President Kennedy’s deadly confrontation with the CIA & MJ-12 over ET/UFO X-Files

Michael E. Salla, M.A., Ph.D.

Abstract

A number of documents and testimonies cast light on President Kennedy’s knowledge of UFO crash retrieval operations, and his efforts to gain access to classified files concerning extraterrestrial life and technology. There are two main phases to Kennedy’s efforts. The first is a series of executive actions he began on February 19, 1961 to place cold war psychological warfare programs under the control of his national security advisor, and later in June 1961 to implement Presidential executive oversight over covert CIA operations through the Joint Chiefs of Staff. These executive actions coincided with Kennedy’s efforts to gain access to the activities of a highly classified project dealing with UFOs and extraterrestrial life – MJ-12 Special Studies Project. The second phase began on September 20, 1963 when Kennedy embarked on a high risk political strategy of getting NASA to cooperate with the USSR on joint space and lunar missions. This brought to a climax a confrontation over the release of classified UFO files with the CIA & those in control of the MJ-12 Special Studies Project. This article reviews testimonies, documents and events concerning Kennedy’s interest in UFOs and extraterrestrial life, and how this culminated in a deadly behind-the-scenes confrontation with the CIA and MJ-12 in the final month of his life.
Introduction

Early in his Presidential administration John F. Kennedy had very strong interests in UFOs and extraterrestrial life that directly influenced some of his policy initiatives. A number of documents and testimonies cast light on his knowledge of highly classified UFO crash retrieval operations, and efforts to gain access to classified UFO files. If leaked documents and testimonies are correct, President Kennedy traveled to remote military locations to view retrieved extraterrestrial vehicles and bodies; allegedly received messages from and even met with human looking extraterrestrials; and pressured the CIA to give him access to classified UFO files.

There are two main phases to Kennedy’s attempts to gain access to files concerning extraterrestrial life and technology. The first concerns a series of executive actions Kennedy took early in his administration. On February 19, 1961, Kennedy issued an Executive Order to placing cold war psychological warfare programs under the control of his national security advisor. This was followed on June 28 by a series of Presidential Memoranda to implement Presidential executive oversight over covert CIA operations through the Joint Chiefs of Staff. These executive actions coincided with Kennedy’s efforts to gain access to the activities of a highly classified project dealing with UFOs and extraterrestrial life – MJ-12 Special Studies Project. Kennedy’s executive actions led to a bitter conflict with his outgoing CIA Director, Allen Dulles who was opposed to granting Kennedy access.

The second phase began on September 20, 1963 when Kennedy embarked on a high risk political strategy of getting NASA to cooperate with the USSR on joint space and lunar missions. Less well known is that this brought to a climax a confrontation over the release of classified UFO files with the CIA & those in control of the MJ-12 Special Studies Project. This article reviews testimonies, documents and events concerning Kennedy’s interest in UFOs and extraterrestrial life, and how this culminated in a deadly behind-the-scenes confrontation with the CIA and MJ-12 in the final month of his life.
Was Kennedy briefed about and witness extraterrestrial life and technology?

A leaked document from July 22, 1947 claims that John F. Kennedy, then serving in the U.S. Congress, had learned about the Roswell UFO crash and the recovery of alien bodies. According to the Interplanetary Phenomenon Unit Summary:

It has become known to CIC [U.S. Army Counter Intelligence Corps] that that some of the [Roswell UFO] recovery operation was shared with Representative John F. Kennedy, Massachusetts Democrat elected to Congress in 46…. Kennedy had limited duty as naval officer assigned to Naval intelligence during war. It is believed that information was obtained from source in Congress who is close to Secretary for Air Force.  

