

[Letter from John F. Kennedy, President of the United States to John Stennis, Chairman, Special Preparedness Subcommittee, Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate (Jun. 23, 1962), *reprinted in Military Cold War Education and Speech Review Policies: Hearings before the Special Preparedness Subcomm. of the S. Comm. on Armed Services (Part 6)*, 87th Cong. 3160 (1962).]

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, June 23, 1962.

HON. JOHN STENNIS,
Chairman, Special Preparedness Subcommittee,
U.S. Senate

DEAR SENATOR STENNIS: I have your letter enclosing excerpts from the record of the Special Preparedness Subcommittee hearing during which Senator Thurmond requested you to ask me to furnish copies of National Security Council papers to the Subcommittee.

As you know, it has been and will be the consistent policy of this Administration to cooperate fully with the Committees of the Congress with respect to the furnishing of information. But the unbroken precedent of the National Security [*3161] Council is that its working papers and policy documents cannot be furnished to the Congress.

As President Eisenhower put it in a letter dated January 22, 1958, to Senator Lyndon Johnson: "Never have the documents of this Council been furnished to the Congress."

As I recently informed Congressman Moss, this Administration has gone to great lengths to achieve full cooperation with the Congress in making available to it all appropriate documents. In the case of National Security Council documents, however, I believe the established precedent is wise. I am therefore obliged to decline the request for Council papers.

It seems to me that explanations of policy put forward in the usual way to Committees of Congress by representatives of the State Department are fully adequate to the need expressed by Senator Thurmond during your hearing.

Sincerely,

JOHN F. KENNEDY.