

UNITED STATES CUSTOMS SERVICE

September 26, 1995

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Overall, the Review Board is establishing a good working relationship with the United States Customs Service. The Customs Service designated the Director of the Office of Administration within the Office of Investigations to oversee the search for assassination records. Review Board staff members first met with the Director and his staff in July, 1995. At that meeting, Mr. London indicated that Customs had not begun its search for records, but that it had been aware of its obligations under the JFK Act for over a year. Soon after the July meeting, however, Customs assigned Bruce Miller to search for records and to interact with the Review Board on a regular basis.

Mr. Miller met with our staff in August. At that time, the only assassination records Customs had located were those records referred to it by other agencies. Customs received at least 15 envelopes of referred documents, and it has approved full release of all of those documents. Mr. Miller is not optimistic that other Customs assassination records are extant for the following reasons:

- The current record destruction policy at Customs states in part that Customs will destroy all documents over 20 years old. The policy applies to both headquarters and field office files.
- However, some documents may have survived destruction. In 1975, the Customs Service headquarters moved to its present location. During the move, most divisions within Customs shipped their files to the Federal Records Center in unlabeled and *undated* boxes. Because the boxes did not have dates, Federal Records Center employees may not have destroyed the documents according to schedule. However, for the same reason, the Customs Service in conjunction with the Review Board, will have a difficult time determining which boxes may contain assassination records.
- Another complicating fact is that the Customs Service did not establish its central filing system until 1971, so both the Customs Service and the Review Board are trying to find out how pre-1971 files were maintained.

Members of the Review Board staff will be going to Federal Records Centers with Mr. Miller to review any boxes of documents that may still be intact. In addition, Mr. Miller promised to continue his efforts contact current and retired Customs agents who worked at headquarters and in the Customs field offices during the relevant time period. Finally, the Review Board has asked the Customs Service to keep track of all tasking memoranda it has issued to the various divisions within Customs in its effort to find assassination records.