

Mrs. Robert F. Kennedy and the Robert F. Kennedy Family are pleased that the National Archives and Records Administration (“NARA”) will open seven boxes of Robert Kennedy’s papers relating to Cuba in honor of the 50th Anniversary of the Cuban Missile Crisis. We are grateful that NARA, the federal agency that administers the John F. Kennedy Library and all Presidential Libraries, in recognition of the importance of the anniversary, expedited the federal declassification process of these seven boxes. Now, these important historical documents will be able to be discussed as part of the conference organized on October 14, 2012 and they will be available to the general public through the John F. Kennedy Library’s website effective Thursday, October 11.

This Statement also addresses inaccurate reports that have claimed that the Robert F. Kennedy Family has restricted public access to the RFK Collection. In fact, the Robert F. Kennedy Family is committed to disclosure of the papers but is required to follow a federal declassification process prior to release of any materials that are marked “classified” or “confidential”.

The RFK Collection includes papers and memorabilia dating from Senator Kennedy’s childhood years through his Presidential Campaign, totaling 1,753 boxes, not including condolence mail. The RFK Collection includes numerous historically significant papers from Mr. Kennedy’s service as Attorney General from 1961 to 1964, as well as many items of a purely personal nature. The Collection is made up of private papers that were left by Senator Kennedy to his widow and their children.

NARA has conducted a comprehensive inventory of the RFK Collection with particular emphasis on the items in the Collection from 1961 to 1964. Of the 279 boxes from the time period 1961 to 1964, 217 boxes have been reviewed and 216 of those

boxes have been made available to the public. Only 1 box worth of materials, containing purely personal items, has been restricted by the family.

However, 62 boxes from the 1961 to 1964 time period are marked “classified” or “confidential” and are in a Federal declassification process. While NARA has done an initial declassification of these boxes, other federal agencies such as the State Department, Justice Department, and the CIA, are still reviewing the materials. When the federal declassification process is substantially complete, the RFK Family will then review the boxes.

To help mark the 50th anniversary of the Cuban Missile Crisis, NARA requested that the declassification review be expedited for seven boxes of RFK materials identified by NARA as related to the Cuban Missile Crisis. The Robert F. Kennedy Family was granted access to those seven boxes last week and they are now being made available to the public. The Family did not withhold any of the papers.

Both NARA and the Robert F. Kennedy Family expect that at the conclusion of the process of federal review of the remaining 55 boxes, those 55 boxes will also be made available to the public, subject only to national security and personal privacy considerations. Robert F. Kennedy was among 47 ranking cabinet officers from the period 1950 to 1980 whose papers are privately owned and not subject to federal ownership laws passed years after his time of federal service. The Robert F. Kennedy Family is committed to ensuring the public’s continued access to the RFK Collection.

On October 14, 2012, the 50th Anniversary of the day when the first U-2 photos were taken that launched the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Kennedy Library has organized a conference on the Missile Crisis featuring noted historians and the Robert f Kennedy

Family is pleased that the conference will benefit from the release of these new materials. The conference will include Graham Allison, professor of Political Science at Harvard University and the author of *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*; Ambassador R. Nicholas Burns, a professor at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and the former United States under-Secretary of State for political affairs, Philip Zelikow, a professor of History at the University of Virginia, and the former executive director of the 9/11 Commission and the author of *The Kennedy Tapes: Inside the White House During the Cuban Missile Crisis*; and Michael Dobbs, a prize winning journalist and author of *One Minute to Midnight: Kennedy, Khrushchev, and Castro on the Brink of Nuclear War*. The conference will be broadcast live on C-SPAN to a national audience.