

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION



National Archives and Records Service
Washington, D.C. 20408

November 14, 1966

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Mr. Harold Weisberg
Coq d'Or Farm
Hyattstown, Maryland 20734

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

This is in reply to your letter of October 31, 1966.

The 16 mm. copy of the Zapruder film in the National Archives was made for us by the National Cine Laboratories of Hyattsville, Maryland, from the 8 mm. copy among the records of the Warren Commission. It is our understanding that the 8 mm. film was made by the Federal Bureau of Investigation from one of the two copies of the film that were turned over to the Secret Service by Mr. Zapruder.

As you know, the copyright to the Zapruder film is owned by Life Magazine. You should first try to obtain prints of Frames 207-212 from Life by writing to the following address:

Life Magazine
Time and Life Building
Rockefeller Center
New York, New York 10020

If Life wishes to give written permission for us to have prints of these frames, or part of them, made for you, we shall be pleased to do so. You may examine the 16 mm. film on the Movieola machine at any time if you will let us know a few days in advance of your wish to do so.

Sincerely yours,

Robert H. Bahmer
Archivist of the United States

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programs. As the Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government pointed out in 1949, many agencies paid only lip service to the Executive Order. The providing of a statutory basis for agency records management programs should strengthen them immeasurably.

(c) *Records centers.*—This subsection is new. It provides the centralized control of records centers recommended in 1949 by the Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government, and gives a statutory basis for the establishment of centers as needed. If the agency can show that economy and efficiency of operation can best be served by permitting it to operate its own centers, the Administrator may permit the agency to do so, but the Administrator may also establish centers under his own jurisdiction and receive in them the records of any Federal agency.

(d) *Certifications on basis of records transferred to Administrator.*—This subsection continues authority contained in section 8a of the National Archives Act (44 U. S. C. 300h-1).

(e) *Safeguards against removal or loss of records.*—This subsection requires heads of Federal agencies to provide proper safeguards for the protection of records in their custody as may be necessary and as may be required by regulations of the Administrator, and to make these safeguards known to all such agency officials and employees.

(f) *Cooperation with Administrator in protection of records.*—This subsection requires that heads of Federal agencies cooperate with the Administrator in protecting the records of their agencies against unauthorized physical damage or removal. The Administrator's responsibilities in this area are defined in the second part of subsection 505 (b).

(g) *No restriction on Comptroller General, etc.*—This subsection is designed to insure that the provisions of title V will impose no limitations upon the exercise of certain functions by the Comptroller General nor lessen the existing responsibility of collecting and disbursing officers for rendition of their accounts to the General Accounting Office.

ARCHIVAL ADMINISTRATION

Sec. 507. (a) The Administrator, whenever it appears to him to be in the public interest, is hereby authorized—

(1) to accept for deposit with the National Archives of the United States the records of any Federal agency or of the Congress of the United States that are determined by the Archivist to have sufficient historical or other value to warrant their continued preservation by the United States Government;

(2) to direct and effect the transfer to the National Archives of the United States of any records of any Federal agency that have been in existence for more than fifty years and that are determined by the Archivist to have sufficient historical or other value to warrant their continued preservation by the United States Government, unless the head of the agency which has custody of them shall certify in writing to the Administrator that they must be retained in his custody for use in the conduct of the regular current business of the said agency.

(3) to direct and effect, with the approval of the head of the originating agency (or if the existence of such agency shall have been terminated, then with the approval of his successor in function, if any), the transfer of records deposited (or approved for deposit) with the National Archives of the United States to public or educational institutions or associations: *Provided*, That the title to such records shall remain vested in the United States unless otherwise authorized by Congress; and

(4) to direct and effect the transfer of materials from private sources authorized to be received by the Administrator by the provisions of subsection (e) of this section.

