

The Assassination Records Review Board (Board) is an independent agency of the Federal government. It was created pursuant to the President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act of 1992, 44 U.S.C. § 2107 (Supp. V 1994) (JFK Act). The Board is collecting records related to the Kennedy assassination and sending them to the National Archives where they will be available for review by the public.

Congress specifically urged the Board to attempt to collect records from foreign governments. The JFK states: "the Secretary of State should . . . contact any . . . foreign government that may hold information relevant to the assassination of President Kennedy and seek disclosure of such information." (Section 10(b)(2)). The Department of State has previously assisted the Board in making contacts with the governments of Russia, Belarus, Great Britain, Mexico, Japan, and France.

The Board wishes to make appropriate contacts with Cuban government officials for the purpose of determining whether the government of Cuba has any information or records related to the Kennedy assassination.

It is believed that the Warren Commission did not make any contact with the Cuban government in 1963-64. The House Select Committee on Assassinations (HSCA) made contact with the Cuban government in 1978. The HSCA, including Chairman Louis Stokes (D-Ohio) made two trips to Cuba in 1978. It is believed that the HSCA spoke with the following persons: President Fidel Castro Ruz, Oscar Fernandez Mell, Armando Torres Santrayll, Ricardo Escartin, Jose Ramon Fernandez, Felipe Villa, Aramis Guetierrez, Eusebio Azcue Lopez, Juan Nilo Otero, Maria Teresa Proenza, Alfredo Mirabal Diaz, Jose Verdacia Verdacia, Orestes Guillermo Ruiz Perez, Rolando Cubela Secades (who was then incarcerated in prison). It is the Board's understanding that the Cuban government was cooperative in 1978 and provided a small number of records to the HSCA.

State will arrange for a meeting between the Cuban Interests Section in Washington and staff members of the Board. At that meeting, the staff members will discuss the types of information and records that the Board is seeking from the Cuban government and will make some suggestions regarding persons in Cuba who may have knowledge regarding information and records related to the assassination.

The types of information of interest to the Board include: (1) Lee Harvey Oswald's visit to the Cuban Consulate in Mexico City in 1963; (2) contacts between the government of the USSR and Cuba regarding Oswald and the assassination; (3) internal investigations by the Cuban government on the Kennedy assassination; (4) activities of Cuban exiles in the US during 1963; and (5) the incarceration of Santo Trafficante in Trescornia prison in 1959.

We request that you contact appropriate persons in the Cuban government to advise them that inquiries will be made through the Cuban Interests Section in Washington.