

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 2, 2009

Dear Mr. Faga:

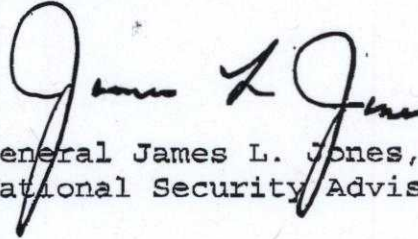
On behalf of the President, we appreciate the hard work and thoughtful analysis reflected in the Public Interest Declassification Board's report on "Improving Declassification." On May 27, the President issued the attached Memorandum regarding a forthcoming review through the National Security Council's interagency process of proposed amendments to Executive Order 12958, as amended, on Classified National Security Information, which will address many of the Board's recommendations. In that Memorandum, the President endorsed the Board's principal recommendation, to establish a National Declassification Center (NDC) that will bring agency reviewers together at the National Archives to conduct collaborative declassification review. The NDC will provide the structure and authority, as you recommend, to prioritize the declassification of records of major significance, particularly those of former Presidents.

In his Memorandum, the President also called for changes to the Order that will address the problem of over-classification and the challenge of reviewing electronic records. We welcome the Board's planned focus on the challenges and opportunities of technological advances in the work of declassification. We also welcome your continuing efforts to help the government make necessary improvements in its classification and declassification programs.

To assist in our review of Executive Order 12958, as amended, I ask the Board to convene a series of public forums to solicit recommendations for revisions to the Order. Bill Leary, the National Security Council's Senior Director for Records and Access Management, will chair an Interagency Policy Committee

that will develop proposed revisions to the Order reflecting the President's priorities. I have asked him to work closely with the Board to ensure adequate public input as this review moves forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James L. Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

General James L. Jones, USMC, Ret.
National Security Advisor

Mr. Martin Faga
Chair, Public Interest Declassification Board
c/o Information Security Oversight Office
700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Room 100
Washington, D.C. 20408-0001