

April 23, 1989

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Dear Bob:

Thanks for your letters of Feb. 25, March 18 and April 8. I had known about part or all of the several Doty items, the most recent being a copy of his letter to Robert Hastings dated March 20. Apparently he's saying much the same thing to Huyghe and other researchers.

I'm inclined to believe this is the real Doty speaking in the Hastings letter. It leaves me a little disappointed. I'd like to think that if anybody is conning us it would be someone rather brilliant. This guy is intelligent, but — because of the phrasing, sometimes awkward sentence structure and occasional grammatical error — he doesn't strike me as overly educated. He doesn't sound like the brainy type who could create and carry out sophisticated disinformation programs. Of course, he could be so brainy and clever that he could write a letter in such a way as to give the impression he isn't all that smart, but I doubt it.

I'm surprised that any publisher would want to put out a book on Doty. The public has never heard of him and shouldn't have any interest in him. It doesn't make sense.

Doty's letter to Hastings said an airman had confessed to the Ellsworth hoax and was punished. That's news to me. When the other Enquirer people and I had finished with our investigation way back then, my editor refused the Air Force's request for either the original "document" or any copies, and I don't believe we ever told the Air Force about the one guy at Ellsworth that we did suspect of being the perpetrator. I would have given the Air Force the information, but it wasn't my decision.

Bill Moore, incidentally, told me on several occasions in the early 1980s (1982 and 1983, I believe) that Doty claimed the Ellsworth incident really happened. I refused to believe that and told Bill so at the time.

Todd Zechel phoned several weeks ago and told me (among other things) that Doty is now a state police officer in Grant, New Mexico. That's another reason why I don't think this Doty is the easterner behind all this disinformation. Somebody with that kind of brains should be able to line up a better job than state trooper.

As for Grant Cameron, I don't recall his ever asking for a copy of the manuscript of The Aquarius Project. I have only

one copy and it would cost a small fortune to make copies of its 250-plus pages. I've read through the parts pertaining to MJ-12 and the Aquarius Project and find nothing revealing in it. I don't see any real chance or need to release the book in any form, and even if I did I'd have to clear it with Bill Moore because he's the co-author.

You ask what I think about the MJ-12 affair. Not much. I believe it's a hoax, but I have no evidence that it is.

My initial reaction in 1987 (that it's a hoax) was based on two things: First, there is the fact that Bill Moore and I had been talking about this since 1982 and Bill had been aware of MJ-12 at least a year earlier — three years before the document allegedly surfaced and two to three years more before he publicized its existence. Secondly, it was such a profoundly neat package that seemed to wrap up in one document all the "evidence" we needed to prove that one or more saucers crashed, that the government was well aware that UFOs were extraterrestrial, and so on. It was an awfully convenient piece of information.

I know the government can keep secrets (Bush's involvement in the contra funding being one of the most recent examples), but I don't see the "leaking" of the MJ-12 document as the act of some unidentified "patriot" in the government who feels the people should know, etc. If it had been, I believe that person would have provided more information or clues of some kind that would enable ufologists to prove the authenticity of the document.

Mostly, I'm curious about Bill Moore and whether he is the perpetrator or the victim of the hoax. I'd like to know why in the two years we were collaborating on the novel that he never mentioned that at the same time Jaime Shandera and Stan Friedman were working with him in investigating the MJ-12 matter. It's not the type of thing you overlook or forget to tell someone. It had to be a deliberate decision not to tell me.

If MJ-12 is a hoax, who would benefit from it? The most obvious answer is Bill Moore. It backs up his claims about a crashed saucer at Roswell, it could help him sell the other UFO documents and various things he merchandises, and it could help make him one of the big gurus of ufology. The fact that he doctored the document before releasing it is very curious, and his explanation for why he did that isn't too convincing.

Phil Klass and/or his buddies could be behind it, too. But I believe they would have gone public by now to discredit Moore and Friedman and others who believe the documents are authentic. The fact that they haven't claimed authorship of the document should indicate they didn't do it.