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**Subject:** Assassination Records Review Board Press Release  
 NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE DECEMBER 16, 1996 CONTACT: THOM WILBORN (202) / 24-0088,  
 EXT. 251 FBI WITHDRAWS PRESIDENTIAL APPEAL OF DOCUMENTS RELEASED BY JFK ASSASSINATION RECORDS  
 REVIEW BOARD The Assassination Records Review Board, an independent Federal agency, announced today  
 that the FBI has withdrawn appeals to the President opposing Review Board decisions to release previously  
 classified information in 21 documents pertaining to the investigation of Lee Harvey Oswald and the  
 assassination of President John F. Kennedy. The Review Board previously had voted to release the FBI  
 documents and the FBI had appealed the Board's decision to President Clinton. "The FBI's decision to  
 withdraw the appeals is particularly gratifying since it had so vigorously opposed the release of this  
 information," said John R. Tunheim, Board Chairman and U.S. District Court Judge for the District of  
 Minnesota. "Although the FBI decision to withdraw its appeals applies only to two sets of documents, I am  
 hopeful that subsequent FBI appeals will also be reconsidered." The FBI has just notified the White House  
 that it was withdrawing appeals opposing the release of information in ten different records that had  
 previously been classified as "Secret." The documents include a May 1960 report discussing the  
 investigation of Lee Harvey Oswald and his family while Oswald was residing in Russia, foreign government  
 reactions to the Kennedy assassination, coverage of the assassination by foreign correspondents, critics of the  
 Warren Commission and former Orleans Parish District Attorney Jim Garrison's investigation of Clay Shaw.  
 (Shaw was later acquitted of conspiracy charges by an Orleans Parish jury.) The records have been the subject  
 of intensive written briefings to the President by the Review Board and the FBI. "Although the Bureau  
 initially had vigorously opposed release of the information, the Review Board clearly demonstrated that the  
 information should be released to the public," Tunheim said. The FBI had previously argued that releasing  
 the information would prejudice current foreign counterintelligence operations and harm foreign relations.  
 The Assassination Records Review Board found that public interest in the information outweighed the  
 evidence that the FBI offered to prevent release of the information. In a letter to Presidential Counsel Jack  
 Quinn, FBI General Counsel Howard Shapiro said the appeals were withdrawn "after carefully considering  
 the matters raised by the Assassination Records Review Board." In addition, Shapiro said, the FBI "will  
 also review our position with respect to all other pending appeals . . . in the not-too-distant future."  
 "Despite the difficulties we have faced and the lengthy delay in resolving these issues, the Board has  
 succeeded in its mission of getting information into the public domain," Tunheim said. "The FBI decision  
 to withdraw the appeals clearly demonstrates the spirit of cooperation between the Bureau and the  
 Record

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