Kennedy appeared to have been unofficially briefed about the Roswell UFO crash from an unnamed Congressional source close to Stuart Symington who at the time was Assistant Secretary of War for Air. Symington was certainly informed about the UFO crash near Roswell Army Airfield in July, 1947, and two months later on September 18, 1947 became the first Secretary for the newly created U.S. Air Force. Symington was a native of Massachusetts and was Kennedy’s favorite as a running mate for the 1960 Presidential election. It is very likely that after the Roswell flying saucer crash made front page headlines on July 6, 1947, Symington took into his confidence the unnamed Congressional source. The source then relayed this to newly elected Kennedy who began his first Congressional term in January 1947 after the November 1946 mid-term Congressional elections. As a former Naval Intelligence officer and a serving Congressman, Kennedy was presumably deemed reliable to receive and keep secret such highly classified information. While the authenticity of the document in question, "Interplanetary Phenomenon Unit Summary," is disputed, the U.S. Army did finally acknowledge through FOIA responses that the Interplanetary Phenomenon Unit did at one time exist and was abolished in the late1950s. This admission supports the legitimacy of the leaked document.
The claim that Kennedy had knowledge of UFO crash retrieval operations is supported by British UFO researcher Timothy Good. In his book *Need to Know*, Good cites a reliable military source that Kennedy was taken to see the alien bodies from Roswell:

> Around 1961/1962 President J.F. Kennedy expressed a wish to see the alien bodies associated with an alien crash-site. He had obviously been informed of their existence and wished to see for himself the evidence…. According to information received, the alien bodes were taken to Florida when Kennedy went to see them [at] a medical facility.⁴

This is consistent with leaked documents concerning the death of Marilyn Monroe and her knowledge of President Kennedy seeing alien bodies at a US Air Force base. A leaked top secret CIA wiretap summary of conversations concerning Monroe and the Kennedy brothers, has been tacitly acknowledged by the CIA as genuine.⁵ The transcript states:

> Rothberg indicated in so many words, that she [Monroe] had secrets to tell, no doubt arising from her trists [sic] with the President and the Attorney General. One such "secret" mentions the visit by the President at a secret air base for the purpose of inspecting things from outer space. Kilgallen replied that she knew what might be the source of visit [sic]. In the mid-fifties Kilgallen learned of secret effort by US and UK governments to identify the origins of crashed spacecraft and dead bodies, from a British government official. Kilgallen believed the story may have come from the New Mexico story [Roswell] in the late forties.⁶

Significantly, the CIA document was signed by James [Jesus] Angleton, chief of counterintelligence for the CIA. As will be discussed later, this reveals that Angleton’s CIA counterintelligence was closely involved in events concerning classified UFO files. The document certainly points to Monroe’s knowledge of Kennedy visiting an Air Force base to see remnants of a crashed UFO and dead extraterrestrials.

Rare first hand witness evidence that Kennedy had certain knowledge of UFOs and extraterrestrial life comes from a former flight steward on Air Force One. Bill Holden claims that Kennedy was aware that UFOs were extraterrestrial in origin. In a June 2007 interview, Holden explained that in
June 1963, while flying to Germany on Air Force One, he placed two newspapers before Kennedy where UFOs were clearly pictured on the front page. In response to Kennedy’s question of what he thought of UFOs, Holden said: “For us to believe that we are the only intelligent beings in the world is unbelievable. So, yes, I believe that there is such a thing as other human species as well as UFOs.” In response President Kennedy said: “You're right, young man.” The unqualified nature of Kennedy’s response revealed he had knowledge that UFOs interplanetary in origin. More significant was the implication that Kennedy knew some extraterrestrials were human looking. This leads to the extraordinary claims by George Adamski that President Kennedy received messages from and even met with human looking extraterrestrials.

**Did Kennedy receive messages from and meet with extraterrestrials?**

George Adamski’s claims of having filmed flying saucers and having met with their human looking extraterrestrial occupants have long been controversial despite supporting photographic, film and witness testimonies. The testimonies of a number of first hand witnesses and investigators of Adamski give credence to his claims of having secret meetings with European dignitaries including Pope John XXIII and members of the Pentagon to secretly brief them about extraterrestrial life. Among the more controversial of Adamski’s claims is that he privately met with President Kennedy in late 1961 and again in 1962. Adamski claims that during his first visit, he passed on a message from his extraterrestrial contacts about a future world crisis – thought to be the October 1962 Cuban Missile crisis.

Desmond Leslie, a former Royal Air Force pilot, Irish Lord and cousin to Winston Churchill, closely investigated Adamski’s claims. Adamski claimed he secretly visited Pope John XXIII and passed on a message from extraterrestrials to him shortly before the Pope's death shortly after the completion of the opening session of the Second Vatican Council which lasted from October 11 to December 8, 1962. Leslie was subsequently able to confirm Adamski did meet Pope John XXIII and was given a papal gold medallion for his service.
Adamski’s claim of having an ordnance pass which gave him access to U.S. military facilities was confirmed by William Sherwood who at the time worked at Eastman Kodak as an optical physicist, and Madeline Rodeffer who worked as personal secretary for the US Air Force. Sherwood himself had previously worked for the U.S. Ordnance Department and possessed his own ordnance pass. Both Sherwood and Rodeffer saw Adamski’s Ordnance pass thereby giving credence to Adamski’s claims that he secretly briefed the Pentagon about his extraterrestrial contacts.

