

Route 12 - Old Receiver Road  
Frederick, Md. 21701

April 19, 1978

Mr. Sylvan Fox  
National Editor, Newsday ✓  
550 Stewart Avenue  
Garden City, N.Y. 11530

Dear Sylvan:

For the hope of maximum compliance or reducing the probabilities of various kinds of official stonewalling, the problems are not with the language of the Freedom of Information and the Privacy Acts. As I indicated, the problems come from the reluctance of the agencies to live with the Acts.

So, initially, invoke both Acts.

Then be careful not to limit your requests in any way. Make them broad and inclusive.

Search fees may be charged under FOIA but not under PA, so you save search costs.

Under PA what is defamatory may not be released to others under FOIA.

But under both Acts they'll all withhold "confidential" sources, etc.

I use such language as "any and all records of whatever form, nature and origin, wherever stored and however described, indexed or classified, relating directly or indirectly to me or my work."

Do not make your request of the FBI alone, for example. Make it of the Attorney General, Department of Justice, and say you are including the FBI but not limiting to it. If you are aware of any other components that might have had records, even if only referred to it, list them. They'll probably send you a list anyway.

The FBI expects you to make a request of each and every field office that might have any records. If you can limit in this way with any certainty, I'd send each such field office a xerox of the request.

Be sure to have "FOIA/PA request" on the letter and on the envelope. It helps.

At some point I will contest the requirement that each field office be asked separately. I've had to make requests of all 59 - at least twice. Now I have a record to draw upon.

The CIA may have separate station and base files so I'd include them in the similar request of CIA. There you address Gene Wilson, FOIA Requests and Appeals. The mail address is CIA, Washington, D.C. 20565. Include routings or disseminations internally and to other agencies.

Disseminations could have been to the FBI, to the State Department, to military and military intelligence units and to others.

What I have been doing when faced with repeating the same requests is using a single letter and xeroxes of it, filling in addresses.

All agencies are touchy about records relating to reporters.

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All the spooks stonewall for reasons not limited to the embarrassing content of their improper records. One such reason is to create misleading statistics in an effort to have the Acts modified the way they would like them to be restricted.

If I can be of further help, please let me know.

Best wishes,

Harold Weisberg