

5/27/70

Dr. James S. Rhoads, Archivist
The National Archives
Washington, D.C.

Dear Dr. Rhoads,

This letter is for your information, a facility in which I sometimes engage, something I hope you will eventually come to regard as a little less than socialist, and for the record, which has, apparently, become the only purpose served by any letter addressed to you by me.

I write it because our correspondence can be interpreted as saying, ~~like~~ the phrase popular among the young, that you and/or whoever writes the letters you sign seem to be "hang up" on the David Ferris matter. This hang-up and the vigor of your responses, generally in the form of lofty denials, have served to mask several facts: you have never addressed my reporting to you the getting of the very files you invited me to inspect; you have never done the essentially simple thing I asked, provide a list of the Ferris documents - and now little a problem this would have been if the files were intact; nor have you really addressed the collateral evidence of the correctness of my reporting that Mr. Johnson had, in fact, made available to me what he represented as a list of these documents, this evidence, from the contemporaneous press, showing that what he or someone else in your agency released to the press reflected the compilation of such a list.

While you may not be aware of it, prior to the first publicity on the Garrison case, which was, roughly, in the middle of February 1967, I was the only one to have written about Ferris and, apparently, the only one to have known about him and had any interest in him or the so-called "investigation" of him. He is in my second book, which was published in early December, 1966.

In the course of going over some of my papers for other purposes, I have just found a brief note I addressed to Mr. Johnson January 11, 1967, a typographical error indicated in was January 11, 1966. In the second paragraph I ask for two copies of each Ferris document, unless the number is great, in which event I said I'd prefer to examine them. Any proper response to this request would have had to indicate to me that the majority of these documents are, in the phrase you use that in this case is a euphemism for suppression, withheld, and should have included a list of those that are and were withheld. Whether or not such proper response was made in full, I submit this bears very much on the accuracy of the recollection I reported to you, that Mr. Johnson did make certain documents on Ferris available to me and had a brief list in his possession that I then noted and since then have lost.

Sincerely,

Harold Steinsberg