September 16, 1981

Dear Harold,

Thanks for your note of the 3rd, and for the very interesting batch of documents.

As instructed, I won't let anyone know about the records you got from the JD about the acoustics panel - records dated after your request.

Please clarify the status of the other records you sent in the same package. Is it okay for me to circulate the 1962 memo from Sheffield Edwards to RFK? This apparently came from Justice Department file 82-46-5; you noted that it was a referral to the CIA on which the CIA, strangely, did act, and did not withhold, although it could have.

The release of this document is indeed quite strange, and I wouldn't even be certain that it wasn't a mistake. (I noted that the "approved for release" stamp, with the date August 1981, doesn't specify that it was the CIA who released it.) And do you know which of your requests produced this document? The file number 82-46 isn't familiar to me, and I doubt that this would have gotten into a JFK assassination file until 1975 or later. Have you asked for all files relating to the CIA-Mafia plots?

This is certainly very interesting; perhaps Lardner would be able to do something with it. I would like to circulate it myself, but since it wasn't quite clear which documents your prohibition applied to, I figured I had better check with you first.

Of course, if this document has been released by mistake, that's a bit of a story in itself. (It's a very famous memo, of course, but I don't recall seeing extensive quotes from it anywhere before - e.g., the Church and HSC reports.)

In terms of substance, what is new and significant is paragraphs 4 and 6. Paragraph 4 indicates that the CIA was getting information from or about the "Cuban principals" (presumably, Varona, and maybe Marita Lorenz) from good sources, and they weren't just relying on the direct channel (Rosselli and Trafficante) to keep track of the developments. (This is relevant to the implausible claim in the Frattiano-DeMaris book that the Mafiosi were just pulling a scam on the CIA, and were not pursuing the plot in Cuba.)

Paragraph 6 establishes that there was "reasonable monitoring" of Roselli's activities - which I think is new, and relevant for the same reasons as paragraph 4. Also, it again raises the question of whether the CIA was doing "reasonable monitoring" of Giancana; in which case, the Las Vegas bug which got all of this out into the open may not have simply been Giancana keeping an eye on his girlfriend, but the CIA (maybe thru Cain) keeping an eye on Giancana. (The HSC staff report is pretty good on all this.)

If the CIA really released paragraphs 4 and 6, with no deletions, on purpose, they are getting soft!

Of course, this document also reminds me that the CIA is still supposed to be finishing up the review of their last batch of JFK documents. Maybe this one will be among them.

Perhaps you could have Mark or someone ask the CIA for this memo, and see whether you get a copy with deletions!

The FBI documents on DeBrueys (NO 89-69-4710) were also quite interesting - almost amusing, actually. It looks like poor old DeB was trying to look at his own report on the FPCC, and nobody bothered to tell him that it had been released (via the Archives) years before, or that the Kaack report was in the 26 volumes. However, maybe they knew that, and DeBrueys wanted to find out what else there was in the files that the HSC would have access to - perhaps, some very sensitive material in the field office files which we haven't even seen yet, and perhaps just the backup material in the files, which would have made DeB's testimony quite difficult, if the HSC had been smart enough to get it and use it properly. (Clearly they didn't.)

These documents mention a letter from DeB on 6/12, enclosing a summary of his

HSCA testimony. I have a copy of the transcript, as you know (I may have sent it to you). (That is, I have a transcript for May 3, 1978, which looks like the first recorded session; I don't know of any later one.) I would be interested in DeB's evaluation of the content and direction of that session. As you may recall, I prepared a long list of detailed questions for DeBrueys, with documents - originally at the request of Sen. Schweiker's office; later I sent it to the HSC. About 2 days before DeB's testimony, I got a call - at 6 a.m.! - from some twit at the HSC who wanted a copy of my stuff; he apparently knew of it but didn't have a copy. They really did a poor job questioning him - they didn't use the relevant documents, and seemed to have only a superficial understanding of what my analysis was all about. (As I recall, they used just of few of my questions.)

Reviewing the documents you sent, I see that (on paper at least) DeB was asking to see the reports on LHO (not the raw files), and that the FBI told him that they had been made available to the HSC but couldn't be shown to him - and nobody told him that the report had been published/released! Seems like he would know that by now!

Anyway, if you can find DeB's summary of his HSC testimony, or other related documents, I would appreciate copies, if convenient for you.

Regardless of his biases, Alvarez is a clever scientist and has been, for years, known for his skill in finding errors in other people's work (and his eagerness to do so). It's quite proper for a panel like this one to have someone like him on it. What does bother me is that he was initially offered the chair of the panel! (Don't even hint to anyone that you heard this from me!!) He turned it down - presumably recognizing that it would look bad, and that it would bring him more hassle than he wanted. Anyhow, for anyone in Washington to offer the chair of this panel to someone with a strong prior position on the case really is indefensible; even if there would be no actual conflict of interest, the appearance of a conflict should have been enough to squelch that suggestion right away.

With best regards,

Paul

PLH