

6/19/70

Dear Paul,

Re your proposed Archiv's project of 6/13:

It all sound good and the right approach save for the manner of doing it, which is needlessly costly and time-consuming, etc. I have a different proposal to offer-and I cannot keep going there, for daily I get farther behind in things that/are already past their time.

If I have an idea of the extent of this file, I can have several people with me, those already accredited and those who can be. Each of them can get ten pages and I should be able to do most of it at one time.

Unless it is an enormous file. Have you any idea of its extent?

I agree Bud should ask for the screening, too.

If it is a large file, then can you, if you know its contents or breakdown, suggest priorities? Which ones should be gone over first, next, etc.?

With vacation-time here, this manner of attempting it may not be impossible. I'll ask Bud about making the request for screening on Monday, when I see him again.

Sincerely,

PROPOSED ARCHIVES PROJECT

When I was at the Archives, the office files (Inventory Entry 44) had not been screened. I examined the files for Liebeler, Specter, and Stern, after having them screened for me. I think it would be well worth while to go over the rest of this entry.

Suggested procedure: first ask Marion Johnson to screen the entire entry. (It might not hurt to have Bud rather than Harold ask for this.) When this is done, which would be after some weeks, the material should be gone over and notes made on a tape recorder. Only a few pages will be copied at that time, and none will be flagged for copying. After the tape is transcribed, pages can be ordered from that list.

The 10-page-per-day allotment will be used only for material that obviously should be withheld, or looks important and would definitely or probably not have been gotten from another file. For more than 10 such pages in any day, a specific and detailed description should be noted on the tape. Or, we could ask someone from Bud's office to return and copy those pages.

Nothing should be flagged, so that Johnson won't go over the order and take out any goodies. Once we order from a list which we have prepared, it would be quite difficult for him to hold something back.

What we are looking for: withheld CD's, memos and drafts with handwritten comments of special interest; information about the general condition of these files (who did what; what is missing; etc.)

Note that some CD's will appear in these files without the proper CD or CR identification. I think in such cases Johnson just assumed it was not withheld, since it was too much trouble for him to figure out the CD number. I can do this easily, given the page number, city, date, and subject. Thus, for ~~xxx~~ pages with no CD marked, the above information should be recorded on tape. For other CD's, the CD and page number will suffice.

For non-CD material, certain information should be recorded for each item: date, number of pages (need not be exact for large items), sender, recipient, subject if one is indicated, (get that verbatim), further identification of the subject if the ~~xxxxxx~~ subject given is missing or inadequate. Take note of any handwritten comments of interest.

As a general rule, little substantive information other than the above indicative data should be recorded. I found it a workable rule that if any page held my attention for 30 seconds it should be gotten. For such cases, just say "get this" and provide no further information or analysis. (Except, of course, if there is reason to suspect that this item will be withheld.) If an item is obviously routine, mention that fact, and there will be no temptation to order it. (For routine items, we should know the subject.)

I found that this kind of checking goes very quickly. Transcribing a tape and making out an order takes quite a bit of time, but I can do that at my own speed. I have a list of all the memos from the "green file" ("Internal" part of Entry 25) and hope to transcribe it soon. I have ordered most of the goodies. Much of entry 44 will be copies of this material, so I will not order duplicates unless there is some special reason.

Paul L. Hoch
June 13, 1970