

August 6, 1998

Ms. Caroline B. Kennedy
c/o Mr. Bradley Gerratt
The John F. Kennedy Library
Columbia Point
Boston, MA 02125-3398

Dear Ms. Kennedy:

I am writing on behalf of the Assassination Records Review Board to seek your permission in securing the release of the tapes and transcripts of William Manchester's interviews with Jacqueline B. Kennedy and Robert F. Kennedy, which were conducted as part of his research for *The Death of a President*. While this is certainly a difficult subject to broach with you personally, the Board believes that you are the best person to make a decision on this material, which now, 30 years later, has greater historical value for the American public. Although much of the work of the Review Board has been to release and declassify government documents, our efforts have also led to private citizens donating to the JFK Collection personal records pertaining to the assassination. Given that the Manchester interviews have such unique historical value, and could provide another window into the events surrounding the tragic death of President Kennedy, we respectfully ask you to consider making them available to the public.

Under the terms of the legal agreement entered into by Jacqueline B. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy and William Manchester, the tapes and transcripts were deposited in the custody of the U.S. Government, subject to certain conditions and restrictions. According to a January 16, 1967 Memorandum of Agreement among your mother, Robert F. Kennedy, Harper & Row and William Manchester, the tapes and transcripts were not to be made public for 100 years "except . . . on the express written consent of plaintiff [Jacqueline Kennedy]. . ." A subsequent agreement dated July 27, 1967 among the aforementioned parties and the United States Government instructs that the tapes and transcripts shall not be disclosed for 100 years "except . . . on the express written consent of Jacqueline B. Kennedy, or her designee for this purpose. . ." We understand that you are the person with the authority to give consent to release this material. We also recognize that you will want respect the wishes of your mother. We would like to do what we can to allay any concerns you may have.

As you may be aware, the Assassination Records Review Board is an independent federal agency created by Congress to oversee the identification and release of records related to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Our mandate will expire on September 30, 1998, consequently, we must act with alacrity in order complete our task before we close down. We believe we have an obligation to the American public to pursue the release of these tapes and transcripts. Brad Gerratt of the Kennedy Library has generously offered to relay this letter to you. If you feel comfortable, I invite you to call me directly to discuss this matter. I can be reached directly at my office in Minneapolis at (612)644-5080 or through the Review Board office at (202)724-0088.

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I thank you for your consideration and look forward to speaking with you.

Sincerely,

Hon. John H. Tunheim
Chair