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## UFO UpDates Mailing List

### Re: Beyond Closed Minds

From: Greg Sandow <[gsandow@prodigy.net](mailto:gsandow@prodigy.net)>  
Date: Sat, 15 May 1999 14:02:22 -0400  
Fwd Date: Sun, 16 May 1999 08:39:50 -0400  
Subject: Re: Beyond Closed Minds

>From: Leanne Martin <[leanne\\_martin@hotmail.com](mailto:leanne_martin@hotmail.com)>  
>To: [updates@globalserve.net](mailto:updates@globalserve.net)  
>Subject: Re: Beyond Closed Minds  
>Date: Fri, 14 May 1999 17:40:30 PDT

>>"Bufile 100-2237 reflects that Dr. Tesla was a world-famous  
>>electrical inventor, and at the time of his death, all of his  
>>personal papers and effects were believed dangerous to the  
>>country's security if they fell into un-authorized hands. The  
>>book, "Prodigal Genius," by John J. O'Neill alleges that the FBI  
>>took over a certain safe and opened it, appropriating his  
>>property. Bufiles clearly indicate that it was the Office of  
>>Alien Property of the Dept (Dept of Justice) which did so...."

Many thanks to Don Allen for his informative response.

>Hi all,

>The above, if true, does imply that he was no 'crank inventor'  
>and that his works were of such value as to require seizure by  
>the authorities.

Or that the authorities (who don't always know what they're  
doing) thought they were.

I'm reminded of another incident...when the federal government  
(don't know which agency) burned Wilhelm Reich's books. Saw that  
in a documentary once. The books were considered obscene.

>Correct me if I am wrong but is there something in the US law  
>that states documents in the possession of the government are  
>the property of the people? And if so do they come under FOIA  
>provisions?

The law about ownership of documents is pretty complex. For  
instance, lots of government documents are also the personal  
papers of government officials. It's not at all clear who owns  
those. Many officials have worked out fancy deals -- Henry  
Kissinger, for instance, has sealed documents he created during  
the Nixon administration. They won't be publicly available for  
many years...but he was able to look at him himself, and use  
them in his memoirs. (And as a result, nobody else can check  
Kissinger's reports of what the documents say!)

Nor do I think more routine government documents are considered  
property of the people -- an intangible entity in any case, with  
(I believe) no legal standing. Or, rather, the entity that can go  
into court and make charges in the name of "the people of the  
United States" is the federal government itself!

The Freedom of Information Act is very valuable, and of course could be used in an attempt to pry loose all sorts of things. I just finished reading a book, though, on the many ways the government has been able to circumvent it. Forget UFOs...the government is very reluctant to release documents of any kind, sometimes simply to cover up any appearance of ineptitude. Some officials, it turns out, used to be strong advocates of openness...and changed their tune after they got their positions. The FOIA isn't any kind of panacea, apparently, and from what I've been reading, the government has actually been more willing to release UFO data than, say, information about sensitive foreign policy issues of the 1950s.

Greg Sandow

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