

Bud, Paul, Gary Withheld docs 8/28/69 Harold Weisberg

I have the impression my presence alone is enough to unsettle Marion Johnson. He seemed a bit so yesterday in our conversation covered by last night's letter and today's memo.

After the conversation reported, I went into other things with him. He confirmed they are not showing the Presidential garments. I told him the testimony about the nick in the tie is inconsistent and I want to know where it is in the side. He seemed to confirm there is no photographic side view. I asked for one.

I asked what, if anything, had been declassified recently. He said nothing recently and I asked within the past year? He seemed uncertain, when I pressed and asked "More than a year", instead of responding he said the correspondence files had been declassified. I asked if this hadn't happened several years ago and he said there were three boxes dealing with reports or the Report, and that Commission did confuse in its use of this word.

I do not know whether this is material I did not see in 1957 or whether it was not seen or unavailable to Schooner and Hoch when I told them about this last summer. However, I have a hunch I should take a look at those three boxes, which can be an enormous work.

When he was so indefinite about declassification I asked him how we could, with an archive of such enormous size, be able to use it at all if we did not know what had been declassified. It was apparent to him declassification is meaningless under such circumstances. He volunteered that if I would bring my file list in, they will update it. This I will do this coming Wednesday. However, I think it is important for all of you to have this knowledge. I told Johnson I would not rush him on this (he didn't ask-I offered) because I want it to be complete.

It is my suggestion, subject to his approval, that I give the bible to Johnson next Wednesday. I ask him to return it to Bud who can then have his secretary prepare for each of you and any others he might want (I suggest Sylvia) for example, whatever they add as updating.

In previous correspondence with "heads, which means Johnson, I had hit this point hard. They should maintain a list of all declassifications that archive-users could consult. Their failure to do this indicates a desire for those of us who worked in the archive early not to know what has been added to those files. This point was never answered in correspondence, but I have a notion Johnson may have been doing some thinking about it, especially since they anticipate litigation from me and are sending copies of my requests to the USA general counsel's office, and had come up with this personal escape hatch. I have no idea how meaningful it may be, but I do think we should not miss whatever opportunity it may offer.

For Bud: if you do this, I suggest you send Paul three copies or send separate ones for Hal Verb and Jim Schmitt. At the appropriate time, I'd like to suggest others. I'll send some myself, if I may.