

February 13, 1986

Mr. Bob Foster Piaggio
1214 First Avenue
New York, NY 10021

Dear Bob,

Thank you for your letter of the 9th and for the enclosure dealing with Oswald and Hosty, on which you ask my opinion.

You will remember from our conversations how much importance I assign to scepticism at all times and in all situations. In this instance, I believe that Carver Gaten told Gochenour and his fellow-students exactly what Gochenour reported. The question is: did Gaten really hear from Hosty what he related he heard, or was he just inventing an exciting story that would amaze and impress the students? His denial of the whole thing to an HSCA representative—and his apparent unwillingness to testify to the story under oath—casts some doubt on his allegations to the students.

But even supposing that Hosty did tell Gaten that Oswald was a paid FBI informer reporting to him, was Hosty telling the truth? I have some doubt about that for the simple reason that, if it was true, Hosty did not have to accept punishment or transfer to Kansas City—he had a big lever to prevent that, by threatening to go public about Oswald's relationship with the FBI.

Do not forget that there are as many disinformation agents as there are agents, and that there are many instances of critics being led into the trap of making claims that cannot be verified and which make all the critics vulnerable to the charge of being gullible and irresponsible. While I do not make any final judgment on this particular affair, I do advise caution.

I am delighted by your plans to do a definitive critique of the HSCA and Blakey and wish you the very best of luck in your imposing task.

All good wishes,