

FROM THE OFFICE OF SENATOR EDWARD W. BROOKE (R-MASS.)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, January 29, 1970

SENATOR BROOKE WRITES PRESIDENT RE CONTINUING NASA INSTALLATION
IN CAMBRIDGE AS A RESEARCH CENTER

Senator Edward W. Brooke released the text of a letter he transmitted this morning by hand to President Nixon.

The letter is an outgrowth of study and negotiations / ^{which} Brooke and other members of the Massachusetts Delegation have undertaken since the NASA closing in Cambridge was announced.

At a meeting of the entire Massachusetts Congressional Delegation yesterday, there was unanimous agreement that every possible avenue should be explored in keeping ~~the~~ ^{it} in Cambridge as a research center. development center

January 29, 1970

The President
White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

In attempting to resolve the difficulties faced by Cambridge and Massachusetts in connection with NASA's phaseout of the Electronics Research Center, one of our major concerns is the danger that the Federal Government, acting through the General Services Administration, will reassign the existing space at the site to other agencies and other non-research purposes.

There is a demand for Federal office space in the greater Boston area, but it would be a singularly poor use of the Cambridge facility to convert it simply to office purposes. The buildings are designed and constructed for a broad range of research activities and a brilliant staff has been recruited. The fundamental effort of all of us in Massachusetts is to preserve this research capability at the Cambridge Center. For this reason I have urged NASA to delay final notification to GSA of the pending availability of the Cambridge facility, in order that we might have the maximum time to seek out alternative sponsors for appropriate research.

In assessing the purpose to which this facility should be dedicated and the Federal Government's obligations in this matter, I have undertaken an in depth review of the relevant contracts between Cambridge authorities, NASA and HUD. Although I believe the United States has a substantial moral obligation in this case, I have concluded that the legal relationship between Cambridge and the Federal Government is a strictly contractual one and wish to call to your attention a few of my conclusions.

Surely I would not argue that the Federal Government can never modify or abandon programs, but the distinctive contractual history of the Cambridge facility persuades me that the United States does not have the right to convert the buildings and facilities at Cambridge to an inappropriate non-research function. As I understand the contracts, NASA has undertaken to complete the project in accordance with the urban renewal plan of the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority. Failing an appropriation by the Congress, I see no way for NASA to be compelled to meet its obligation in this respect, but I do believe that Cambridge has ample legal authority, should it wish to employ it, to obtain the reconveyance to the city of the land in question, rather than see it diverted to a mission other than that contemplated in the land disposition contract between NASA and the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority. Cambridge would, of course, be obliged to return the purchase price received for the land and to negotiate arrangements for conveying the buildings already constructed.

NASA's covenant to devote the property solely to the use specified in the city's urban renewal plan remains in effect until October 7, 1995, and

and Cambridge is authorized to pursue any available remedy to enforce it. As I say, the remedy available to Cambridge appears to be limited to compelling reconveyance of the land and at the moment it is not possible to say whether the city in fact would seek the return of the land if NASA fails to meet its obligations.

However, the feeling in Cambridge is very strong that the Center should be retained for research purposes and there is strong opposition to any suggestion that this modern facility might be converted into mere office space.

It is these considerations which reinforce my conviction that the worst possible action would be premature assignment of the Cambridge facility to GSA for reallocation to non-research activities.

I trust that the Federal Government will give close study to these contractual issues and to the sentiments of the Cambridge community in this regard. We hope that, with Dr. DuBridge's assistance, we will be successful in the search for other federal sponsors who have a need for the kind of capability which exists at the Center.

Thank you for your considerate attention to this important matter.

Sincerely yours,

Edward W. Brooke

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EDWARD W. BROOKE
MASSACHUSETTS

COMMITTEES:
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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

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January 29, 1970

The City Council
City Hall
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Dear Mrs. Ackermann and Gentlemen:

I wanted you to have a copy of a letter I have just dictated to City Manager Sullivan and a copy of a letter I have also dispatched to the President this morning.

It has been a genuine pleasure to work with your City Manager, the members of his staff, and the members of the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority during this difficult crisis for your City. I have been impressed with their grasp of the issues involved and their determination to do the very best they can for Cambridge.

In closing, I want to reiterate to all of you that I stand ready to cooperate with you, the City Manager, and all Cambridge officials to work out the most satisfactory solution to this vexing problem.

Sincerely yours,



Edward W. Brooke

EWB/rws
Enclosures

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Communication from Senator Edward W.
Brooke relative to continuing NASA
Installation in Cambridge as a Research
Center

February 9, 1970.

in City Council Feb 9, 1970

PLACED ON FILE

Paul E. Healy
City Clerk