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From the Desk of [REDACTED]
SA/C/CIC, X74606

NOTE FOR: William H. McNair @ DO
Fredrick C. Wickham @ DO
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J. Barry Harrelson
FROM: [REDACTED] @ DO
OFFICE: SA/CIC
DATE: 08/01/98 12:57:43 PM
SUBJECT: IMMEDIATE - Questions re JFK Assassination Search

CIC has received the tasking memo from Lee Strickland to conduct the new search on information relating to the JFK Assassination. I see that LA and CE divisions have received it as well. Before the CIC Focal Point [REDACTED] CIC/EXO gets started on the search for us on Monday (I'll be on A/L), I have some questions:

1. Will we be receiving any additional guidance from the DO (either the DDO or IMS or someone else)?
2. Will we be required to submit a "search strategy" and a "written final response"? (As instructed in the memo entitled "Document Search Procedure" issued by the DDO in Feb 1997, #DD/O 97-0420.)
3. I note that the tasking memo says if any information is found it should "be brought immediately to the attention of the Historical Review Program, OIM Barry Harrelson." I'm not comfortable with doing that (see item "B" below) and think our findings, if any, should go through someone in the DO first. (No offense Barry; it's just that we might find something that's sensitive/compartmented.)

According to the memo above - which I think was very helpful when we were going through a number of searches early last year - certain things are called for. For example, it states:

A. The DDO will "a. Appoint a DO focal point officer to manage each search activity and provide policy guidance." "b. The DO focal point officer will be responsible for obtaining the external request in writing and for working with the requester to determine the level of search expected and the desired end product." "e. The component focal point officers will coord their search plans with the DO focal point to ensure there is consistency with..... the searches done by other components. Communication and coordination between the DO focal point and the component shall continue during the course of the search to eliminate duplication of effort and to ensure that no relevant holdings are overlooked."

B. "Upon completion of the search, the component's final written response to the DO focal point should detail the search methodology, describe the review process, list the material provided and note any caveats for the provision of the documents to the requester."

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Any advice and guidance you can give us re the above, would be helpful. As you know, this is a very important search for the DO, in general, and CIC in particular. Erroneous- and unfair- accusations have been aimed recently at CIC, causing members of the JFK board to demand to see C/CIC immediately for an explanation of why new documents are being uncovered. We've been able to defuse these situations and explain them to everyone's (quasi-)satisfaction and we want this last search to eliminate once and for all the idea that CIC is either harboring relevant documents or not doing a thorough enough search. Right now we're feeling left to our own devices in conducting this search (although [REDACTED] DC/IRMB, has generously agreed to help us because our IMO is away on emergency leave). I think CIC would feel alot better if we had the active (at least articulated) support and guidance of the DO on this one. Thanks.

CC:

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