

5/21/69

Dear Paul,

I have just reread your excellent 11/26/68 memo on Hoover's statement you date at 11/25 (which I think is that of publication rather than issue). I now notice in it what I did not recall from the original reading. At that time I was rather more interested in the evidence that it had, in large part, been inspired by the contents of "MI", which was not yet printed, especially those parts never published or used in appearances.

He said the nick in the tie was on the left side. That is not consistent with it having been caused by a projectile that cut both inside edges of the collar, for such a projectile should have hit the tie close to the middle. It is, however, consistent with a right-handed surgeon working from the head of the patient. If you add to this the absence of traces of metal (copper) and the absence of mention of these traces from the FBI summary and supplemental reports, I think some of Hoover's strange language assumes significance: he was trying to keep the FBI in the clear, knowing there was a fake explanation. Not inconsistent with this is what you properly describe as the "unusually careful testimony" by Frazier. It is not the normal course of events for him to have been asking those kinds of studies he was making without awareness of the medical reports. In fact, it is certain that, with the record of the feds, he was intent upon making his work as consistent with that as he could get away with. It also is possible to give this "careful" testimony another and fangs-crossed-when-alarmed explanation. What he actually said is not that he hadn't seen the autopsy report but "I am not aware of the autopsy information as to the path of the bullet through the body". He could have spent hours studying that report and still have said this for there is no "autopsy information" on the "path" of the bullet. That path, as from the time of WHITWASH has remained unchallenged and now Flack has confirmed, was never traced. As I prove in POST MORTEM, they knew they hadn't traced it (Spector memo on doctors interview) but had projected it. In the light of this, the original opinion in these reports and cited by the SS agents is worth recalling.

Remember, also, that at the time those FBI reports of various characters were prepared Hoover fully expected they would never be made public. Did he not write you to that effect? Therefore, he had to keep himself and his agency in the clear in private, not public.

Frazier's testimony on the "character" of the front holes is not consistent with that he gave, limited as it was, on the jacket.

You might want to note on your filex copy (page 2, par. 1, that as published Ex885 also had the last 9 frames eliminated and as in the Archives, as of 5/16/69 one with Hill and 40 men in it still is placed after 313 and as published 283 is repeated twice whereas there is no 254.

If you can spare me two more copies of this, I'd like to file them as a reminder. It would help when I get them, for I forget so much now, if you could underline Hoover in one and Frazier in the other, in red.

I have the published copies of his statement and a mimeographed copy that I had marked up. When I decided to include in FM I wrote and phoned for a mimeo copy, without response. I got the copy I have from a reporter, not the FBI.

Sincerely,