

## Free Hand Sought for U.S. Archives

By BARNARD L. COLLIER

A committee of noted historians and archivists urged yesterday that the National Archives be removed from its "undignified subordination" to the General Services Administration and restored to the independent status it lost 18 years ago.

The group also called for the strengthening of the cultural and educational functions of the National Archives and charged that neither of those purposes has received adequate attention or support since the General Services Administration took administrative control of the National Archives in 1949.

A 300-page study containing the charges and recommendations will be presented today before the Council of the American Historical Association, which is meeting in Toronto. The study was prepared last summer by members of the association, the Organization of American Historians and the Society of American Archivists.

"We think it is deplorable

to have the National Archives under a housekeeping or managerial agency of the Federal Government," said Julian P. Boyd, a professor of history at Princeton University and the chairman of the Joint Committee on the Status of the National Archives. "Historians have waited too long to make this kind of study, or rather, protest."

The study criticizes in retrospect the concept of putting the National Archives under the administrative control of the Administrator of General Services. The report considers Bahmer, are "debased" because that the National Archives and the Archivist of the United States, who is now Dr. Robert the archives and the archivist are "reduced to the equivalent of a bureau having charge of office supplies, transportation and building space."

"We have a unique and very great archival system in the United States," Mr. Boyd said, "and even though the General Services Administration has done a reasonable job, the Na-

tional Archives should stand apart."

Mr. Boyd said that the National Archives ought to enjoy a status similar to that of the Library of Congress or the Smithsonian Institution.

"If anyone suggested that those institutions be subjected to the control of an agency that is in charge of governmental housekeeping there would be a terrific uproar," he asserted.

The study specifically suggests that the national archival and records management system be returned by an act of Congress to independence as the National Archives and Records Authority under the administration of an archivist appointed by the President, approved by the Senate, and assisted by a board of regents.

"The independence of this office of [of archivist] and its establishment on a level comparable to that of the Librarian of Congress and the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution is an imperative necessity," the study states.