If Adamski did regularly brief the Pentagon and European VIPs, then this leads to his claim that he secretly met with President Kennedy around October 1961 to deliver a message from the “space brothers.” The message contained advice on a world crisis to occur in about a year that was later revealed to be the October 1962 Cuban Missile crisis. If true, the contents of the message may have helped Kennedy develop the right strategy for dealing with a conflict that could easily have escalated into a Third World War. The extraterrestrial message, apparently, also contained an invitation for Kennedy to meet with them in California. According to Adamski, President Kennedy accepted the invitation.

Lou Zinstag, Carl Jung’s niece describes what she was told by Adamski concerning Kennedy’s alleged meeting with extraterrestrials:

I still remember his [Adamski’s] White House story. He told me that he had been entrusted with a written invitation for President Kennedy to visit one of the space people’s huge mother ships at a secret airbase in Desert Hot Springs, California, for few days. In order to keep this visit absolutely secret, Adamski was to take the invitation directly to the White House through a side door. Still glowing with excitement and smiling happily, he explained how the row of cars in which his taxi was traveling had to stop because of a red light just in front of this particular door where a man he knew - a spaceman, he said - was standing ready to let him in. Adamski later learned that Kennedy had spent several hours at the airbase after having canceled an important trip to New York, and that he had a long talk with the ships crew, but that he had not been invited for a flight."
The quality of witness testimonies, photos and film evidence all lead to the conclusion that George Adamski was largely telling the truth about his flying saucer sightings and contacts with human looking extraterrestrials. There is however no reliable independent evidence that Kennedy met with the extraterrestrials Adamski claims he was in contact with. The only witness testimony related to Adamski’s claim concerns President Kennedy secretly traveling to an undisclosed Air Force base to watch UFOs in flight. A reliable source, according to UFO researcher Timothy Cooper, said that Kennedy "did fly out to an air force base to personally watch an unidentified bogie track from an aircraft under tight security which got no press coverage sometime in 1962." This event appears to be different to Kennedy’s visits to view remnants of crashed UFOs and alien bodies. If Kennedy actually traveled for a secret meeting with human looking extraterrestrials, no one other than Adamski has come forward to make this claim.

Whatever the truth of claims that Kennedy had been unofficially briefed about the Roswell UFO crash while a congressman in 1947; personally saw extraterrestrial vehicles and bodies early in his administration; received extraterrestrial messages; or even met with human looking extraterrestrials, there is little doubt that he attempted to gain official access to UFO files. An extensive set of documents reveal that Kennedy ran into a powerful opposition from the Director of the CIA when he tried to gain access to the files of the classified project created to handle UFOs and extraterrestrial affairs – MJ-12 Special Studies Project.

Kennedy’s Efforts to Gain Access to MJ-12 Activities
The existence of a Top Secret classified project responsible for extraterrestrial life and technology is supported by three official government documents. The first was a document found in 1985 in the U.S. National Archives that explicitly referred to an “MJ-12 Special Studies Project”. It was found...
among a group of declassified Air Force documents and copied by the archivist, Ed Reese, as part of official records belonging to the National Archives. The July 14, 1954 memorandum was sent by President Eisenhower’s National Security Advisor Robert Cutler to U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff, General Nathan Twining to schedule a meeting for the “MJ-12 Special Studies Project” briefing. The “Cutler-Twining memo” is among the most authoritative documentary sources so far for the existence of an MJ-12 Special Studies Project.

The second government document referring to a Top Secret UFO control group is a Top Secret memo from Wilbert Smith who at the time was a senior radio engineer with the Canadian Department of Transportation. Dated November 21, 1951, Smith wrote the following to the Controller of Telecommunications concerning flying saucer technologies being secretly studied in the U.S. by a very highly classified group:

a. The matter is the most highly classified subject in the United States government, rating higher than the H-bomb,

b. Flying saucers exist,

c. Their modus operandi is unknown but a concentrated effort is being made by a small group headed by Dr. Vannevar Bush, and

d. The entire matter is considered by the United States authorities to be of tremendous significance.

