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DECEMBER 31, 1980

Honorable Thomas Foley
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Foley:

Your communication transmitting a letter from your constituent [redacted] concerning the investigation of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy has been referred to me.

In November 1979, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) was asked to conduct a series of specific Kennedy assassination-related investigative tasks. These requests were based upon information from the public, House of Representatives Select Committee on Assassinations-generated information, and previous FBI investigations. Attorneys of this Department were instructed to request an investigation into any aspect of the case which had an arguable potential of advancing the assassination investigation. The FBI has completed all investigative tasks requested and no new information of value has been developed. However, all unsolicited correspondence is promptly reviewed.

More recently, on January 3, 1980, the National Science Foundation (NSF), an agency of the Federal Government which promotes the increase of scientific knowledge and encourages research, agreed to a request by the Department of Justice to have the House of Representatives Select Committee on Assassinations' (HSCA) acoustics report studied by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) which is a private organization composed of some of the world's most respected scientists. The NAS study report is due in January 1981, according to an August 12, 1980, study proposal. The Department intends to minimize its contact with NAS and will not risk exerting pressure on NAS which could be misinterpreted as an endeavor to prematurely terminate or influence the NAS Committee's work. Accordingly, the Department is not prepared to accept responsibility for the timeliness of this independent organization's performance, though we have requested that NSF supervise NAS compliance with the terms of its proposal.

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The final review of the results of the Department's activity in the John F. Kennedy matter, as well as other investigations currently under review, should be expected within two months of the completion of the MAS report to Congress. We have arranged for the Department to receive a copy of that report directly from MAS to facilitate an immediate review. It would be inadvisable to attempt to formulate any final conclusions or proposals in the John F. Kennedy matter prior to the release of the MAS report, since the only indication of a conspiracy is the HSCA expert opinion regarding the acoustical evidence. That evidence is, of course, the object of the MAS review.

I hope this information will be of assistance in responding to your constituent.

Sincerely,

Philip L. Heymann
Assistant Attorney General
Criminal Division

BY:

Philip T. White
Acting Deputy Assistant Attorney General