

August 14, 1997

Mr. Oliver Stone  
Illusion Entertainment  
201 Santa Monica Boulevard, Suite 625  
Santa Monica, CA 90401

Dear Mr. Stone:

Thank you for your letter of August 11, 1997 regarding certain documents contained in the J. Lee Rankin Collection that were acquired by the Assassination Records Review Board and recently became part of the JFK Collection at the National Archives.

We appreciate your interest in the work of the Review Board. In addition to the review and public release of assassination records held by federal agencies, the Board has made a priority of acquiring private collections that enhance the historical record of the assassination. The aggressive pursuit and acquisition of the Rankin papers was an important part of that effort.

The interest in the documents that relate to former President Gerald Ford's has been widespread and opinions vary on the importance and implications of his editing of a draft of the Warren Commission's final report. Regardless of one's view on these documents, it is clear that they enrich the historical record and give further insight into the inner workings of the Warren Commission.

The debate over President Ford's work on a draft of the final report is evidence that the intent of the Congress with the passage of the JFK Act is being fulfilled. The Congress sought to have the record of the assassination of President Kennedy made available to the American public to allow each interested individual to be able to make his or her own judgments regarding this tragic event.

As you are aware, the Congress did not authorize the Review Board to reinvestigate the assassination. Our mandate is to make the record of the assassination of President Kennedy available to the American public. With the public release of the Rankin papers we have taken another step towards fulfilling that mandate and have exhausted our legal authority relative to these documents. Although I understand and appreciate your intense interest in this matter, a Review Board public hearing, as you described, regarding these records would be beyond the scope of the Board's authorizing law.

Again, thank you for taking the time to write and express your thoughts on Ford papers contained in the Rankin collection. You have played a crucial role in making the history of the assassination of President Kennedy available to the American public. Your continuing interest, as well as the interest of many others, in the work of the Review Board demonstrates that the JFK Act is working. We assure you that we will continue to make every effort within our power to further enrich the historical record of the assassination.

Sincerely,

David G. Marwell  
Executive Director