

Speaker: divulge UFO truth

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AT ONE TIME or another, haven't we all wondered: Are we alone? Or is there someone else, out there among the stars, watching us?

It could be just a paranoid delusion, but there are those who claim the government has conducted an ongoing, systematic cover-up since the 1940s to keep the answers to these questions from the American public.

Reports of unidentified flying objects have become the basic filler story for supermarket tabloids and the butt of well-worn jokes by late-night television comedians.

But in his lecture "UFOs: The Hidden History," at Brookdale Community College, Middletown Township, on Thursday, Robert Hastings said government documents, declassified and released under the Freedom of Information Act, point a disturbing finger at the government's truthfulness regarding "flying saucers."

Hastings, 39, of Albuquerque, N.M., is a UFO researcher and lecturer. He also works as an electron microscope operator who analyzes computer chips.

"It may seem like a science fiction fantasy, a paranoid delusion, or just an elaborate practical joke, but I assure you it is none of these things," said Hastings, who added that he has been fascinated by the subject of flying saucers since his late teens.

He said there is an abundance of documentation at this time that the objects that have come to be known as UFOs are real and that the government has been engaged in an ongoing cover-up.

"I believe the government's policies are very short-sighted to keep the public so totally in the dark regarding seemingly vital information that affects not only Americans, but the entire human race," Hastings has written.

His 90-minute lecture and slide presentation is based primarily on previously classified documents from

the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the U.S. Air Force that have been acquired by Freedom of Information Act requests by several UFO researchers.

"In a nutshell, what these documents indicate, beyond a reasonable doubt, is that UFOs do indeed exist — and despite public denials by official government spokesmen over the years, these mysterious objects are of the greatest concern to the highest levels of the U.S. Air Force and the intelligence community," he said.

One of the most disturbing documents in Hastings' collection describes the recovery of three flying saucers by the U.S. government.

Dated March 22, 1950, the FBI memorandum was sent by Guy Hottel, a special agent in charge of the bureau's Washington, D.C., office, to FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover.

Hastings said the name of the special agent who obtained the information used in the memorandum from an Air Force informant was deleted by the FBI when the document was declassified.

The memo reads:

"An investigator for the Air Forces stated that three so-called flying saucers had been recovered in New Mexico. They were described as being circular in shape with raised centers, approximately 50 feet in diameter.

"Each one was occupied by three bodies of human shape but only 3 foot tall, dressed in metallic cloth of a very fine texture. Each body was bandaged in a manner similar to the blackout suits used by speed fliers and test pilots.

"According to Mr. (name deleted) informant, the saucers were found in New Mexico due to the fact that the government has a very high-powered radar set-up in that area, and it is believed the radar interferes with the controlling mechanism of the saucers.

"No further evaluation was attempted by Special Agent (name deleted) concerning the above," the memo ends.

The other documents point re-

peatedly to numerous incidents of UFOs being spotted flying around important defense installations, especially those dealing with nuclear weapons.

It was an incident of this type that Hastings experienced as a self-described 16-year-old Air Force brat at Malmstrom Air Force Base, near Great Falls, Mont., in 1967, that sparked his interest in the subject.

Because his father was stationed at the base, Hastings said, he was able to get a job there as a custodian three nights a week.

The men working in the base's air traffic control tower were used to his being there and always asking them questions about their jobs.

But the friendly mood changed one day when he was there and five UFOs were tracked on military radar.

"For a half-hour period, they hovered over nearby ICBM silos, violating sensitive air space. They flew off at an estimated speed of 5,000 mph, far beyond the capability of any conventional aircraft," Hastings said.

The men coldly told him to leave the room, he said. But later, one of the more friendly people told him the incident had happened about a half-dozen times before, Hastings said.

The government probably chose to cover up the truth about UFOs to avoid massive panic, he said.

The Orson Welles broadcast of "The War of the Worlds" in October 1938 had proved how much panic there had been just over a fictional broadcast, he said.

Also, Hastings theorizes that if the U.S. government has, in fact, recovered crashed UFOs, he feels officials would consider it a matter of national security as scientists continue to work to duplicate the space alien technology.

During the Reagan presidency, there was a concerted effort to stop the flow of information by the government on matters involving potential cases of national security, he said.

"The time has come for a more candid dissemination of the information," Hastings said. He said the public is ready to know the truth about UFOs.