

To Quin Shea from Harold Weisberg, appeals, all cases - priorities 6/29/79

Given the magnitude of the accumulation of ignored requests extending back over more than a decade, non-compliance in cases in court, refusal to abide by an Order of a Court, failure to act on appeals in a timely manner and a series of developments ranging from exclusive leaks to favored writers to Congressional investigations and the assignment of a new person to these appeals, it is impossible to provide a scale of priorities to all the appeals I have filed. Instead I attempt to give an indication.

As I file additional appeals I will attempt to separate them in a manner indicating their importances to me.

While I regard all as serving a public role now and as aimed at perfecting the historical record those appeals that do not serve my personal interests in addition are those to which I would assign the lower priority. By number and in volume these are most of the appeals I have filed.

As examination of my actual requests reflects, my interest has been centered on the functioning of the executive agencies in time of great crisis. Often this has been by examining details of the functioning - or non-functioning. Appeals of this nature are in general those to which I attach greater importance. These range from the withholding of information from the Presidential Commission, of which my more recent additions to earlier appeals relating to photographs of Oswald in action in New Orleans is one kind of illustration, to my MA requests, which now clearly are part of the major cases by virtue of the misuses made of the content of the FBI's files and material added to them in an effort to destroy the credibility of my work by that means, factual basis not existing. This is an aspect of the functioning of the agencies and in my view has no law enforcement purpose.

Addressing the same problem and question in a different way, I believe that searching the files not searched, identifications of some of which I have provided, is of higher priority and greater importance than most of the appeals of specific withholdings from records provided. This is particularly true of the King case, where it also overlaps with specific items of the requests that are without any compliance. Examples are the items relating to help to other writers and the surveillances. (In general on the King case my special interests are set forth in the specifics of information requested, illustrated by my initial requests for details of the actual crime rather than all the junk with which the MURKIN records are stuffed.)

Most of the JFK records provided also have nothing to do with the crime or possible participants and are a substitute for a real investigation of that crime, unsearched files again are of higher importance, as illustrated by my yesterday's addition to the Nosenko/Epstein request (which was in part included in a 1975 request relating to Oswald). Also of higher importance are withholdings relating to Oswald and aspects of his career, in Mexico and elsewhere. Here the "national security" claims and withholdings, which I regard as unjustified, are of considerable importance. This problem is magnified by the lack of subject-matter knowledge by your staff, the review committee and probably ~~many~~ by most of the FBI's FOIA personnel.

I will provide all the assistance I can to your staff. I spent much time seeking to assist Ms. Robinson but I have no idea what this led to because I recall no records provided and no claims to exemption as a result. (Similarly, directing Mr. Mitchell to knowledge of what is within the public domain in the King case in 1977 has led to no compliance and no action on those appeals.) This offer includes my time and access to my files. While I cannot be certain that I have a separate file on each request and each appeal I now have a considerable number of such files. As my work continues there will be more. However, I believe the historical case determinations (copies of which I have not been provided) means that all records in any way relevant are now included in the records to be disclosed.