

7/2/70

Mr. James Woods, Archivist  
The National Archives  
Washington, D.C. 20540

Dear Mr. Woods,

Mr. Angel's letter of the 20th is welcome not alone because it is the first time in 10, these many months, that there has been any response in any way like a month's time; I am grateful for the courteous courtesies with it. They do contribute to knowledge. That this opinionizer with my having filed a 1011 form makes me wonder if I have been too patient in filing such forms.

Unfortunately, the letter is not without fault, not of that self-serving statements also suggesting awareness of the filing of this form for the Ferris Documents, not strictly in accord with the facts of the record, and a reminder of long-unanswered and, I think, quite proper inquiries that may have escaped the recall of the employee who originally drafted this letter.

Taking the last first, I quote this sentence, "We have previously informed you of the material in the name files (sic) for Ferris that is of value from research". You have denied ever giving us a list of such documents, have refused to give us one in the present, and are completely without response to the letter I wrote after accepting your suggestion to examine this file. I then wrote you the file was given, that there was virtually nothing in it. There certainly are no other slips you do require to check the withholding of documents, but possibly it is only that a mere seven months has elapsed since my request that you have not responded to it. My letter was dated 11/24/69. Would you please tell us where you "informed" me of the material the identification of which I have for as long and as fruitlessly sought? Would you please inform me that you have no material shortage, there is interest in this sentence. "We are unable to locate the response needed to examine the thousands of pages of material in the Commission's files in order to because of preparing a complete list of material relating to Ferris". On the one hand, you claim certain things must be withheld to preserve them, and on the other you permit files to be given, make an effort to restore them, and do not bother to respond to inquiries about this. Now, if you have been too to trust, if you had not permitted the Ferris file to be given, but not removed documents from it without the requisite form replacing them, this problem would not exist, for the Ferris name file (you showed us but one of Commission origin) would have 100% of this.

Moreover, you have a record of everything you have ever had access to this file. As you once informed me, it is a criminal offense to remove anything from such a file. If the inconceivable happened, that someone other than a Federal employee or agent, burglarized this file, have you taken any steps since I informed you of it to bring him to justice? Have you, for example, informed the FBI about it? Or, if these pages were always withheld, how could anyone other than a Federal employee been in a position to remove them.

Despite the obvious interpretation of your silence following my letter

seven months and eight days ago, I would be interested in any explanation, no matter how long delayed, for I have this continuing interest in Ferris, as I also do in suppression and the sanctity of our institutions and the integrity of the public's property, which is what every paper in your custody is.

One of the valuable pages you sent me bears a file identification, as REF 2. I would appreciate knowing the origin of all the others. I realize there may all come from that file, but the only page marked is not, chronologically, the first.

I note an inconsistency in the deletions, by which it seems that which was deleted from the long name, not the transcripts. In some cases, where the word "deleted" is written in, the description is marked, apparently by the overlapping of a piece of paper in scanning. In others, as with the O'Sullivan case that is of interest to me, it is not, yet in the printed transcript this has, indeed, been excised. Would you please tell me whether you did this deleting and, if you did, the basis for selection and the legal justification? Also, it sometimes in some cases, where the notes on this name indicate there was deletion, the printed transcript does not so indicate. Not, if you did this editing, how did you know what to remove?

Mr. Bailey's letter of May 11 does cite two Secret Service "serial numbers" for Ferris documents, but the Commission identification is missing. My request for this has not been responded to. It may well be that I not only have but have written about these documents, but because the Commission used its own numbers rather than the Secret Service's identifications, I cannot be certain, nor can I be certain that the copies I may have may be complete. Supplying the SD numbers could be helpful and all I need.

However, this serves to remind me that you have not responded to my request for copies of all covering letters with which you were sent material in response to my requests of others, material I was led to believe had been sent you for me. I would still like these, and as soon as possible, please.

There remain other letters that are without response. It is in no way my responsibility to see to it that you take care of your mail before it gets lost or mislaid, and it is an apparent futility to accept your invitation to refresh your recollection, for I have done so, at great cost in time and effort, to no purpose. However, I think it fairer to you I should remind you of the seriousness of my purposes, the fact that you do have responsibilities, including to me, and to see to it that there is proper and expeditious response to proper inquiries, for this is your function, for which I bear my part of the cost. I therefore do expect that these inquiries will be properly and completely responded to, as they should have been so long ago.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

National Archives and Records Service  
Washington, D.C. 20408



June 30, 1970

Mr. Harold Weisberg  
Cog d'Or Press  
Route 8  
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Dear Mr. Weisberg:

This is in reply to your letter of May 27, 1970.

You have copies of the material in the Warren Commission name files which relate to David Ferris, copies of the testimony of Frederick O'Sullivan concerning him, and copies of Secret Service documents or pages in these documents that relate to Ferris. Enclosed is a copy of a commission staff memorandum which includes a reference to the deletion in Frederick O'Sullivan's testimony concerning Ferris. No record which shows the actual deletion has been found. These are all of the unrestricted documents relating to Ferris of which we have knowledge. We have previously informed you of the material in the name files for Ferris that is withheld from research. We are unable to devote the manpower needed to examine the thousands of pages of material in the commission files in order to be sure of preparing a complete list of material relating to Ferris.

Enclosed is a copy of a letter of May 11, 1970, from the Secret Service transmitting copies of Secret Service Control Nos. 449 and 620 which relate to Ferris. As we sent you copies of No. 620 and of the page in No. 449 which relates to Ferris prepared from copies in the Commission's records, we are not sending copies of these enclosures to you. We will send you copies of the enclosures if you want them.

Sincerely,

HERBERT E. ANGEL  
Acting Archivist  
of the United States

Enclosures