Smith’s memo confirms that in 1951 a small group headed by Dr Vannevar Bush was secretly studying the technologies associated with the UFO issue. Bush had earlier headed the Office of Scientific Research and Development (1941-1947) and the joint military services Research Development Board (RDB). At the time of Smith’s memo, Bush was on the oversight committee of the RDB and a leading scientific advisor to Truman. Bush’s role is significant for another leaked document, the Truman Memo, shortly to be discussed.

The third document involves three 1952 Top Secret memos from the Joint Chiefs of Staff titled: "Joint Logistic Plan for MAJESTIC." The memos were declassified in 1976 and state:
The following plans in support of MAJESTIC are now under preparation: A psychological warfare plan, an unconventional warfare plan, cover and deception plans, a civil affairs/military government plan, a command plan, a logistic plan, transportation guidance, to be included in the logistic plan, a map and chart plan and a communications plan.”

The significance of this set of memos is that it shows that in 1952 a project called Majestic was underway and this involved significant support across a wide spectrum of areas that would be expected for something involving UFOs and extraterrestrial life: psychological warfare, covert military operations, civil affairs/military government, logistics, communications, etc. The Joint Chiefs memos corroborate the 1954 Cutler Twining memo involving a project called Majestic-12, and what Smith described as a UFO group headed by Vannevar Bush.

The three preceding official documents corroborate a number of leaked documents also describing a UFO control group called MJ-12, Majestic or similar variations. One leaked document is an alleged Top Secret memorandum written by President Truman to Secretary of Defense, Robert Forrestal on September 24, 1947. Referring to recent conversations on an undisclosed matter [UFOs and extraterrestrial life], Truman writes: “[h]ereafter this matter shall be referred to only as Operation Majestic Twelve.” The Memorandum goes on to say: “future considerations relative to the ultimate disposition of this matter should rest solely with the Office of the President following appropriate discussions with yourself, Dr Bush and the Director of Central Intelligence.” The Truman memo was described as a Special Classified Executive (#092447) and attached to a larger leaked document called the Eisenhower Briefing document. Alleged to be a briefing to President-Elect Eisenhower on 18 November 1952, the Eisenhower Briefing Document describes the
beginning of Majestic-12 operations and the twelve officials that sat on it.\textsuperscript{17} The Eisenhower Briefing Document has been exhaustively researched, and found by some prominent UFO researchers to be historically consistent with events, documents and officials of the time.\textsuperscript{18}

Taken collectively, the Cutler-Twining Memo, the Smith Memo, the Joint Chiefs of Staff Memos, the Truman Memo and the Eisenhower Briefing Document conclusively show the existence of a Top Secret military scientific group responsible for dealing with extraterrestrial life and technology called at the time – Majestic-12 or some variation. These documents reveal that MJ-12 operated in a clandestine manner, was given enormous logistics support by the Pentagon, was closely associated with CIA covert operations, and escaped direct Presidential oversight. When President Kennedy came to office in 1961, he was aware of the existence of MJ-12, and its relationship to information concerning UFOs and extraterrestrial life. He decided to find out more about its covert activities and reestablish Presidential executive authority over it.

On June 28, 1961, President Kennedy wrote the following to Allen Dulles who was the Director of the CIA:

\begin{verbatim}
National Security Memorandum
To: The Director, Central Intelligence Agency
Subject: Review of MJ-12 Intelligence Operations as they relate to Cold War Psychological Warfare Plans
I would like a brief summary from you at your earliest convenience\textsuperscript{19}
\end{verbatim}

This leaked National Security Memorandum clearly shows that in June of 1961, Kennedy wanted to learn about MJ-12 activities and the relationship with psychological warfare. While the leaked June Memorandum has not been acknowledged by the CIA (it was classified TOP SECRET), other documents from the period support its authenticity. Early in his administration, President Kennedy showed that he desired to restructure the National Security Council and bring all intelligence and psychological warfare activities under direct Executive control. On February 19, 1961, President Kennedy issued Executive Order 10920 which abolished the Operations Coordinating Board.\textsuperscript{20} The Operations Coordinating Board was the primary interagency organization responsible for Cold War

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psychological warfare activities. Its responsibilities were handed over to Kennedy’s national security advisor, McGeorge Bundy and the Department of State.

