

MEMORANDUM

September 10, 1996

To: David Marwell
cc: Jeremy Gunn

From: Tim Wray

Subject: Input for Annual Report

General.

Overall, compliance with the JFK Records Collection Act by Department of Defense (DOD) services and agencies has been satisfactory during the past year. Each service (Army, Air Force, and Navy/Marines) has now requested subordinate headquarters to search their records for assassination-relevant materials. Likewise, most independent DOD agencies or activities have also taken steps to comply with the statute. The results of this canvassing are discussed by individual service/agency below.

For the most part, the search for records by each service/agency focused on records currently in its custody (e.g. historical files and other administrative holdings). What these searches universally missed were records still under the service/agency's control but no longer in its custody: namely, records stored at the Federal records storage facility in Suitland, Maryland, that have not yet been accessioned by NARA and so technically remain the property of the individual service or agency which created them. (To access these records one must obtain permission from the owning service or agency, not NARA.) The failure by DOD agencies to search their Suitland records constitutes a serious omission inasmuch as many records from the early 1960's are in this limbo where they are no longer in the possession of the agency, but not yet controlled by NARA. The ARRB Military Team is currently doing a general inventory of records stored at Suitland to identify those that may include assassination-related materials; where significant holdings are found, we intend to make a specific, formal request to the owning service or agency for those files to be searched.

Compliance highlights by individual service/agency.

Department of Defense (General):

- designated Stewart Aly as single point of contact for liaison with ARRB in July, 1995
- Hosted explanatory meeting between ARRB staff and all DOD services/agencies in

October, 1995.

-- Cleared approximately 45 previously-withheld HSCA documents for release without postponements.

Joint Staff:

-- Cleared approximately 20 Joint Staff or Joint Chiefs of Staff documents for immediate release without postponements.

-- Identified various historical documents (chiefly within J3 Special Operations Division) as possibly assassination-related; currently reviewing these for future Board action.

Office of the Secretary of Defense:

-- Identified unknown quantity of OSD documents as possibly assassination-related; currently reviewing these for future Board action.

[Note: I am scheduled to go look at these records on the afternoon of September 10; I should have more definitive information afterwards.]

Army:

-- Located, reviewed and cleared for release without postponement Corps of Engineers documents related to JFK gravesite.

-- Assisted ARRB staff members in locating, reviewing and partially declassifying documents from the microfilm records of the Pentagon Telecommunications Center. To date, more than 300 documents (all of which are either incoming or outgoing messages in the 1962-4 timeframe) have been photocopied for declassification, referral and possible Board action. Documents represent all military services plus CIA, State Department, and other agencies. Personnel from the Army's Center of Military History in Washington, DC, and Military History Institute at Carlisle Barracks, PA, have been particularly helpful in searching for and declassifying Army records.

-- Historical office for the Army's Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM) assisted ARRB staff in locating Army intelligence files previously accessioned by NARA and held in NARA's classified collection.

-- Army declassifier will shortly begin reviewing six cartons of Top Secret and Secret documents found at NARA (College Park) dealing with policies and activities toward Cuba in the 1962-4 timeframe.

Air Force:

-- Located, reviewed and cleared for release without postponement approximately ten assassination-related documents; additional classified records currently being reviewed.

-- Air Force canvass of subordinate commands yielded a ledger-type book entitled "Log of Events" and "Death of JFK" that appears to be a record of incoming/outgoing messages, orders and reports kept by an unknown individual assigned to the headquarters or operations section of the 1254th ATW at Andrews Air Force Base. This book contains handwritten entries from November 22 to November 25, 1963, describing actions related to the return of Air Force One from Dallas to Andrews and other activities.

Navy/Marines:

-- ARRB has had the least substantive feedback from the Navy/Marines of all the services. Original Navy/Marine POC (Lieutenant Colonel Sparks) departed for new assignment without providing any feedback after October, 1995 meeting; ARRB contacted his replacement in August to rejuvenate Navy's compliance efforts.

-- USMC historian provided ARRB with original paper copies of Lee Harvey Oswald's personnel and medical records for transfer to NARA; also provided two cartons of documents (already open to the public) concerning USMC operational planning during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 which generally appear not to be assassination-related.

National Security Agency: Currently working closely with members of ARRB staff to prepare approximately 100 assassination-related documents for Board action.