

**Final Report
of the
President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Review Board**

DRAFT BY TJG¹

March 9, 1998

Introduction [Jeremy]

The lingering suspicions.

Now, as a result of the JFK Act, there is more info on JFK assassination than any other single event in history. Records are available for scholars of national security, VN, Cuba, Kennedy admin.

As best the Board is able to determine, all federal records relevant to the assassination have been placed at NARA. The information that is postponed typically is technical information or information that identifies sources that are highly peripheral (or indeed unrelated) to the assassination. The public should be assured that all information that the Board can identify as meaningfully related to the assassination is now open to the public.

Chapter 1: Secrecy and the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy

- A. The Problem: Secrecy and Suspicion
 - a. missing records and evidence from the beginning
 - b. costs of Secrecy
 - a. financial costs of classification
 - b. the loss of public confidence
 - . Prior government inquiries
 - WC
 - HSCA
 - Church-Schweiker
 - Abzug
 - Others
- C. Literature on the assassination

¹CAVEAT: This is a draft by TJG and does not necessarily represent the viewpoint of the Review Board or of any member of the Review Board. The final version of the Report will be a report by the Review Board and will reflect the Review Board's opinions. Statements made in this draft reflect what the author believes is likely to occur during the last few months of the Board's existence. The draft will be revised as developments warrant.

Ineffectiveness of FOIA to handle JFK records

Prior government declass efforts

POW/MIA

Human radiation

CIA special projects (Bay of Pigs)

FRUS

- Chapter 2: The Solution: The JFK Act [section-by-section analysis] [Ron/Jeremy]
Summary and discussion of the law
- a. Responsibility of Agencies
 - i. identifying, reviewing, and transferring records
 - ii. special responsibilities of State, DOJ
 - b. The Assassination Records Review Board
The ARRB is an *independent* federal agency; did not conduct an investigation/did not seek a solution. Goal was to *identify, review, and clarify (where possible)* assassination records
 - i. Set standards for release (see Chapter 2)
define AR
apply Section 6
 - ii. Oversee compliance with the JFK Act (see Chapter 3)
 - iii. Pursue additional records and information (see Chapter 4)
 - c. The JFK Collection at NARA

- Chapter 3: The Assassination Records Review Board [history of] [Eileen/Michelle]
ARRB Members: circumstances of appointments and confirmation
Independence; professionals;
ARRB staff
Summary of major Review Board activities
meetings
hearings
extension for a fourth year
FBI appeals to the President
Compliance
Research projects
Connick litigation
Pursuit of foreign records
Sheridan/NBC
Kodak
Fragment at NARA
Subpoenas and enforcement

Liaison with agencies
Depositions
Interviews

Chapter 4: The Standards for Release of Information [Bob and Laura]

- A. Prior standards for the release of information
 - a. FOIA
 - b. Mandatory review, etc.

- B.

The relevant provisions of Sections 6, 11

- B. Prior standards: FOIA
- C. Definition of AR
- D. Experience with agencies

Chapter 5: Overseeing Federal Agency Compliance [Ron]

- A. Compliance Program description

- B. Agency by agency review (including Compliance Program and Statistics)
 - CIA
 - FBI
 - NARA and the Presidential Libraries
 - Military
 - Secret Service
 - Justice (except FBI)
 - State
 - Treasury (except Secret Service)
 - White House (PFIAB, NSC)
 - Congress (SSCI, etc.)

Chapter 6: Additional Records and Information [Michelle/Eileen/Doug]

- A. Additional records and information from Federal agencies and former Federal officials
 - a. Formal and informal requests to agencies

 - b. Interviews with former Federal officials
see also contributions from Rankin, Ford, Hosty

Leads by witnesses that turned up no useful information.

LeWinter
Prouty
Nagell
Novell
Capehart
[John Thomas Mason]
FBI agent on Hosty
filming of the autopsy, later murdered

B. Assistance from the public

Pro bono services
Kodak
Experts
Records contributions/donations from public
Lifton
Rankin
Garrison
Wegmann
Fritz
Ford
etc.
Photographs
Photographs etc.

C. Local governments

New Orleans DA
Miami/Metro-Dade
Connick litigation
Sheridan/NBC litigation
Manchester
Cusak
Kodak
Bullet fragment testing
Subpoenas and enforcement
Depositions
Interviews
Compliance Programs

[D. Medical Evidence?]

Chapter 7: Lessons Learned and Recommendations [Michelle/Jeremy]

Weaknesses of government declassification and information programs

FOIA

Mandatory review

Case study: FBI appeals to the President under the JFK Act

Case study: Requests for evidence from agencies

Weaknesses of government records policies

Case study: Secret Service records

Case study: Military records

Weaknesses of the JFK Act

Lack of clarity

Subpoena powers

Takings powers

Inability to detail personnel from other federal agencies

Unrealistic time schedule

Document-by-document tracking

Exemption of IRS

The Review Board as a model for future declassification efforts?

Appendices

Statistical summaries on assassination records

List of staff reports

List of hearings

List of staff members

Bios on Board Members

List of persons who testified

Audit report

Index to Board filing system

List of depositions

Medical Evidence Report

Record advisories

Attempts to communicate with public

Interns

Budget information