

October 20, 1995

HAND DELIVERED

Mr. Michael Ranneberger
Coordinator
Office of Cuban Affairs
United States Department of State
ARA/CCA, Room 3244
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Ranneberger:

I am writing to advise you and the Department of State that one or more representatives of the Assassination Records Review Board is intending to meet with some citizens of Cuba at a conference in Nassau on December 7-9. It is expected that there will be discussions related to the assassination of President Kennedy and the possibility that the government of Cuba might have records related to the assassination.

The Assassination Records Review Board

The Assassination Records Review Board (Review Board) is an independent Federal agency that was created pursuant to the President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act of 1992, 44 U.S.C. § 2107. The statute authorizes the Review Board to collect both governmental and non-governmental records related to the assassination of President Kennedy and to transfer those records to the National Archives in order that they may be accessible to the American people. Therefore, unlike previous governmental inquiries into the assassination, the Review Board's mandate does not include opining on substantive issues related to the assassination, but includes only an effort to update and forward records to the National Archives.

Previous U.S. Government Contacts with Cubans Relating to the Assassination

Officials of the United States government have previously contacted Cuban officials regarding the assassination of President Kennedy. During the investigation conducted by the House Select Committee on Assassinations, some members of the Committee and staff traveled to Cuba twice to

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visit with governmental and non-governmental officials. Part of those visits included the recording of a verbatim conversation with President Fidel Castro Ruiz. Cuban officials were, according to Committee staff notes, very cooperative and helpful in the investigation. To the extent that you may be interested in examining records of those prior visits, I would be pleased to share them with you.

The December Meeting with Cubans

A privately sponsored conference on the JFK Assassination is currently scheduled to be held in Nassau on December 7-9, 1995. The sponsoring organization, the Committee on Political Assassinations, has arranged for certain Cubans to be in attendance. Although we cannot independently confirm who will or will not be in attendance at the conference, we have been advised that the following Cubans are likely to attend: Arturo Rodriguez, Carlos Lechuga, Oscar Pino Santos, and Fabian Escalante. The Review Board representatives seek to attend the conference in order to gain a better understanding about the possibility that the Cuban government may be able to provide additional information about the assassination. As one example, Lee Harvey Oswald, the accused assassin, reportedly visited the Cuban embassy in Mexico City in September and October of 1963, shortly before the assassination. He had been involved in pro-Castro activities in New Orleans prior to his trip to Mexico City.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely yours,

David G. Marwell
Executive Director