

NR_key_name: F1DD57788C9B51AA8525667300626CD1
SendTo: CN=Kevin Tiernan/O=ARRB @ ARRB
CopyTo:
DisplayBlindCopyTo:
BlindCopyTo: CN=R ecord/O=ARRB
From: CN=Laura Denk/O=ARRB
DisplayFromDomain:
DisplayDate: 09/02/1998
DisplayDate_Time: 2:11:58 PM
ComposedDate: 09/02/1998
ComposedDate_Time: 1:55:04 PM
Subject: Re: Steve's quote

No, I don't, but I am willing to be overruled. We have as much experience as anyone in searching the RIF databases to find documents and I think we know that a database search is really only a start (unless you're searching for a particular agency file number and then you could just ask Steve to pull that box, anyway.) Not to be so obstinate, but if, for example, I search for "Ed Butler" and "Edward Butler" and "Edward Scannell Butler" AND "ESB" (or whatever code the FBI data inputters chose for his name) in the ALL FBI database, I will get some documents, and the documents I do get will mention Butler, but I have no idea what else might be in the FBI files on the guy. So it can be misleading. Same deal for date searches. If the FBI inputter happened to be having a bad day, they might have forgotten to put the date on 5 or 10 documents. If I do a search by date in ALL FBI, I can, again, be sure that I will get some documents, and the documents I do get will be of that date, but I have no idea what other documents with that date might be in the Collection. And I'm talking about the diligent FBI here. Imagine the same searches in Criminal Division or Treasury files. So then, a year down the road, you have researchers saying that they did a JFK Collection database search for something and everyone laughs and says, "well, you know how much those searches miss," and then they'll just end up doing a regular archival file search with Steve's finding aids, anyway. Having said all of that, I am the first to admit that there is a value in being able to find some stuff, even if it isn't all the stuff. I am really glad that Steve thinks it is helpful to the researchers, and we can say that Steve says that it is a great system. But I don't think we want to say that this is a great and wonderful system, because it may be a few years before the public has a chance to really use and understand it. What do you think?

To: Laura Denk/ARRBcc: Bob Skwirot/ARRB From: Kevin Tiernan/ARRB Date: 09/02/98 01:41:13 PMSubject: Steve's quoteI called Steve to ask him about his quote about researchers using the database to precisely ask for specific documents, and whether he thought document level control of the collection is a good thing. He said that with a collection of this size, and the type of researchers, it is useful, because these are researchers that are interested in specific documents as opposed to general history or policy. All of this is true despite the heavy burden of creating and maintaining the database. Do you think we need to make Bob's paragraphs even more positive?

Body:
recstat: Record
DeliveryPriority: N
DeliveryReport: B
ReturnReceipt:
Categories: