

August 4, 1998

The Honorable Dan Burton
Chairman, Committee on Government Reform and Oversight
2185 Rayburn House Office Building
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 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 our FBI team has negotiated the public release of 4,242 pages of records from the FBI's HSCA subject files. This number is lower than previous months, however that is due to the fact that our review of FBI records is near completion. We are also finalizing 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 plans to begin this review beginning 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 Letter attached **(Ron has)**.

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 moved on to the U.S. Institute of 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, the Review Board's FBI Team Leader, as our new Executive Director. Tracy Shycoff, Associate Director For Administration, has been named our Deputy Director, and Ron Haron, who served as our Associate General Counsel, is now 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.

[don't know if we want to update Burton on Zapruder issue since there is not much to report -- but Burton is interested in this issue.]

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

Sincerely,

John R. Tunheim
Chair
Enclosure