President Kennedy’s EO 10920 showed that he desired to gain control over all intelligence activities related to psychological warfare. Abolishing the Operations Coordinating Board shows he was willing to dismantle any government entity in order to bring its psychological warfare operations under the direct control of his national security team. EO 10920 helps substantiate his later June 28, 1961 National Security Memorandum concerning a review of MJ-12 activities that Kennedy had learned involved psychological warfare. EO 10920 also helps substantiate the very real concern, to be discussed later, that Dulles believed that the future of MJ-12 was at stake.

The authenticity of the June 28, 1961 Memorandum is also supported by a declassified set of three National Security Action Memorandums (NSAM) issued on the same day to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and also forwarded to Dulles. NSAM 55-57 placed Cold War operations firmly under the control of the Joint Chiefs. According to Col Fletcher Prouty, they were Kennedy’s main means of gaining control over covert CIA operations. Prouty wrote:

… shortly after the Bay of Pigs committee had completed its hearings, the White House issued three NSAM of a most unusual and revolutionary nature. They prescribed vastly limiting stipulations upon the conduct of clandestine operations. NSAM #55 was addressed to the chairman of the JCS, and its principle theme was to instruct the chairman that the President of the United States held him responsible for all "military type" operations in peacetime as he would be responsible for them in time of war…. [T]here was no misunderstanding the full intent and weight of this document. Peacetime operations, as used
in that context, were always clandestine operations…. This NSAM therefore put into the chairman's hands the authority to demand full and comprehensive briefings and an inside role during the development of any clandestine operation in which the U.S. Government might become involved.23

The three June 28 NSAM’s support the content of the CIA Memorandum issued the same day that involved Cold War operations by MJ-12. As I will show later through a leaked burned document, the three NSAMs explain why the Joint Chiefs were excluded from the most classified UFO information by MJ-12.

Finally, I referred earlier to three 1952 Top Secret memos titled: "Joint Logistic Plan for MAJESTIC" from the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Prominent among the various “plans in support of MAJESTIC” was a “psychological warfare plan.”24 Once again, this shows the relationship between MJ-12 (Majestic) operations and psychological warfare. Kennedy therefore had good reason to issue his June 28 1961 memorandum to Dulles asking him for a review of MJ-12 psychological warfare operations.

Dulles response to Kennedy’s June 28 Memorandum was an alleged Top Secret letter issued on November 5, 1961.25 Dulles’ letter gives an overview of the MJ-12 activities with regard to psychological activities. It describes UFOs as part of “Soviet propaganda” designed “to spread distrust of the government.”26 Dulles’ letter acknowledged that while it was possible some “UFO cases are of non-terrestrial origin,” these did not “constitute a physical threat to national defense.”27 Most significantly, Dulles’ letter said: “For reasons of security, I cannot divulge pertinent data on some of the more sensitive aspects of MJ-12 activities.”28 If genuine, Dulles’ letter was giving President Kennedy only minimal information in response to his June 1961 NSAM request for a brief summary of MJ-12 activities.

Dulles and the Burned MJ-12 Memorandum
The leaked June 28, 1961 Memorandum; EO 10920; NSAM’s 55-57; and Dulles’ November 1961 letter reveal that a power struggle was occurring over Presidential Executive control of Cold War psychological warfare programs and the covert activities of MJ-12. Up until his resignation as DCI...
on November 29, 1961, Dulles was the pivotal figure in the power struggle with Kennedy over MJ-12 activities and its control of classified UFO files. This power struggle is reflected in a leaked draft of a partially burned memorandum allegedly rescued from a fire burning the remainder of James Angleton’s files after his death on May 12, 1987.

A former counterintelligence colleague of Angleton, who claimed to be present at the burning, sent it on June 23, 1999 to Timothy Cooper, a UFO researcher best known for his role in making public leaked MJ-12 documents. According to Dr Robert Wood and Ryan Wood, the burned document is an original carbon with an Eagle watermark characteristic of government work, but so far forensic laboratories have been unable to trace it…. Although no dated is given, its content directly suggests the month of September. The year is estimated to be in the early 1960s and is still under investigation.

