

BY FACSIMILE AND FIRST-CLASS MAIL

March 19, 1997

Lt. Col. Gregory Rath
Assistant Chief of Staff
White House Military Office
Washington, D.C. 20502

Re: White House Communications Agency Records and the
JFK Assassination Records Collection Act, 44 U.S.C. § 2107

Dear Lt. Col. Rath:

I am writing to thank you for commencing the process of searching for assassination-related records that may be within the custody or control of the White House Communications Agency ("WHCA"). I would like to raise the following points.

1. December 1966 Cable. To date, the WHCA has located a recently declassified December 1966 WHCA memorandum that provides a "list of telephone calls recorded by the White House switchboard on 22 November 1963." (A copy of this memorandum is attached hereto). This is clearly an assassination-related record within the meaning of the JFK Act. You indicated that this document was located in an historical file of White House switchboard records, but that this file contained no additional telephone records for 1963-64. Any additional information or records you can provide relating to this 1966 communication would be helpful. In particular, we would like to obtain a copy of cable no. CAP661353, which is referenced in the December 1966 cable.
2. Search for Additional Records. We understand that the WHCA is continuing to search its records for additional assassination-related materials and will keep the Review Board informed of its search results. As we indicated previously (*see* Feb. 28, 1997 Letter from David G. Marwell to Lt. Col. Gregory Rath), among the major records that we are attempting to locate are communications to and from Air Force 1, Air Force 2, and the White House (including the National Security Council) on the day of the assassination.¹ However, the Review Board does not want to limit artificially the

¹ For example, the Review Board seeks to have the WHCA locate any original, unedited audio recordings of voice communications on the day of the assassination between or among Air Force 1, Air Force 2, Andrews Air Force Base, and the White House Situation Room.

Lt. Col. Gregory Rath
March 19, 1997
Page 2

WHCA's searches solely to records dated on or around November 22, 1963. In the broadest sense, the Review Board wants to discharge its obligation to make available to the public (with redactions where appropriate for national security reasons) any records that reflect communications to or from, or information in the possession of, the highest levels of the Executive Branch in the 1960's that relate to the assassination or the subsequent investigation. For example, a major category of records that the Review Board is attempting to locate are 1963-64 communications to and from the White House, including telexes or cables, that relate to the assassination (*i.e.*, communications relating to the Warren Commission investigation, Lee Harvey Oswald, or other information pertinent to the assassination that may have been forwarded to the White House from the State Department, CIA, NSA, Defense Department entities, Secret Service or FBI). In addition, to the extent that the WHCA has custody or control of any internal White House communications, including any tape recordings, the Review Board requests that those records be reviewed to identify any materials relating to the assassination. To the extent such records are not within the control of the White House Military Office or the WHCA, but are within the custody of another entity or agency within the Executive Branch, please advise us as to the appropriate entity to whom our inquiries should be directed.

Upon completion of its record search, the WHCA will need to forward all identified assassination-related records, including the attached December 1966 memorandum, to the JFK Assassination Records Collection at the National Archives.

3. WHCA Indices and Finding Aids. To assure the Review Board that the WHCA has done an adequate search of all relevant 1963-64 record groups within its custody, we request that the WHCA make available to the Review Board for inspection any indices, finding aids, or other materials that would disclose the categories of 1963-64 records within the custody of the WHCA. This would assist the Review Board in potentially identifying other sources of information or records that may relate to the assassination. It may also allow the Review Board to identify more precisely which WHCA records should be searched. Review Board staff members possess appropriate security clearances to the extent that any such finding aids are classified. In conjunction with an inspection of the WHCA finding aids, the Review Board would like to arrange for a meeting between the WHCA and the Review Board staffs so that the Review Board can obtain a better appreciation for the categories of records maintained by the WHCA (and whether such records might contain materials relating to President Kennedy's assassination).

Thank you again for your cooperation in this endeavor. Please do not hesitate to contact us in the event the WHCA has any questions in connection with its search efforts.

Lt. Col. Gregory Raths

March 19, 1997

Page 3

Sincerely,

Ronald G. Haron

Senior Attorney

cc: Terry W. Good, Director,
Records Management,
Executive Office of the President (w/enc.)
Steven D. Tilley, Chief,
JFK Assassination Records Collection, NARA
(w/enc.)