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# State Pressed For Papers on Cuban Crisis

## Ex-Kennedy Aides Support FOI Request

By Tracy Thompson  
Washington Post Staff Writer

Nine former high-ranking officials of the Kennedy Administration said in court papers filed yesterday that they can think of no reason why the State Department should not release some 4,000 documents—many of which they wrote—on the Cuban missile crisis.

The affidavits in support of releasing the documents were taken from Theodore Sorensen, former special counsel to President John F. Kennedy, George Ball, former undersecretary of state, and seven other high-ranking former State Department officials.

They urge the State Department to release the papers on the Soviet buildup of nuclear missiles in Cuba in October 1962, a confrontation widely regarded as the closest this country has ever come to a nuclear war.

The affidavits were disclosed in federal court in connection with a three-year-old Freedom of Information Act lawsuit filed by Philip Brenner, an associate professor of history at American University.

"Recent world events—in particular, the easing of tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union—underscore the timeliness of Professor Brenner's request," said an accompanying motion, filed by Stuart H. Newberger, one of the attorneys representing Brenner.

In one affidavit, Sorensen said State Department officials failed to give a good reason for not releasing the documents, "at a time 28 years after the events in question, when neither the principal figures or principal issues of that crisis are still with us."

The State Department has already released roughly 18,000 documents on the Cuban missile crisis in response to FOIA requests filed by Brenner and Scott Armstrong, former executive director of the National Security Archive, a Washington-based research institute.

The department has withheld the documents on the grounds that disclosure would harm national security.

In the past two years, the material already released on the missile crisis has spawned four major gatherings of former and current government officials and scholars seeking to understand how the two superpowers came so close to nuclear war.

Along the way, said Brenner, the "myth" of the Kennedy presidency—that a group of cool, bright young men called the bluff of Soviet premier Nikita Krushchev—has yielded to a more chaotic picture of mixed communications and disaster narrowly averted.

Brenner said he hoped the documents still in the State Department's possession would "fill in the gaps, give us a sense of the kind of planning that was being done, the kind of thinking that helped us get into a crisis, and what helped us get out of it."