

August 6, 1998

The Honorable Dan Burton
Chairman, Committee on Government Reform and Oversight
2185 Rayburn House Office Building
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter is the Assassination Records Review Board's twelfth monthly progress report, as required by the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight report on H.R. 1553 (now P.L. 105-25), which extended the authorization of the Review Board until September 30, 1998.

The Review Board met on July 7-8 and July 20-21, 1998, and processed, through formal determinations and consent releases, approximately 4,700 documents. In the month of July, the Review Board acted on more than 1,000 FBI records, 1,600 CIA records, 1,200 INSCOM/CSF records, and approximately 900 records from other agencies.

This month, the Review Board's FBI team negotiated the public release of 4,242 pages of records from the FBI's HSCA subject files. Although this number is lower than previous months, the Review Board staff is approaching the completion of these files and is focusing its efforts on completing its work. We are also working with the FBI to process the assassination records that the Review Board identified as a result of our review of records produced by the FBI in response to our requests for additional information.

The Review Board continues to process CIA records at an accelerated pace. At our July meetings, the Review Board processed more than 1,600 CIA records. The documents continue to flow from CIA, and we have strong indications that we will complete the review of CIA materials by the end of September. In addition, the CIA recently transferred to the JFK Collection the original of a multi-volume Office of Security file that it had maintained on Lee Harvey Oswald.

The Board processed more than 200 Army and Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) documents this month. Also, more than 200 additional Army and JCS records from the papers of Joseph A. Califano, Jr. were

transferred to the JFK Collection last week.

I am happy to report that we recently received permission from the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence to inspect the original Church Committee files. The Review Board began this review on August 3 to ensure that all relevant Church Committee materials have been identified under the JFK Act. Although the originals were inspected by staff members of the Senate Intelligence Committee several years ago to identify materials to be released under the JFK Act, no member of the Review Board or the National Archives has had access to inspect the originals. Additionally, last week we transferred to the JFK Collection additional transcripts of witnesses who testified before the Church Committee, including former Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and former DCI Richard Helms. *See attached letter.*

We have met with the CIA, and have memorialized in a letter to the General Counsel of CIA, the outstanding items to be completed by the CIA under the JFK Act before September 30. At the Review Board's request, CIA Director George Tenet has issued a CIA-wide directive requesting that a final check be done for any records relating to Oswald or the assassination.

As reported in our letter last month, we are unfortunately still working with the House Judiciary Committee to obtain access to inspect certain HUAC [House on Un-American Activities] records.

Finally, we have had some significant staff changes that I would like to report. Our Executive Director, Jeremy Gunn, has accepted a position at the United States Institute for Peace. We are grateful for his hard work and dedication to the Review Board these last four years, and we regret his departure. I am pleased, however, to inform you that the Board has named Laura Denk, Esq., the Review Board's Chief Analyst for FBI Records, as our Executive Director. We have appointed Tracy Shycoff Deputy Director. Tracy has served the Board for four years as the Associate Director for Administration. Ronald Haron, Esq., previously our Associate General Counsel, will serve as our General Counsel. We are confident that our efforts will continue as scheduled and we look forward to fulfilling our mandate by September 30, 1998.

With regard to the Zapruder film, the Justice Department's Civil Division continues to negotiate with counsel for the Zapruder family in an effort to reach agreement on the price of the film. Of course, the Review Board's resolution concerning the Zapruder film went into effect several days, on August 1, 1998, and the Review Board is eager to reach closure on this important record. As you know, the Zapruder family recently released the Zapruder film in the form of a videotape. The Review Board is pleased to note that a copy of the film is now more widely available to the American public.

As always, thank you for your continuing support and interest in the work of the Review Board.

Sincerely,

John R. Tunheim
Chair

Enclosure