Missing Files—The Defense Department unaccountably has destroyed files on the assassination of President Kennedy. Yet at the same time, it has carefully safeguarded insignificant files on thousands of GIs and civilians.

The destruction occurred despite a warning from the Justice Department to all government agencies to preserve their assassination files.

We have been unable to locate anyone in the Pentagon who knows what the files contained. Officials speculate that the material may have come from the FBI and, subsequently, may have been deleted for some reason by the FBI. But there is no way to assess their importance.

We have uncovered only veiled references to the missing files. In an obscure Pentagon microfilm drawer, for example, there are notations that files once existed which exist no longer.

Footnote: Other Pentagon files on the assassination, such as the military data on presumed assassin Lee Harvey Oswald's Marine career, were preserved.