

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX 473-8186

New address: Route 7
Frederick, Md. 21701

January 17, 1968

Dr. Robert H. Behmer
Archivist of the United States
Washington, D. C. 20540

Dear Dr. Behmer:

In our previous correspondence, you have gone to great pains to assure me that documents from the Kennedy Archive are made available on a basis of complete impartiality. On one occasion when I waited quite some time for access to certain specific documents I wanted, I was assured that no one would get them ahead of me and that this was the unvarying practice.

As you know, quite some time ago I requested a copy of the agreement between the Kennedy family and the General Services Administration. I was then denied it. Now, whether or not anyone else requested it, you and I both know that I did. Under the assurances you gave me before, no one should have been given a copy before me. You mailed me a copy with a covering letter dated January 9, 1968. I received it January 11. It appeared in the New York Times of January 6, which means that not later than January 5 you gave the Times a copy.

This is a clear violation of all the assurances I have been given. It is also a departure from what I would take to be proper operational methods and what I hope yours are. This letter, therefore, is to register my protest. I hope in reading it you will recall some of the language heretofore employed by those who draft letters for you.

Because you assured me that the Archives never makes general press releases on the date in the files but makes them available only in response to specific researcher request, I would like to know whether the New York Times made such a request and, if so, if you know whether it was inspired. I would also like to know why this document was made available in response to their or any other request when it was not made available to me in response to mine. And I would like to know the means by which a date of availability was determined. It seems to me there is no reason for making this document available today that was not applicable some time ago when I first made the request.

Also, with reference to my previous request for several documents that were temporarily denied me, two sheets of four pages in all, from a file all the rest of which was then available and in my possession, I would like to know now whether these were made available earlier to anyone else. I ask that you personally investigate to assure yourself that everything here involved was normal, nondiscriminatory Archives practice, that there was nothing unusual in the withholding of those four pages, and that, in fact, they were not made available to anyone else before they were to me.

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I hope you will agree that, in the light of this most recent development, these are reasonable questions.

I would also like to have an 8x10 print made of Commission Exhibits 237 and Odum Exhibit #1 and a copy of the page stamped with the number "20" in Exhibit 2137. This is the December 20, 1963, report of SA Robert L. Chapman of his interview with Customs Agent Fugh.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg