April 17, 1990

To: Bill Woodward
Jim McGovern

From: Vic

Subject: Draft Task Force Report

I think this is a dynamite job. I have edited fairly liberally, which you can of course accept or ignore as you choose, and have also made some substantive suggestions in the margins.

I have the following additional comments:

(1) There needs to be a hard-hitting summary of findings and conclusions up front. One gets halfway through before one finds the suggestion of a cover-up or lying. One has to go literally to the end (page 43, before you get into "related issues") before one knows what the Task Force really thinks. I know you probably had to write the whole thing before you knew what you really thought, but the reader should not have to go through the same discovery process. The Task Force should state at the beginning what it believes--and is prepared to defend.

(2) That leads to my only real problem with the report, which is the section entitled, "Who Else May Have Been Involved?". I find this section fascinating, on the one hand, but terribly speculative, on the other. Will the Members really want to say all this?

If the point is that the two questions of "higher orders" and a "cover-up" are not being adequately investigated, then that is a legitimate conclusion for the Task Force and is easily defensible--but can't it be made much more briefly?

If the point is stronger--i.e., that the Task Force considers it unlikely that all those involved have been identified--I think that conclusion can be defended as well but it needs to be done more carefully.

If the point is that the Task Force thinks there was a cover-up, then that goes too far. The "cover-up" section seems particularly speculative. The press will certainly try to read into this speculation that you think there was one. At the very end of the section, you say that's not what you really mean, but not everyone will read this with the Talmudic intensity that I put into it.

In short, I am uncomfortable with this section and think it needs to be re-thought. I personally think the military knew and tried to cover it up. You probably do, too. But do we want

to make the Members say that in writing? You come perilously close to doing that, but the reasons you give are too speculative to be convincing. Recast this to make it say things Members will be comfortable defending when they are asked the inevitable question, "Are you charging that . . .?"

(3) Why no focus on the Embassy's not-altogether-laudatory role? Did you leave that element out on purpose? Between their screw-ups and unforthcomingness, and that of State and FBI in Washington, the Task Force can certainly confidently conclude that our own government is trying to cover something up. Is that not an interesting conclusion?

(4) There should ideally (if you have time) be some standardization between Bill's and Jim's portions. For example, in that same section ("Who Else May Have Been Involved?") there is a careful and effective use of subheads; in the rest, it seems haphazard.

(5) Also in the if-you-have-time category, I think you should adopt a common usage of Spanish names and stick to it. Sometimes, for the same guy you use one last name, two last names, one first name and one last name, one first name and two last names, and two of each, at different places in the report. It's confusing. For each guy, pick a name and stick to it.

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page

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* polygraph +

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"it seem highly unlikely" — Angle

* Monday 17th meeting

(it is second)

(how many people.

- efforts were made to

reassure them.

witness

Jonathan Moore

John Hackney

John

Chief

Ken.

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