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OFFICE OF
WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON

November 6, 2002

The Honorable John W. Carlin
Archivist of the United States
National Archives
at College Park
7601 Adelphi Road
College Park, Maryland 20740

Dear Mr. Carlin:

On August 19, 1994, I wrote to the then Acting Archivist of the United States, Dr. Trudy Huskamp Peterson, in accordance with the Presidential Records Act (PRA), 44 U.S.C. 2201-2207, specifying that access should be restricted to all six categories of records set forth in section 2204(a) of the PRA for twelve years after the termination of my service as President of the United States.

In order to provide guidance to the NARA staff in the processing of the records of my Administration, I would like to ease for review and processing purposes the application of two of the restrictions -- section 2204(a)(2), "relating to appointments or submitting advice between the President and his advisers, or between such advisers" -- subject to the limitations described below.

With respect to easing section 2204(a)(2), information should generally be considered for withholding only if it:

1. contains clearly confidential personal information, including social security numbers, private salary, medical history, negative, derogatory, or other information that would otherwise require it to be restricted under section 2204(a)(6) of the PRA; or
2. would still be subject to restriction under section 2204(a)(5), in accordance with the easing instructions described below.

With respect to easing section 2204(a)(5), information should generally be considered for withholding only if it contains:

1. negative or derogatory information about individuals involved in the appointment process, including their non-selection.
2. confidential communications regarding a sensitive policy, personal, or political matter that is contained within a Presidential record, as defined in section 2201 of the PRA;

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3. confidential communications on a foreign policy topic;
4. confidential communications involving legal issues and advice, including, but not limited to, matters in litigation and matters subject to investigation by Congress, the Department of Justice, or an Independent Counsel;
5. communications directly from the President, unless routine in nature;
6. communications directly between the President and the Vice President, unless routine in nature;
7. communications directly between the President and the First Lady, and their families, unless routine in nature;
8. communications directly to or from a former President, Vice President, or their families, unless routine in nature.

My intent is to make available to the public as full a record as possible documenting the decision-making, policy-making, and appointment process of my Presidency by applying both the appointment and confidential advice restrictions as narrowly as possible. I anticipate, at the appropriate time and after further discussions with the NARA staff, waiving these two restriction categories except as noted above. I encourage NARA staff to consult with my designated representative on any questions or concerns that they may have, including with respect to individual records and particular record categories.

I am hopeful that this letter clarifies my intent and provides the guidance NARA staff will need to process the records of my Administration.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton