keep my options open, and decide for myself after the HSCA Report becomes available what if anything I feel able to do to expose its deficiencies. At the risk of being simplistic, I must say that it seems to me that it will be nothing more than a reprise of the Warren Report, but with two lone assassins instead of one.

All the best,