

N E W S R E L E A S E

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JFK ASSASSINATION RECORDS REVIEW BOARD RELEASES FIVE
DISPUTED FBI DOCUMENTS ON INVESTIGATION OF OSWALD IN SOVIET
UNION

The Assassination Records Review Board *today released five FBI documents relating to the FBI's investigation of Lee Harvey Oswald while he was in the Soviet Union in 1960 and 1961. The FBI had previously sought to keep these documents closed principally because they contained some information provided by the Swiss Government.*

The Review Board originally voted to open these documents in full on July 17, 1995. The FBI appealed the Board's decision to the President. The Board then agreed to approach the Swiss Government through diplomatic channels to seek a waiver of any remaining Swiss interest in the records. The Swiss Government advised the Review Board that it had no objection to the release of the documents, if the names of Swiss citizens were redacted.

On December 13, 1995, the Board again voted to release the documents, except for the name of a Swiss citizen, which appeared twice in the documents. The FBI did not oppose the release of the documents after

approval had come from Swiss officials.

“These pre-assassination FBI documents on Lee Harvey Oswald are an important part of the historical record which were worthy of the Review Board’s aggressive pursuit. The documents reveal the steps that the United States government took to determine what Lee Harvey Oswald was doing after he left the United States in 1959 and whether or not someone was posing as Oswald,” said John R. Tunheim, Chair of the Review Board. “We owe a debt of gratitude to the Swiss government for recognizing the historical importance of these documents and for not objecting to their public release.”

Ten other FBI documents (including duplicates) which the Review Board had also originally voted to release in full in July 1995 and on which the FBI appealed to the President, were eventually released by the Board in October 1995. After receiving additional information from the FBI, the Board voted to open the documents, except for the numerical portion of informant symbol numbers.

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The Assassination Records Review Board was established by The President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act, which was signed into law by President George Bush. The five members of the Board were appointed by President Clinton, confirmed by the U.S. Senate, and sworn in on April 11, 1994. The law gives the Review Board the mandate and the authority to identify, secure, and make available all records related to the assassination of President Kennedy. It is the responsibility of the Board to

determine which records are to be made public immediately and which ones will have postponed release dates.

The Review Board consists of the following members:

John R. Tunheim, Chair; Minnesota Chief Deputy Attorney General.

Dr. Henry F. Graff; Professor Emeritus of History at Columbia University.

Dr. Kermit L. Hall; Dean, College of Humanities, and Professor of History at The Ohio State University.

Dr. William L. Joyce; Associate University Librarian for Rare Books and Special Collections at Princeton University.

Dr. Anna K. Nelson; Adjunct Professor of History at American University.

The Review Board has until October 1, 1996 to fulfill its mandate, plus an additional year at the Board's discretion to complete its responsibilities.

Note: Copies of the FBI documents released today are available at the Assassination Records Review Board, 600 E Street NW, 2nd Floor, Washington, D.C. 20530