

I was turned down on their release. I appealed and was turned down on the appeal, even though a couple of years later, they were reviewed again and were released with some censoring done of the documents.

One last-minute benefit of all the delays in my research was that finally, on March 6, I received the first response to my Mandatory Classification Review requests of February 1988. One document was acted upon: A message from James Lay to Robert Cutler dated, of all dates, July 16, 1954 (which is the reason I requested its review in the first place). This was transmitted electronically by General Paul Carroll, White House Secretary, to Cutler in Europe. It is a quick review of the activities at the July 15, 1954, NSC meeting as originally instructed by Cutler to Lay, in his memo which had also instructed Lay and J. Patrick Coyne to keep things moving out of his basket.

The last two lines are of particular interest for those who claim forgery, because they could find nothing else handled by Lay for Cutler. "Hope you will recuperate, rest and enjoy yourself for few days before returning. Will try to have everything tidy and not too much pressure upon you when you return." According to the Eisenhower Library in response to my request, the message was a blue carbon on onionskin without a watermark and there is no heading on the stationery. As with the Cutler-Twining memo, it reproduces poorly because of the blue ink and onionskin. Clearly, Lay was handling things for Cutler. I hope that within the next year more of my mandatory classification review requests of 1988 (and subsequently) are acted upon.

Incidentally, at the presidential libraries and at the National Archives, copying costs are 35 cents per page, so one doesn't usually ask for everything in a file because the costs mount quickly.

There is an additional problem with regard to getting official confirmation or back-up on the reality of MJ-12. And that is simply that if it was a highly classified program as certainly would seem to be the case from the fact that it was Top Secret Majic, the "Majic" would be a need to know limitation and with Eyes Only and "One of One," there would be very few people in government who would know about the program. Most people in government who are asked "Do you have any information on this?" would say quite honestly that they had never heard of it and were not aware of it. That would not mean that that information did not exist.

Now, suppose a request happened to be made of somebody who did know of the organization. What could that person say? If the very existence of the organization was classified, then clearly that person could NOT say that there was such a project. Here again, many people seem to think that everybody with a particular clearance has access to material at that level which totally ignores the need to know concept which is the crucial deciding factor as to who gets to see what. But even more so they don't recognize that even at the highest levels of government there is compartmentalization of data. One illustration of this fact is that in a many-page Top Secret listing of NSC documents was an item