

What will the Review Board have accomplished by the end of FY97?

- ***Government Records related to the Assassination*** -- The Assassination Records Review Board will have reviewed and processed nearly all of the assassination records that have been identified by Federal government agencies with the exception of the FBI and the CIA. The overwhelming majority of previously redacted information will have been made public.
- ***Identification of Additional Records*** -- The Review Board will have identified additional government records that had not been located by the agencies.
- ***Private and Local Records*** -- The Review Board will have identified and secured significant assassination-related records in the hands of private citizens and local governments.

What will Additional Time Buy?

- ***Sequestered Collections*** -- Additional time will permit the Review Board to complete its review of the huge collections of records at the CIA and FBI that were requested by the HSCA in the course of their investigation.
- ***Foreign Records*** -- The Review Board has started the process of collecting and reviewing records held by a number of foreign countries (Russia, Belarus, Mexico, England, Germany, France, Japan, Cuba). Additional time will increase the likelihood of success.
- ***The Records of Some Agencies and Congressional Committees*** -- Additional time will allow the Review Board to finish its work with several agencies and Congressional Committees (NSA, Secret Service, Senate Intelligence Committee).
- ***Search for Additional Records*** -- Additional time will permit the Review Board's search for additional records held by government agencies, private individuals, and local governments to be concluded with greater confidence.

What will an additional year cost?

As a result of the Review Board's necessarily protracted start-up, a budget carryover of no-year funds from its first year would be sufficient to fund a full quarter of continued operation. The Review Board would consequently require only \$1.6 million of additional funds to continue operating for one year.

Why won't the Board be Finished by the End of FY 97?

•***Unrealistic Time Limit*** --When the legislation was drafted, it was believed that the task would take three years. Although that estimate was based on the best available information at the time, it turns out that the Review Board will need more time. It is not surprising that additional time is needed since this legislation established an unprecedented process. There was no way to know for sure what problems of scale and complexity the Review Board would encounter.

•***Delay in the appointment of the Board*** -- The Board was not appointed until 18 months after the legislation was signed into law. Federal agencies were left to define for themselves the universe of records that should be processed under the Act and to speculate about the kind of evidence that would be needed to sustain the redaction of assassination-related information. Once the Review Board was in place, agencies needed to revise a considerable amount of work. In fact, many agencies have yet to complete their review.

•***Prolonged Start-up*** -- In an effort to create a truly independent agency, Congress imposed several restrictions on the manner in which the Review Board could operate. Unlike other temporary agencies, the Review Board could not hire or detail experienced federal employees, but rather had to hire new employees who had to undergo background investigations and be cleared at the Top Secret level. In addition, the Review Board had to locate and renovate space that was suitable for the storage of classified material. These administrative tasks stole valuable time from the allotted three years. As a result, the Board could not begin an effective review of records until the third quarter of its first year.

Importance of Completing the Task

The Review Board is a solution to the vexing problem of continued government secrecy and the Kennedy Assassination. A premature termination would surely generate intensified doubts about the commitment of our government to release all information that relates to the assassination of President Kennedy as well as renewed speculation about the conduct of our government and its institutions and personnel. If appropriate closure is not reached now, the identical issues will have to be revisited in the future.