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# A Move To Release JFK Files

Lawmaker hopes to dispel  
suspicion of government role

By Clifford Krauss  
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Washington

The chairman of a congressional committee that investigated the assassination of President John Kennedy said yesterday that he will ask Congress to order the release of all government documents on the slaying in an attempt to dispel public suspicions that the government was involved in a conspiracy to kill Kennedy.

Representative Louis Stokes, D-Ohio, chairman of the former House Select Committee on Assassinations, said the release of the documents could, however, strengthen evidence that mob figures were involved in the assassination.

The committee's files could be released if the House votes to do so, and Stokes' support would be influential in such a vote. But secret material held by other government agencies can be made public only with the approval of the House, the Senate and the president, and prospects for such approval are unclear.

The former House panel sent 848 boxes of unpublished documents it had collected to the National Archives, where they were to be sealed until the year 2029. But the idea of unsealing the files has picked up momentum with the recent endorsement of Senator Edward Kennedy, D-Mass.

Stokes said recently that he was leaning in favor of releasing the committee's documents, although he added that he believed they would add nothing important to public knowledge of the case.

But he said yesterday that documents assembled by the CIA and FBI should be released, too. These documents are not part of Stokes'

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## WORK FILES

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committee's files, although the panel saw some of them in the course of its inquiry.

These files include transcripts of conversations among prominent members of organized crime that were secretly — and in some cases illegally — taped by law enforcement authorities in the six months before the assassination, said G. Robert Blakey, a Notre Dame University law professor who served as counsel to the House assassinations committee.

There are concerns that the files, and the intelligence agencies' information, could reveal intelligence sources and methods, as well as raw rumors that could needlessly harm the reputations of innocent people.

A senior aide to Senator George Mitchell of Maine, the Senate majority leader, said Mitchell supports the fullest disclosure possible of government documents related to the assassination. "If Mr. Stokes comes forward with any proposal," the aide said, Mitchell "would review it."

### 'Clear the Air'

David Boren, D-Okla., chairman of the Senate intelligence committee, also called yesterday for the release of all classified government files relating to the assassination. He said he knows of no indications that the government was involved, "but it is time to find an appropriate way to clear the air."

A White House spokeswoman, Judy Smith, said of Stokes' proposal: "Presently we have no position. We will, of course, review any request when presented."

Stokes expressed particular interest in the release of three tapes of secretly recorded conversations between FBI undercover agents and Carlos Marcello, a New Orleans organized crime figure, in the late 1970s, in which Marcello reportedly discussed his involvement in the assassination.

The tapes were sealed by Judge Morey Sear of the U.S. District Court in New Orleans in 1981 in order not to prejudice Marcello's trial for bribing a Louisiana official to receive state insurance contracts.

Marcello, 82, was released from

prison two years ago and lives in New Orleans. Counsel Blakey says he is in poor health.

### Dislike for Brother

When Marcello testified before the committee, he denied any involvement in the assassination. But he also expressed intense dislike for Attorney General Robert Kennedy, John Kennedy's brother, whom Marcello held responsible for his brief deportation in 1961.

In its findings, the panel stated that Marcello "had the motive, means and opportunity to have President John F. Kennedy assassinated, though it was unable to establish direct evidence of Marcello's complicity."

Interest in Marcello's possible involvement in the assassination was fanned earlier this month when Frank Ragano, a lawyer who represented labor leader Jimmy Hoffa for 15 years, told the New York Post that Hoffa had ordered him to tell Marcello and another mob leader: "They had to kill the president. Hoffa said to me, 'This has to be done.'"

Hoffa was being investigated on orders from Robert Kennedy.

### Oswald Alone

The Warren Commission, which conducted the government's official review of the assassination, concluded in 1964 that Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, killed Kennedy.

The House panel concluded in its 1979 report that Kennedy "was probably assassinated as a result of a conspiracy." But it decided that neither the U.S. government or any foreign government was involved.

Conspiracy theories implicating the Soviet Union, Cuba, the Mafia, right-wing Cuban exiles and even the FBI and the CIA have long been in abundance.