(b) The Administrator shall be responsible for the custody, use, and withdrawal of records transferred to him: *Provided*, That whenever any records the use of which is subject to statutory limitations and restrictions are so transferred, permissive and restrictive statutory provisions with respect to the examination and use of such records applicable to the head of the agency from which the records were transferred or to employees of that agency shall thereafter likewise be applicable to the Administrator, the Archivist, and to the employees of the General Services Administration, respectively: *Provided further*, That whenever the head of any agency shall specify in writing restrictions that appear to him to be necessary or desirable in the public interest, on the use or examination of records being considered for transfer from his custody to the Administrator, the Administrator shall impose such restrictions on the records so transferred, and shall not remove or relax such restrictions without the concurrence in writing of the head of the agency from which the material shall have been transferred (or if the existence of such agency shall have been terminated, then he shall not remove or relax such restrictions without the concurrence of the successor in function, if any, of such agency head): *Provided, however*, That statutory and other restrictions referred to in the provisos of this subsection shall not remain in force or effect after the records have been in existence for fifty years unless the Administrator by order shall determine with respect to specific bodies of records that such restrictions shall remain in force and effect for a longer period: *And provided further*, That restrictions on the use or examination of records deposited with the National Archives of the United States heretofore imposed and now in force and effect under the terms of section 3 of the National Archives Act, approved June 19, 1934, shall continue in force and effect regardless of the expiration of the tenure of office of the official who imposed them but may be removed or relaxed by the Administrator with the concurrence in writing of the head of the agency from which material has been transferred (or if the existence of such agency shall have been terminated, then with the concurrence in writing of his successor in function, if any).

(c) The Administrator shall make provisions for the preservation, arrangement, repair and rehabilitation, duplication and reproduction (including microcopy publications), description, and exhibition of records or other documentary material transferred to him as may be needful or appropriate, including the preparation and publication of inventories, indexes, catalogs, and other finding aids or guides facilitating their use; and he may also prepare guides and other finding aids to Federal records and, when approved by the National Historical Publications Commission, publish such historical works and collections of sources as seem appropriate for printing or otherwise recording at the public expense.

(d) The Administrator shall make such provisions and maintain such facilities as he deems necessary or desirable for servicing records in his custody that are not exempt from examination by statutory provisions or other restrictions.

(e) The Administrator is authorized, whenever he deems it to be in the public interest, to accept for deposit—

(1) the papers and other historical materials of any President or former President of the United States, or of any other official or former official of the Government, and other papers relating to and contemporary with any President or former President of the United States, subject to restrictions agreeable to the Administrator as to their use; and

(2) documents, including motion-picture films, still pictures, and sound recordings, from private sources that are appropriate for preservation by the Government as evidence of its organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, and transactions.

(f) The Administrator is authorized, whenever he deems it to be in the public interest—

(1) to accept, for and in the name of the United States, any land, buildings, and equipment offered as a gift to the United States for the purposes of creating a Presidential archival depository, and to take title to such land, buildings, and equipment on behalf of the United States, and to maintain, operate, and protect them as a Presidential archival depository, and as part of the national archives system; and to enter into agreements, upon such terms and conditions as he deems proper, with any State, political subdivision, university, institution of higher learning, institute, or foundation to utilize as a Presidential archival depository land, buildings, and equipment of such State, subdivision, university, or other organization, to be made available by it without transfer of title to the United States, and to maintain, operate, and protect such depository as a part of the national archives system: *Provided*, That the Administrator shall submit a report in writing on any such proposed Presidential archival depository to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, which report shall include a description of the land, buildings, and equipment offered as a gift or to be made available without transfer of title as aforesaid, a statement of the terms of the proposed agreement, if any, a general description of the types of papers, documents, or other historical materials which it is proposed to deposit in the Presidential archival depository so to be created, and of the terms of such proposed deposit, a statement of the additional improvements and equipment, if any, necessary to the satisfactory operation of such depository, together with an estimate of the cost thereof, and an estimate of the annual cost to the United States of maintaining, operating, and protecting such depository: *Provided further*, That the Administrator shall not take title to any such land, buildings, and equipment or enter into any such agreement, until the expiration of the first period of sixty calendar days of continuous session of the Congress following the date on which such report is transmitted, which sixty-day period shall be computed as follows: Continuity of session shall be considered as broken only by an adjournment sine die, but the days on which either House is not in session because of an adjournment of more than three days to a day certain shall be excluded from the computation;

(2) to deposit in any such Presidential archival depository any papers, documents, or other historical materials accepted under subsection (e), or any Federal records appropriate for preservation therein;

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Washington, D.C. 20408

November 14, 1966

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Mr. Harold Weisberg
Coq d'Or Farm
Hyattstown, Maryland 20734

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

I have received your letter of November 3, 1966, requesting permission to study the x-rays and photographs made at the time of the autopsy of John F. Kennedy, and have forwarded it to the representative of the executors of the estate of President Kennedy.

The statutory authority for the Administrator of General Services to accept materials of this kind is found in the Federal Records Act of 1950, as amended.

As you requested, a marked copy of the pertinent portions of the law is enclosed. At this time we do not know the entire chain of possession of these materials since their creation. As you know, the pathologists who conducted the autopsy have authenticated them.

Sincerely yours,

Robert H. Bahmer
Archivist of the United States

Enclosure

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