

Memorandum - (4) page fax, including this page

To: Jack Tunheim  
David Marwell

From: Tom Samoluk

Date: October 20, 1995

Re: ARRB Presentation at COPA Conference; Sunday, October 22nd, 9:30-11:00am

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## I. Introduction

As you are aware, COPA has asked the Review Board to make a presentation at their annual conference on Sunday, October 22, 1995, from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. They want us to give an update on the Board activities during the last year. The conference will be held at the Omni Shoreham Hotel. The ARRB presentation will be held in the Ambassador Room. John Newman will act as moderator.

David and I will join you on stage to make the ARRB presentation. We thought that the most effective structure for the presentation would be for you to speak first and give an overview of the Board's work. David will speak second and give more detail about how the Board used this first "start-up" year. I will conclude by discussing our public information and outreach efforts. We thought that if you and David spoke for ten minutes, and I spoke for five minutes, that would leave sufficient time for some questions.

## II. Suggested Talking Points

### A. Introduction

1. I would like to thank COPA for inviting us again this year.
2. I'd also like to introduce two members of our senior staff who join me this morning and will make some remarks, and also be available for questions.
3. David Marwell is our Executive Director and Tom Samoluk is the Associate Director for Communications.
4. We appreciate the support that the research community has given us during the last year.

5. We have made it a priority to try and keep you informed about what the Board is doing and also make use of your years of experience in our search for assassination records.

6. I should also note that our funding appears to be secure for the coming year. We thank all of you who spoke out on our behalf when things were a little in doubt earlier this year.

## **B. The Review Board and its Mandate**

1. I would like to briefly state what the Board's mandate is and who serves on the Board. The ARRB is an independent federal panel, consisting of five private citizens. The members were appointed by President Clinton. They are:

Dr. Henry F. Graff; Professor Emeritus of History at Columbia University;

Dr. Kermit L. Hall; Dean, College of Humanities, and Professor of History and Law at The Ohio State University;

Dr. William L. Joyce; Associate University Librarian for Rare Books and Special Collections at Princeton University;

Dr. Anna Kasten Nelson; Adjunct Professor of History at The American University; and

me. I am the Minnesota Chief Deputy Attorney General in my other life.

2. The Board's mandate is to identify and secure Kennedy assassination records.

3. It is up to the Board to determine which records are to be made public immediately and which ones will have postponed release dates.

4. The purpose of the law and the Board's work is to provide a full record to the American public, make it available at the National Archives, and allow interested parties to draw their own conclusions about what happened in Dallas 32 years ago.

5. The Board is not re-investigating the assassination of President Kennedy. Our focus is collecting the assassination records.

6. We are doing everything we can to fulfill our mandate and make the record as complete as possible.

## **C. Activities of the Review Board**

1. The Review Board has been meeting regularly to review records since the spring. We are pleased with the progress we are making in dealing with some very difficult issues. David will give you more details on our progress in reviewing the records.
2. As many of you know, the Board has held public hearing on identifying and locating assassination records in New Orleans, Washington, Dallas and Boston to allow for public input and assist the Board in fulfilling its mandate. We are continuing to pursue additional records which should be in the Collection at the National Archives. Again, David will give you some more details on our search for records in the possession of private individuals, and state and local government

#### **D. Review Board Progress: Last Year, This Year**

1. Last year when David Marwell and I were here I set out several goals that we hoped to achieve in the coming year. I'm proud to say that we accomplished everything we set our sights on.
2. Last year, we had no staff. This year we are fully staffed and I am pleased with the people who are working hard on making records available to the American public.
3. Last year, I said we would have public hearings. As I noted, we have been to Dallas, Boston and New Orleans, giving many people the opportunity to testify and allowing the public to see the Board at work.
4. Last year, I said that we needed to provide guidance on the definition of an assassination record. It was an early priority and with your help we developed a very solid definition guidance which serves as the foundation for our work.
5. Last year, I said we would begin the acquisition of records and the review process. As I said, we are on schedule and will hear more from David about our progress and the record review process used in our first year of operation.

#### **E. Conclusion**

1. The Act which created the Review Board has given the American public an extraordinary and unprecedented opportunity to gain insight into its government and recent history.
2. The Board has the opportunity not only to make publicly available records that may clarify the

facts surrounding the assassination, but also, along the way, the opportunity to redefine the meaning of, and need for, secrecy in government.

3. The unprecedented powers given to an independent panel of private citizens will also hopefully help to restore a measure of confidence in government.

4. The controversy surrounding the Kennedy assassination is unlikely to disappear even after the Board's work is completed, But, the American public will know that no information about the assassination is being hidden by the government. Perhaps we will see a way for government business to be conducted more effectively -- and more openly -- in the future.

5. Thank you. I'd like to turn the floor over to David Marwell, our Executive Director.

### **III. Question and Answer Session**

There will be time set aside for questions and answers after we make our formal remarks.

The following are anticipated questions, on which you can defer to David or me:

1. Are you going to be a federal judge? Are you staying on as Chair of the Board?
2. What happened with the FBI appeal? Wasn't what happened against the JFK Act?
3. Are you following leads provided by researchers? (Note: I can give specific examples where we are following leads.)
4. Are there doubts about funding beyond this year?
5. Will there be any more public hearings?

Note: Any questions or complaints about responses to letters or notification can be turned over to me and will be glad to respond.