

## MEMORANDUM

July 7, 1995

To: Phil Golrick

From: Laura Denk

Subject: Status of United States Customs Service Compliance with JFK Act

The purpose of this memorandum is to brief you on the status of the United States Customs Service (Customs) Compliance with the JFK Act in preparation for your July 11, 1995, meeting with Irving Wilson at the Department of the Treasury.

### *HSCA Correspondence*

From January 1978 until July 1978, the HSCA wrote the Customs at least eleven times, requesting information on 130 individuals and two Warren Commission exhibits.<sup>1</sup> Customs sent six response letters to the HSCA, four of which simply stated that the Customs had received the HSCA correspondence and would search for the material in question.<sup>2</sup>

Customs responded to the substance of the HSCA's requests twice. First, on April 25, 1978, Customs wrote that they had assembled a portion of the information that the HSCA requested. They further stated that many of the files that the HSCA requested were stored at the Federal Records Center in Georgia and that others had been misplaced since 1963. In this letter, Customs invited HSCA staffers to discuss the materials that Customs had located up to that point.

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<sup>1</sup>The dates of the letters from HSCA to Customs are as follows: Undated letter requesting information on Rose Cheramie; 1/19/78 letter requesting information on 15 individuals; 3/8/78 letter requesting information on 62 individuals; 4/7/78 letter requesting information on WC exhibits No. 1442 and No. 1443; 4/20/78 letter requesting information on 18 individuals; 6/6/78 requesting information on 10 individuals; 6/8/78 letter requesting information on 1 individual; 6/30/78 letter requesting information on 8 individuals; 7/6/78 letter requesting information on 2 individuals; 7/6/78 letter requesting information on 1 individual; and 7/7/78 letter requesting information on 12 individuals.

<sup>2</sup>The dates of these non-substantive responses were 2/3/78, 4/14/78, 7/14/78, and 7/20/78.

Then, on May 15, 1978, Customs responded to the HSCA's April 7, 1978, letter on WC exhibits No. 1442 and No. 1443 (attached). Customs responded that it had no information on WC exhibit No. 1442. With respect to WC exhibit No. 1443, Customs stated that the Fort Worth Federal Records Center may have had records for the date in question, but that those records were destroyed in 1966.

#### *HSCA Referrals*

On September 21, 1993, the Director of the Special Investigations Division, Office of Investigative Programs at Customs sent a letter to the JFK Task Force at NARA. To the letter, Customs attached one envelope of copies of unclassified records that originated in Customs. The letter advised NARA that Customs had no objection to releasing the attached documents in full.

#### *Federal Records Center 135 Forms*

As we discussed yesterday, I reviewed the Customs 135 forms that are in our office file. The entries in the "description of records with inclusive dates" column are too general to be helpful.

#### *ARRB Databases*

I searched the HSCA database for "custom" or "customs," but I did not come up with any fruitful entries. The Mary Ferrell database provided 12 references to the U.S. Customs Service. I have attached those references to the file copy of this memorandum.

#### *ARRB Correspondence*

On May 23, 1994, Bill Joyce of the Review Board sent a letter to Customs. Stephen Bryant at main Treasury responded on July 14, 1994, on behalf of Customs. Bryant's letter, as you know, stated that the IRS is the only bureau within the Treasury Department that has assassination records in its possession.

Then, on June 28, 1995, we sent a compliance letter to George Weise, Commissioner of Customs.

If you need any additional information, please let me know.

Denk e:\wp-docs\complian.ltr\customs.mem

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