

January 5, 1969

Dr. James B. Rhoads
Archivist of the United States
National Archives and Records Service
Washington, D. C. 20408

Dear Br. Rhoads:

It occurs to me that the organization of the Warren Commission files, titled "File Classification" and apparently prepared by your agency in May 1964, may not encompass all categories that, during the course of the Commission's life, turned out to be necessary or desirable.

Two of the possible categories are Oswald's literature distribution or picketing activities and the apparent falsification or counterfeiting of him. Both of these subjects were looked into by or for the Commission at some length. For neither does there seem to be any appropriate file heading.

Especially with the Oswald file, with editorial determinations apparently controlling, broken into Pre-Russian, Russian and Post-Russian parts, is this true. There is not one of the eight subdivisions of his "Post-Russian Period" that could properly contain data on these subjects. For example, were his pamphleteering to be included under 2, "Political and Subversive Activities" (and no subversive activities were alleged or reported by the Commission), not one of the four breakdowns is appropriate and accurate.

If those numerous reports of men using the name Lee Harvey Oswald when it could not have been the real Lee Harvey Oswald were included under "aliases", this would be erroneous for it was known and the Commission concluded in those cases it evaluated that these were not and could not have been him.

Particularly because experience has shown that such files as "MP", designed to include all "photos" and "films", rather clearly does not, does this concern me. It also makes access to the Commission's materials more difficult and perhaps, with their enormous volume, impossible.

I therefore ask if you have discovered or made any breakdowns other than those initially provided me in this file classification to which, under date of August 10, 1967, there was "Supplementary information added" by Marion Johnson

Especially because of the vastness of the files is declassification a problem. Is there any way in which we can know that material we have requested and been denied has subsequently been released for research? If you have made no provision for this you have, to all practical purposes, effectively denied in perpetuity what was once classified and asked for by researchers, for it is impossible to keep in mind and to keep asking for what was originally classified. Where records are said to have been kept in some cases, they were without meaning.

On the other hand, if you have, as I think the government should, kept a list of what has been declassified, I would like a copy, to be charged to my account, as I would with any periodic additions to it. I understand the David Ferrie file is one of those now under review.

If this has not been and will not be done, I think the government is open to and justifies the charge of suppression of information by simple bureaucratic manipulations.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg