

Assassination Records Review Board

600 E Street NW ■ Second Floor ■ Washington, DC 20530

July 6, 1995

The Honorable Sheila E. Widnall
Secretary of the Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20330-1670

Re: Status of the Department of the Air Force's Compliance with the
JFK Assassination Records Collection Act, 44 U.S.C. § 2107

Dear Madam Secretary:

I am writing in regard to the Department of the Air Force's compliance with The President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act, 44 U.S.C. § 2107 (JFK Act) (copy enclosed). I am writing to request your assistance in ensuring that the appropriate personnel within the Air Force understand their obligation to comply with the JFK Act and to ascertain which officials will be responsible for ensuring compliance with the law.

Under the JFK Act, all Federal Government offices -- including the Air Force -- are required to: (a) identify all of their records related to the assassination of President Kennedy; (b) review the records for the purpose of declassifying them under the standards specified in the JFK Act; (c) prepare electronic identification aids; and (d) send the records to the National Archives.¹

¹ As far as we are aware, Andrews AFB is the *only* component of the Air Force that has provided any information regarding assassination records. On August 16, 1994, Staff Sergeant Don Valentine of Andrews AFB responded to a preliminary inquiry from Dr. William Joyce, a member of the Review Board, indicating that Andrews AFB was not in possession of any records relating to the assassination. While we appreciate that response, we are now interested in determining the Air Force's compliance with all aspects of the JFK Act, particularly in light of the enclosed definition of "assassination record."

The Honorable Sheila E. Widnall
July 6, 1995
Page 2

The Assassination Records Review Board, a panel appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, is responsible for overseeing governmental compliance with the JFK Act. Last week the Review Board promulgated in the *Federal Register* a regulation that defines "assassination record" for the purposes of the JFK Act (a copy of this regulation is enclosed). This regulation should help provide guidance to governmental offices in their search for assassination records.² Members of our professional staff -- who have received all of the appropriate security clearances -- are also available to assist you and your staff in this process.

I am now seeking to learn which officials at the Department of the Air Force are responsible for supervising the process of identifying and reviewing assassination records. For your convenience, I am enclosing our "JFK Records Contacts" form. Please return this form by July 17, 1995, with the names, titles, relevant responsibilities, and telephone and fax numbers of all Air Force personnel with whom you would like us to be in contact regarding the Air Force's compliance with the law.

² We note that the Air Force is likely to have, at a minimum, the following types of assassination records: flight plans and transmissions from Air Force One on November 22, 1963; records from the Strategic Air Command indicating any or all changes in the readiness level of the Armed Forces on the day of the assassination; message traffic or orders indicating changes in the DEFCON level in the wake of the assassination; records originating from the office of Gen. Curtis LeMay from November 22, 1963 and the immediate aftermath which might discuss the assassination; records of John Edward Pic, Lee Harvey Oswald's half-brother, who served in the Air Force in the late 1950's; any internal Air Force correspondence regarding the assassination; any official Air Force correspondence with government investigations of the assassination (Warren Commission, Rockefeller Commission, Church Committee, or the House Select Committee on Assassinations.).

The Honorable Sheila E. Widnall

July 6, 1995

Page 3

We look forward to working with the Air Force to further the important objectives of the JFK Act. Please feel free to contact me if I can be of any assistance.

Sincerely yours,

David G. Marwell
Executive Director

Enclosures

cc: William J. Perry, Secretary of Defense
Sheila C. Cheston, General Counsel, Department of the Air Force

The Honorable Sheila E. Widnall
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Page 4

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Enclosures [JFK Act, Definition, 1 form]

cc: William J. Perry, Secretary of Defense
Sheila C. Cheston, General Counsel, Department of the Air Force

bcc: T. Jeremy Gunn

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