The burned document dates from the Kennedy era and has the characteristics of a government document. If its contents are accurate, it provides smoking gun evidence of the power struggle between Kennedy and MJ-12 over access to UFO information.

The classified Top Secret document with MJ-12 codeword access is a set of directives from the Director of the CIA who simultaneously headed the MJ-12 Special Studies Project, to six other members of the Project. It says on the cover page:

As you must know Lancer [Kennedy’s Secret Service codename] has made some inquiries regarding our activities which we cannot allow. Please submit your views no later than October. Your action to this matter is critical to the continuance of the group.

The document clearly acknowledges that Kennedy’s efforts to gain access to UFO information soon after coming into office on January 20, 1961, actually imperiled the existence of the MJ-12 Special Studies Project/Group.
While the burned document has no date of issue, the authority of the writer and the political context indicates it was written shortly after Kennedy had issued his June 26, 1961 National Security Action Memorandum requesting a “Review of MJ-12 Intelligence Operations as they related to Cold War Psychological Warfare Plans.” The burned document acknowledged that it had “become necessary to review and evaluate duplication of field activities in light of the current situation.” This appears to be a reference to the June 26 NSAM review Dulles was ordered to undertake.

The burned document appeared to be a draft for a series of MJ-12 directives from Allen Dulles, who knew his time as DCI was limited due to the April 1961 Bay of Pigs fiasco. He needed an answer from the other MJ-12 members by October, a month before he was to retire as DCI on November 29, 1961. The burned document contained a number of directives concerning how to control UFO information and ensure that it would not be shared with the “Chief Executive [President Kennedy], National Security Council Staff, department heads, the Joint Chiefs, and foreign representatives.” Basically, Dulles secret directives proscribed Kennedy’s National Security team from gaining access to the most sensitive UFO files possessed by the CIA and MJ-12.

While the response of other MJ-12 members is not found in leaked documents, Dulles November 5, 1961 letter to Kennedy indicates that his secret draft of MJ-12 directives was approved. Dulles letter firmly suggests that MJ-12 had decided not to cooperate with Kennedy. Thus Kennedy’s efforts to incorporate MJ-12 psychological warfare activities under the direct control of his National Security Advisor had been dismissed.

To summarize so far President Kennedy’s activities towards MJ-12, documents reveal that in 1961 Kennedy was attempting to gain control over intelligence activities related to Cold War psychological warfare operations. This is confirmed in Executive Order 10920 that placed interagency psychological warfare plans under the control of McGeorge Bundy. It is further supported by declassified 1952 memos from the Joint Chiefs of Staff to provide logistic support for MAJESTIC (MJ-12) psychological warfare programs, and three NSAM’s issued on June 28, 1961 to place covert Cold War activities under the control of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. On the same day, June 28, Kennedy contacted Allen Dulles to request a summary about MJ-12’s psychological warfare activities. Dulles November 5 response highlighted that these activities involved the UFO
issue but declined to release sensitive information. These events are consistent with the content of
the burned document comprising eight directives restricting access to UFO information from the
President, his National Security Council Staff, including Bundy, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. It can
therefore be concluded that Allen Dulles was the official who drafted the burned document.

Some time shortly before his alleged November 5, 1961 letter to Kennedy, Dulles draft set of
directives had been responded to and approved by six other members of MJ-12. While Dulles and
MJ-12 frustrated Kennedy’s efforts to gain access to classified UFO files in late 1961, less than two
years later Kennedy would embark on a course of action that would renew his conflict with MJ-12
and bring it to a devastating climax.

To be continued in Part II.

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About the Author: Michael E. Salla, PhD., is the author of Exposing US
Government Policies on Extraterrestrial Life (2009) and Exopolitics: Political
Implications of the Extraterrestrial Presence (2004) He has held full time
academic appointments at the Australian National University, and American
University, Washington DC. He has a PhD in Government from the University
of Queensland, Australia. He is the Founder of the Exopolitics Institute
(www.exopoliticsinstitute.org ) and the popular internet website Exopolitics.Org; Chief Editor of
the Exopolitics Journal, and Co-Organizer of the Earth Transformation: New Science,
Consciousness and Cosmic Contact conferences in Kona, Hawaii. Main website:
www.exopolitics.org
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The burned memorandum is available online at: http://majesticdocuments.com/documents/1960-1969.php#burnedmemo

