

MEMORANDUM

October 16, 1997

To: T. Jeremy Gunn

From: Laura Denk and Kevin Tiernan

Subject: Determinations Regarding FBI/Church Committee Records

The FBI created administrative files to document its correspondence and records production for the Senate Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities (hereafter referred to as the Church Committee). The FBI conducted a review of these files for assassination records after the passage of the JFK Act. As part of this review, the FBI assigned the whole body of Church Committee/FBI records record identification numbers ("RIFs"), processed certain records as assassination records under the JFK Act, and processed the remaining records as not assassination-related ("NAR"). The Church Committee/FBI records reflect the broad interest of the Church Committee in the intelligence activities of the government, and by assigning RIF numbers to the entire file, the FBI over processed the file.

The ARRB staff conducted its own review of the FBI-designated NAR records to ensure that no assassination records were missed in the initial FBI review. Our review yielded sixteen previously NAR-designated documents which we plan to ask the FBI to process under the JFK Act. There is an outstanding question regarding the remaining not-assassination-related records.

Because the entire body of Church Committee/FBI records was not explicitly defined as assassination records in the JFK Act, we recommend that we make it clear to the FBI that assigning RIF numbers to the entire Church Committee administrative file was in error, and that they need not deliver not-assassination-related records to the National Archives JFK Collection for eventual release in 2017.

We recommend this course because the RIF numbers were assigned in error, and the records in question should never have been reviewed under the JFK Act.