

MEMORANDUM

September 17, 1997

To: T. Jeremy Gunn
From: Laura Denk
Subject: Proposed ARRB Timetable for Review of FBI Records

The FBI team has developed a timetable that will provide a framework for completing our review of FBI assassination records by August 1, 1998. The Bureau's assassination records fall into three broad categories: (1) the "core" and related files, which we have completed with a few exceptions; (2) the "HSCA subject" files; and (3) files that the FBI produced in response to the Review Board's requests for additional information.

FBI's "HSCA" Collection (or "sequestered" collection)

Targets for Completing Review of HSCA Collection

The FBI team's primary goal in the next 10 months is to complete our review of the 280,000 total pages in the FBI's HSCA Collection. With that goal in mind, the FBI team has set the following targets monthly targets for number of total pages reviewed:

September 30, 1997:	28,000 pages
October 31, 1997:	56,000 pages
November 30, 1997:	84,000 pages
December 31, 1997:	112,000 pages
January 31, 1998:	140,000 pages
February 28, 1998:	168,000 pages
March 31, 1998:	196,000 pages
April 30, 1998:	224,000 pages
June 30, 1998:	252,000 pages
July 31, 1998:	280,000 pages

FBI team progress toward targets

Since August 11, 1997, the FBI team has reviewed over 23,500 pages.¹ In the last two weeks, two

new analysts have started working with our team and now, with a full FBI team staff, we should easily surpass our September 30, 1997, goal of 28,000 pages.

FBI progress toward targets

With the “new process” review in place, the Review Board’s FBI team is moving at a pace that is faster than the FBI’s pace of preparing files for “new process” review. The FBI is aware that we will be reviewing 28,000 pages per month, whether the FBI has completed its final review of that number of pages or not. Because of the work that the FBI did to process its JFK files in 1994, the FBI has completed at least one JFK Act review of each file. However, if the FBI falls too far behind the Review Board staff, the staff may ask the Board to vote on files that have not been through a recent and complete review by the FBI.

Third agency information in FBI documents

Approximately 65-75% of FBI documents in the HSCA Collection contain information generated by another agency. Although the FBI is ultimately responsible for processing the records, they do not release information in their documents that they believe belongs to third agencies. As a practical matter, this means that when a Review Board staff member negotiates an HSCA subject file with the FBI, we skip over any referred information if the third agency has not yet decided how to handle the information. Although the FBI has been diligent in referring this information to the third agencies, the third agencies do not always respond promptly, and when they do respond, they do not always do so with a sound understanding of the principles of the JFK Act.

To remedy the delay that the third agencies cause by not returning their referred information to the FBI in a prompt manner, the Review Board staff together with the FBI has instituted a program in which we give third agencies approximately 60 days to return referred information to the FBI. If the third agencies do not return their referrals by our deadline, we will assume that the third agency has no objection to release of its information in the FBI document at issue and we will present it to the Review Board for a vote. The deadline for the first round of documents is October 1, 1997, and we will present to the Review Board any designated referrals that have not been returned to the FBI on time during the Board’s October meeting.

Requests for Additional Information

The FBI team has made 45 formal requests for additional records and information from the FBI and

¹For several months prior to August 11, 1997, the FBI team had been reviewing the FBI’s HSCA subject files, but we did not begin to count page totals until August.

another 14 informal requests for additional records and information. During the summer months, the FBI team made significant progress in completing our review of files that the FBI has produced in response to our requests. We hope to complete our review of these files that the FBI *has already produced for us* within the next two months. Although we have assured the FBI that we have already made the bulk of our requests for additional information, we have left open with the FBI the possibility that we will send more requests as we need to carry out our obligations under the JFK Act.