

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 18, 1975

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As we both know, the Nation must have a strong and effective foreign intelligence capability. Just over two weeks ago, on December 7th while in Pearl Harbor, I said that we must never drop our guard nor unilaterally dismantle our defenses. The Central Intelligence Agency is essential to maintaining our national security.

I nominated Ambassador George Bush to be CIA Director so we can now get on with appropriate decisions concerning the intelligence community. I need -- and the Nation needs -- his leadership at CIA as we rebuild and strengthen the foreign intelligence community in a manner which earns the confidence of the American people.

Ambassador Bush and I agree that the Nation's immediate foreign intelligence needs must take precedence over other considerations and there should be continuity in the CIA leadership. Therefore, if Ambassador Bush is confirmed by the Senate as Director of Central Intelligence, I will not consider him as my Vice Presidential running mate in 1976.

He and I have discussed this in detail. In fact, he urged that I make this decision. This says something about the man and about his desire to do this job for the Nation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your efforts on behalf of Ambassador Bush's nomination. I will deeply appreciate your efforts to expedite approval of this nominee by your Committee and the full Senate.

Sincerely,

The Honorable John C. Stennis
Chairman
Armed Services Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510