

January 6, 1997

Dr. James K. Galbraith
LBJ School of Public Affairs
The University of Texas at Austin
Austin, TX 78713

Dear Dr. Galbraith:

Thank you for your letter of December 2, 1996, and the accompanying article on the National Security Council meeting of July 20, 1961. I appreciate your suggestions of material to be examined as possible assassination records. I can assure you that the Review Board is strongly committed to the earliest possible public release of any material relevant to the assassination of President Kennedy.

The Review Board staff has examined the available finding aids from the John F. Kennedy Library and has discussed the issue of releasing all available presidential meetings recordings on Vietnam with the staff of the Library. As you may know, the meetings recordings begin on July 30, 1962 and end on November 8, 1963. We have been advised that the recordings do not exist for the two week period prior to the assassination. The tape recording system was manually operated (rather than voice activated) and was turned on only at President Kennedy's request by his secretary Evelyn Lincoln. In addition, the Kennedy Library is in possession of Evelyn Lincoln's daily log, which indicates which meetings were taped and which were not. The log shows that no recordings were made after November 8, 1963.

The Kennedy Library is currently in the process of producing transcripts and opening redacted versions of their complete collection of presidential meetings tapes. The Library reports that none of the recordings on Vietnam has been opened to the public, to date, but the Library is in process and currently plans to open these records within the next three years at the latest. The Library reports that the Kennedy family is eager to have the tapes made available to the public. Robert McNamara has also recommended declassification of the October 2, 1963 tape, and we are pursuing the issue. We would very much appreciate your recommendations regarding other specific tapes. In addition, we are requesting other records including those you cite, related to Vietnam.

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Again, I appreciate your interest and your letter detailing the research that you have done. If there are other materials that you think it is important for the Review Board to see, I certainly would appreciate receiving such materials.

Sincerely,

Dr. T. Jeremy Gunn
General Counsel and
Associate Director for Research & Analysis