

March 5, 1997

The Honorable Fred Thompson
Chairman, Committee on Governmental Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Earlier this week, I sent to you the 1996 FY Report of the Assassination Records Review Board. In the Report, the Review Board recommended that its tenure be extended for one additional year in order to complete, *inter alia*, its congressionally imposed mandate of reviewing for declassification all Federal records related to the assassination of President Kennedy.

It is important for you to know that ***neither the President, nor the Office of Management and Budget, has taken any position with respect to the Review Board's recommendation.*** It is our understanding that the issue is now under advisement at OMB and that its own decision and recommendation will be made in due course.

The Review Board's enabling legislation, the President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act of 1992, 44 U.S.C. § 2107 (Supp. V 1994), created the Board as "an *independent* agency" and *not* an executive branch agency. Section 7(a). The Act also specifically instructed the Review Board to make, in its FY Reports, "[s]uggestions and requests to Congress for additional legislative authority needs." Section 8(f)(3)(G). By making its recommendation for a one-year extension, the Review Board did not intend to suggest in any way that the Administration had made any decision with respect to the advisability of the Board's continued operations.

Sincerely,

David G. Marwell
Executive Director