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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Friedman's Laws for 'Debunkers'

From: James Easton <pulsar@compuserve.com>
Date: Wed, 24 Jun 1998 23:02:35 -0400
Fwd Date: Thu, 25 Jun 1998 12:14:43 -0400
Subject: Friedman's Laws for 'Debunkers'

Regarding...

>Date: Wed, 17 Jun 1998 20:17:16 -0300
>From: Stanton T. Friedman <fsphys@brunnet.net>
>To: UFO UpDates - Toronto <updates@globalserve.net>
>Subject: Re: UFO UpDate: Re: Who is Jerome Clark?

Stanton wrote to Peter Brookesmith,

"Thank you, Duke, for demonstrating all 4 of Friedman's laws for Debunkers, even if you only paraphrased #3 If you can't attack the people, attack the data. 1.What the public doesn't know , I am not going to tell them. 2. Don't bother me with the facts,my mind is made up; and 4. Do your research by proclamation, not investigation. It is much easier".

Stanton,

No doubt you'll be aware of the following:

Skeptics' UFO Newsletter by Philip J. Klass. #43, Jan, 1997
404 "N" Street, SW, Washington DC 20024 (C) 1997

[SIX ISSUES \$15 for US/CANADA, OVERSEAS AIR MAIL IS \$20/YEAR]

=====
_National Security Agency (NSA) Responds To SUN's Request And
Declassifies Revealing Portions Of its Top Secret "UFO
Documents"_
_

Partially declassified copies of 156 Top Secret "UFO documents" recently obtained by _SUN_, which the National Security Agency refused to release in 1982 in response to a Freedom of information Request (FOIA), reveal that NSA's refusal was to keep secret that it was eavesdropping on Soviet air defense radar sites -- providing vitally important intelligence for our Strategic Air Command bomber missions. When NSA intercepted messages from Soviet radars which reported tracking an 'Unidentifiable object,' some NSA analysts translated that into "Unidentified Flying Objects". Because the Soviets used balloons carrying radar reflectors to periodically check the performance of their air defense radars and the alertness of

their radar operators, a NSA translator-analyst would add "Probably a balloon" where it seemed appropriate. After UFO organizations, such as Citizens Against UFO Secrecy (CAUS), began to make FOIA requests to CIA and NSA in the late 1970s to release documents involving "UFOs," NSA translator-analysts stopped using the term UFO for the balloon-borne targets.

Most of the 156 Comint documents obtained by SUN report the "Probably balloon" type of slow-moving UFO. The reports, covering the 21-year period from 1958 to 1979, are still heavily censored to withhold the identity/location of the Soviet radar sites whose communications NSA was able to intercept, the dates and other still-sensitive military information. Following are several typical NSA "UFO" summary reports, with still-censored material shown as [XXXX]. The first numbers show the time when the "UFOs" were being tracked by Soviet radar.

[...]

NSA ALSO RELEASES GREATLY DECLASSIFIED COPY OF TOP SECRET DOCUMENT WHICH UFO-LECTURER FRIEDMAN CLAIMS IS EVIDENCE OF COSMIC WATERGATE

To enable U.S. District Court Judge Gesell to render an informed judgement on the agency's rationale for not releasing its "UFO documents," NSA provided him with a 21-page affidavit in October 1980, classified Top Secret, which described all of its "UFO documents" and explained the reasons for not releasing most of them. After studying the document, Judge Gesell ruled in favor of NSA. Subsequently, in response to an FOIA request to obtain a copy of this Top Secret court document, NSA released a heavily censored version in which about 70% of the contents were blacked out. UFO-LECTURER STANTON FRIEDMAN INVARIABLY SHOWS THESE MOST HEAVILY BLACKED-OUT PAGES DURING HIS LECTURES AND TV SHOW APPEARANCES, CLAIMING THEY PROVE A GOVERNMENT UFO COVER-UP.

FRIEDMAN WITHHOLDS SIGNIFICANT INFORMATION

Friedman knowingly withholds from his audiences the fact that the heavily censored version of NSA's 21-page court document disclosed that the bulk of the documents being withheld were "communications intelligence (COMINT) reports." Friedman also withholds from his audience the further NSA explanation that these Comint reports "are based on [covertly] intercepted communications of foreign governments." In the affidavit, signed by a top NSA official Eugene F. Yates, he said "I certify that disclosure of past and present foreign intelligence communications activities of NSA revealed in the records the plaintiff [CAUS] seeks would endanger highly valuable sources of foreign intelligence." FRIEDMAN NEVER MENTIONS THIS AS A POSSIBLE EXPLANATION OR JUSTIFICATION FOR NSA'S ACTIONS.

