

CHAPTER 5 -- Federal Agency Compliance with the JFK Act

Introduction

In the Fall-Winter of 1996, the Review Board initiated a compliance program to ensure, to the fullest reasonable extent, that all relevant agencies conducted as thorough and diligent a search as reasonably possible for records relating to President Kennedy's assassination. Under the compliance program, each agency was requested to submit a declaration, under penalty of perjury, describing the search that it conducted. Prior to submission of this final declaration, however, the Review Board staff worked directly with the agencies in identifying issues specific to that agency that should, if possible, be resolved in connection with the search and processing of records relating to the assassination.

Among the issues that the Review Board addressed with the agencies were the following: (1) the overall scope and adequacy of the agency's record search, including whether the agency searched its records storage facilities and any secured or vault facilities containing classified records; (2) locating discrete groups of records that, in the opinion of the Review Board, should be reviewed for materials relating to the assassination; (3) providing specific records or information in response to Review Board requests; (4) explaining the circumstances for the destruction of any records relating to the assassination or otherwise accounting for specific record groups that could not be located; and (5) agency effectiveness and cooperation in processing records in a timely manner so they could be placed in the JFK Collection at the National Archives.

In this Final Report, we will briefly review each agency's compliance with the JFK Act, focusing on the issues identified above.