

June 4, 1998

BY FACSIMILE

Mr. Bradley S. Gerratt
Director
John F. Kennedy Library
Columbia Point
Boston, Massachusetts 02125-3398

Dear Brad:

As you know, the Assassination Records Review Board has been in discussions with the JFK Library and the National Archives and Records Administration for more than three years regarding our access (at this time for examination purposes only) to William Manchester's papers that are related to the assassination of President Kennedy. We have waited for this significant amount of time and have even traveled to Connecticut to meet with you, Mr. Manchester, and others in order to reach an agreeable way of resolving our potential differences. Some time ago I met with officials of NARA in a further attempt to determine whether there might be a simple means by which we could have access to the records for examination purposes. Having waited and hoped for a very long time for a positive resolution of this issue, and being mindful of our very limited tenure, we have now determined that we need to act, and to act immediately, to ensure that the Review Board fulfills its responsibilities under the law.

Under the President John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection Act of 1992, 44 U.S.C. § 2107 (as amended), the Review Board is authorized to, *inter alia*,

-- "obtain access to assassination records that have been identified and organized by a Government office" (Sect. 7(j)(1)(C)(1); and

-- "direct a Government office to make available to the Review Board, and if necessary investigate the facts surrounding, additional information, records, or

testimony from individuals, which the Review Board has reason to believe is required to fulfill its functions and responsibilities under this Act.” (Sect. 7(j)(1)(C)(ii).

The Review Board has examined the document entitled “The Personal Papers of William Manchester at the John F. Kennedy Library—Item List of Materials Pertaining to *The Death of a President* (DOAP), 1/10/97” (copy attached). It is the Review Board’s understanding that this list was prepared by the JFK Library. The Review Board believes that the records identified on this index are presumptively “assassination records” within the meaning of the JFK Act and that, in any case, they identify “additional information . . . from individuals” that the Review Board believes it must examine in order to “fulfill its functions and responsibilities” under the JFK Act.

Accordingly, the Review Board hereby “directs,” within the meaning of the JFK Act, the JFK Library to make available the records identified on the January 10, 1997 inventory, as well as one additional box identified as “WM-20, Death of a President, Material relating to controversy,” that is identified on another inventory entitled “William Manchester Papers.” It is our understanding that this second inventory was prepared by “EAS” at Wesleyan University in March 1982. (A copy of the cover page and the relevant index page of this second inventory also is attached.)

On June 5, 1998, Ms. Irene Marr will arrive at the JFK Library at 9:00 a.m. and will be prepared to review the Manchester records identified on the attached list.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

T. Jeremy Gunn
Executive Director and
General Counsel

Attachments

cc: Christopher M. Runkle, Esq.
NARA