

August 16, 1996

Ms. Joan Hamilton
SAIS, Room 1C710
The Pentagon
Washington, DC

HAND DELIVERED

Re: Department of the Army Review/Declassification of Cuba Records

Dear Ms. Hamilton:

Staff personnel at the National Archives facility in College Park recently discovered a collection of Army documents related to various policies and clandestine activities toward Cuba during the early 1960's. Members of our staff have done a preliminary inventory of these records and found that they appear to fall within the purview of the JFK Assassination Records Collection Act inasmuch as they enhance the historical understanding of events contemporaneous with the assassination of President Kennedy. This collection consists of six cartons of classified records: one carton is entirely Top Secret, the other five are all Secret. All appear to be Group 1 (not automatically downgraded or declassified) records.

As Tim Wray has previously discussed with you, we think the simplest and most expeditious way to process this collection is to make it a joint effort between the Army and the ARRB staff. I am prepared to make available Mr. Christopher Barger, a member of our staff conversant with Cuba policy issues in the early 1960's, to assist in the review and in the preparation of Records Identification Forms (RIF's) for these documents. In return, I request that the Army provide Mr. Randy Rakers, a declassification specialist assigned to the Military History Institute at Carlisle Barracks, to review these documents in order to: (1) immediately declassify those records that no longer require security classification; (2) identify those records that require more deliberate review and referral prior to declassification under the JFK Act; and (3) identify any third agencies that may have equities in particular documents and which would have to be consulted prior to declassification. As you know, Mr. Rakers has been of enormous help to us in reviewing and declassifying assassination-related records in the past, and his familiarity with JFK Act standards and procedures would be of inestimable value in this effort.

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Because of the size of the Cuba records collection, we estimate that it will take Mr. Barger and Mr. Rakers approximately one week to complete this process. Since these classified records cannot be removed from the NARA facility at College Park, processing of these records on site will therefore necessitate the Army's funding Mr. Rakers' TDY for a period of one week. On the basis of informal coordination with Mr. Rakers, we propose that this take place the week of September 2-6, 1996.

Please feel free to contact me or Mr. Wray should you have any questions or desire any further information about this project. We have been extremely pleased with the Army's cooperation—and, I should add, with your personal advice and assistance—throughout this process, and I look forward to continuing to work with you in the future.

Sincerely yours,

David G. Marwell
Executive Director