

NR_key_name: 51AED6BB05B9E221852565EF0073CFC7**SendTo:** CN=Eileen Sullivan/O=ARRB**CopyTo:****DisplayBlindCopyTo:**

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Subject: Letter from ARRB Chairman Tunheim
 April 21, 1998
 Dear interested parties: I am pleased to have this opportunity to provide you with an update on the activities of the Review Board. As you are all aware, we have six months remaining to fulfill our mandate, and I am proud to report that we are on schedule. The Board looks forward to completing successfully our mission and submitting our final report to the Congress, the President, and the American people. To date the Review Board has processed for release over 37,000 assassination-related records. After streamlining the review process, the Board continues to release larger volumes of records at each meeting. We continue to dedicate our resources to completing the review of the i%€sequestered collectionsi%€ held by the CIA and the FBI. The ARRB tackled difficult issues early on in our tenure, paving the way for the automatic release of documents with the same issues later on. Both the CIA and the FBI have been advised that it is our firm intention to complete our task within the congressionally mandated time limit. This goal includes reviewing, processing, and transferring to the custody of the National Archives all identified assassination records by September 30, 1998. The Board members are confident that the cooperative relationship that we have established with the agencies will form the foundation for a successful completion of our mandate. This year we have also focused our efforts on releasing military records related to the assassination. The Board has held successful joint declassification sessions with agencies including the Department of the Army, the State Department, National Security Council, Joint Staff Secretariat, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense to declassify thousands of military records in which these agencies have equities. Many of these records, although not directly related to the assassination of President Kennedy, have enhanced the historical record surrounding the assassination. The Boardi%€s broad definition of an i%€assassination recordi%€ has helped ensure that the record is as complete as possible. On July 3, 1997, President Clinton signed a bill (H.R. 1553) into law that extended the authorization of the Review Board until September 30, 1998. With this extension, the Board will be able to submit a more complete final report and ensure federal agency compliance. We are in the process of obtaining from all relevant agencies their declarations, made under penalty of perjury, certifying that they have made diligent efforts to search for and identify any assassination-related records within their custody. It is then ultimately left to the discretion of the Review Board to determine if an agency has in fact complied with the JFK Act. At the end of 1997, the Board received from the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence the unredacted Church Committee records that had previously been forwarded to NARA in redacted form. Receipt of these records is the result of a long-standing request from the Review Board and will require intense staff work to process them for Board review and public release. In the past year, we have

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