



U.S. Department of Justice
Office of the Attorney General

Counselor to the Attorney General

March 17

NOTE FOR JOHN ROBERTS:

The attached letter is, I believe,
from the chap we were discussing
earlier this week.

Any further thoughts in light
of the letter?

Many thanks.

A handwritten signature, likely of the Counselor to the Attorney General, is written in dark ink. The signature is stylized and appears to be "J. Roberts".

Department of Political Science/The University of Michigan



5602 Haven Hall
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109
March 9, 1982

Mr. Kenneth W. Starr
Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher
1776 G. Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear Mr. Starr:

I am a doctoral student in political science at the University of Michigan currently engaged in research for my Ph.D. dissertation. I am interested in learning how agendas are set for governmental institutions. More specifically, I am examining the certiorari process of the United States Supreme Court. I am attempting to do this by systematically analyzing a sample of cert. petitions, and by conducting interviews with people involved in this process such as former Supreme Court clerks, members of the Solicitor General's staff, frequent litigators before the Supreme Court, and perhaps some of the Justices.

I would like very much to visit with you to discuss your perceptions of the cert. process. I am interested in general patterns of decision-making processes, not in personalities. Your comments would not be for attribution. I want to assure you that this is legitimate academic research. I have received a Horace Rackham Dissertation Grant from the University of Michigan for this project. Should you have any questions in this regard, I would encourage you to contact either of the professors listed below. There are also former clerks I have interviewed who have agreed, if necessary, to vouch for the propriety and interesting nature of these interviews.

Since there are so few people who have been directly involved in this process, and because funding limitations restrict my travel to a few geographical areas, your assistance is greatly needed. I will call soon to answer any questions you might have, and if you agree to be interviewed, I would like to make an appointment at that time.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

H. W. Perry, Jr.

Professor John Kingdon
Department of Political Science
University of Michigan

Professor Vincent Blasi
Law School
University of Michigan

SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO
THE ATTORNEY GENERAL



3/17/82

TO: Ken Starr
FROM: John Roberts

This is what I said.

Folder: O - P
Series: Correspondence Files of Ken
Starr, 1981-83
Acc. #60-88-0498 Box 10
RG 60 Department of Justice



Office of the Attorney General
Washington, D.C.

March 17, 1982

Mr. H. W. Perry, Jr.
Department of Political Science
The University of Michigan
5602 Haven Hall
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109

Dear Mr. Perry:

I am writing in response to your letter of March 9, 1982. In that letter you request an interview to discuss the certiorari process of the United States Supreme Court.

I must respectfully decline to participate in your project. I have no doubt that it is, as you describe, "legitimate academic research." Nonetheless, I believe that it would be improper for me to discuss with you my work as a law clerk at the Supreme Court. That work was of a confidential nature.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Roberts".

John Roberts
Special Assistant to
the Attorney General