(When Friedman presented a paper at the 1981 MUFON conference in Cambridge, Mass., it began with a statement attributed to Albert Einstein: "The right to search for truth implies also a duty; one must not conceal any part of what one has recognized to be the truth.")

Whereas only about 30% of the originally released court document was readable (i.e., not blacked out), roughly 75% of the contents are now visible in the recently declassified version. The new release reveals that the court document carried the highest/most sensitive classification for Comint documents: TOP SECRET UMBRA.

[...]

NEWLY RELEASED COURT DOCUMENT EXPLAINS PREVIOUS BLACK-OUTS

The original court document cited a second non-Comint document, written by the same NSA employee, which had been released to CAUS with some deletions. NSA's explanation for the deletions was heavily blacked out in the copy of the court document originally released but are now revealed in the newly classified version. (The portions of the court document previously blacked out are underlined below.)

"The second non-Comint document is a three page undated, unofficial draft of a monograph with a four page appendix by the same agency employee who authored the draft referenced in sub-paragraph a, above....It is entitled 'UFOs _and the Intelligence Community Blind Spot to Surprise or Deceptive Data_'. In this document, the author discusses what he considers to be a serious shortcoming in the Agency's COMINT interception and reporting procedures -- the inability to respond correctly to surprising information or deliberately deceptive data. He uses the UFO phenomenon to illustrate his belief that the inability of the U.S. intelligence community to process this type of unusual data adversely affects U.S. intelligence gathering capabilities. Deletions in this document were made as follows:

(1) All of the title after UFO, _which addresses the perceived shortcoming_ and all of paragraph one, which discusses the _employee's perception of the negative implications of the handling of the UFO phenomena as it demonstrates what he believes is the less than optimum ability of the intelligence community to process and evaluate highly unusual data_...

[...]

[End]

It's asserted that you may not fully have explained the perspective of some documents released under the FOIA, i.e., that you neglect to acknowledge they are often evidence which does not substantiate claims of a 'cover-up'.

As you know, one of your favourite 'party pieces' during debates was to reference the aforementioned NSA documents and show the 'blacked out' pages or NSA submission which led to Judge Gesell ruling in favor of the NSA.

For example, whilst in the UK, if I recall to participate in a 1996 Oxford University debate on the subject of UFOs, you appeared on the nationally broadcast 'breakfast' TV program 'The Richard and Judy Show' and when asked, "A lot of stuff you believe is being covered up by various governments", responded:

"The National Security Agency, which is a major cover-up agency... now this is a legal document, that's 75 percent blacked out [document shown] and this is only the justification to a Federal Court Judge for not releasing 156 UFO documents they admit they found, but they wouldn't even show them to him".

Some six months after the publication of the above Skeptics' UFO Newsletter, on 27 June, 1997, you appeared on the 'prime time' UK ITV network broadcast 'Strange But True?' televised 'UFO' debate.

In view of the fact the NSA documents and court ruling had since been demystified, I wondered what you might replace them with.

On the question of a government 'cover-up', you claimed this was "easy to prove" and cited as evidence:

"A group of us went after the NSA. We found that they had over 150 UFO documents. They refused to release them to us, and to the Federal court Judge. We went after the CIA... 'Freedom of Information', people think is the magic tool that unlocks all the doors, it doesn't. Took me 5 years to get a released CIA UFO document [document shown], on which you can read 8 words, not very exiting words.

There's no question that they're withholding data, CIA, NSA, DIA..."

Presumably you no longer displayed the NSA documents or submission to the Federal Court, as both had largely been explained.

Yet, you still implied that the original "150 UFO documents" had never been released at all, either to yourself or the Federal

Court Judge.

We can perhaps also conclude you never had any intention to, otherwise you wouldn't have mentioned the NSA documents or Federal court proceedings, hardly now evidence of a 'cover-up', in the first place.

I wouldn't have brought this up, other than it relates to your recent comments to Peter Brookesmith, when you said of "Friedman's laws for Debunkers":

"1 .What the public doesn't know, I am not going to tell them."

I wondered if you realised your own 'debunking' might be considered somewhat selective, not necessarily faithful to the facts and perhaps is seen to fall short of satisfying your own criteria.

As Philip Klass suggests, does it ring hollow when you proclaim, "The right to search for truth implies also a duty; one must not conceal any part of what one has recognized to be the truth"?

James. E-mail: pulsar@compuserve.com

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