

the 24 entries, only 75 could be brought to me! In several of the folders, a majority of the items had been withheld even for 1947 and 1948!!

It was also clear that there had been a great deal of Top Secret material. Anybody who thinks that secrets cannot be kept simply doesn't understand how the system works. It must also be noted that the Freedom of Information Act, even in those situations in which it does apply, requires that one identify the record one is seeking. The government cannot do a blind search. Since there are no finders aids for any of these entries, one can only request classification-review of these items as listed on the very brief withdrawal sheet. This research cannot be done by mail or phone.

A similar situation is present at the National Archives in its Civilian Reference Branch which houses the official National Security Council files, as opposed to those present at the Truman and Eisenhower Libraries. I was told that, at most, 15% of these files are available. Of a list of 85 "P" documents (1947-1959) only 27 had been declassified and listed. Of 229 "Mill" documents for 1948-1960, only 22 are available. As another example, there are 20 pages of General Twining's 187 page Mail Log for 1954 withheld, as of 1989 for security reasons and listed only by page number! I have no idea what could be on them, but since they were so recently reviewed, it is from a practical viewpoint impossible to gain access.

Many people unfamiliar with how the Freedom of Information Act works and how the various archives work are shocked that we have not simply requested from various government agencies all their MJ-12 documents and not been able to obtain other documents. These people are naive. The Freedom of Information Act, contrary to what many people assume, is NOT a key that opens all the doors. In the first place, the intent of the Freedom of Information Act was not that the government should act as a searching team for people curious about various and sundry topics. Quite the reverse. The purpose is to provide public access to certain classes of documents IF they can be well defined and easily sought. There are numerous exclusions. An exclusion list from the FBI is given in Appendix E.

Clearly of greatest importance are matters which affect the National Security and intelligence activities. Some people think (wrongly) "Well, that's no problem, since the government obviously has to declassify everything after 20 or 30 or 40 years". While it is true that in England the Official Secrets Act does have provisions relating to how many years before information is released, the United States does not. Certain documents are put under security with the proviso that they shall be periodically downgraded. Many do not have any such limitation. There is not an automatic provision that any classified document becomes declassified after a specified period of time. Secondly, who do you ask? Here we have the Briefing, an Eyes Only copy 1 of 1, document. That would imply there is only one copy in the first place, probably kept in a vault at the White House. One of Roosevelt's and Truman's assistants told me that highly classified Manhattan Project materials were stored in the White