

PH, JMS,HR

1970 review

Harold Weisberg 1/25/71

Apologies if the carbons are not clear. This is new carbon paper of a "buy" I got by getting 24 boxes at one time, and we'll have to live with it until they are used up, and a word of comfort, that happens pretty fast. Unless it is just old stock, when I think it should not happen anyway, be warned that the trade name is "Nu-Lote".

In the course of attacking the accumulation, I find the enclosed 1/4/71 letter from Rhoads with a correction for the list and what I find to be a rather interesting comment on which, paranoid that I am, I solicit comment.

First he says the Secret Service Review is completed.

Then we know (PH) that the FBI declassification was announced 10/1/70. Unless that announcement was premature or unless it was an announcement of partial completion, which I do not detect in the page I have, it would seem that the FBI declassification of this ~~matter~~ 5-year review had already been completed.

Then we have this language from Rhoads, "...but the 1970 review as a whole is not quite completed."

How can this be explained? By the CIA or State holding them up?

I think it might be a good idea to try and learn which reviews by which agencies were completed at what time, so that we may learn when the last of the agencies completed its review. My belief is that the Archives was then reviewing what had been reviewed and declassified by the various agencies, or that the FBI or someone or some other agency was reviewing the various declassifications with a view to possible reviewing of the review to the end that what had been declassified that this or those persons or agencies might not want released.

There may be a simpler explanation, if I may have made the wrong assumption, but this is too obvious a possibility to ignore, hence I solicit disagreement, particularly is this disagreement can be backed up with credible evidence or reasonable argument. I have trouble not being willing to believe it from my experience with the Ferris docs alone. Here, under Clark, Vinson wrote me that they were then being review to see what could be released. Archives wrote me the opposite. And when I filed under 5 U.S.C. 552, Klein-dienst turned me down and Mitchell supported him at a time when they had to have already been declassified and marked for release under the 1970 review. So this I add the great haste with which the Archives sent me, without reminder by me, what was represented as all the declassified Ferris docs. That old paranoia swelled up and out again and lol about half and the more important half of the Ferris docs that had been declassified were not included in that generous Archives outpouring.

With this kind of record and with the repeated re-classified of what was released after I selected it for copying, and with Johnson riding herd of what is copied, it is difficult not to at least consider this a possibility, if not a probability.

And on delays? I have stopped trying to get things by going there because there is almost invariably a long delay even when I ask in advance for what I want so it can be waiting and I just do not sit and await delivery after getting there, and on the last occasions, there was then argument about what was in the file. When I've ordered things by mail it has been approximately the same, with delays of 6 months not really exceptional. But, when I go there at a time Johnson does not know I am (even though Rhoads does), there is no problem at all. Last week I asked for a few pages from what I had in hand. The search-room xerox was broken, so I gave them to Mike Simmons, or told him of whom and left them in the box. He went to a late lunch. Yet I had them by mail the next a.m. which means there is no need for delay and that they are not busy, for he was able to do this when Johnson was on vacation and there was more than usual for him to do.