

March 23, 1961

LT. Col. A. J. MacLaren
Military Assistant
Strategic and Space Systems
Office of the Under Secretary
of Defense
Washington, D. C. 20301

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 7-14-92 BY SP18SKM/V2

Dear Colonel MacLaren:

A complete search of our retrievable files concern-
ing Dr. Nikola Tesla shows that all notes and material in his
immediate possession at the time of his death on January 7, 1943,
were placed in the custody of the Alien Property Custodian
under seal by the United States Government. These materials
have never been in the care or custody of the FBI.

On January 26 and 27, 1943, Federal authorities made
a thorough review of the effects of Dr. Tesla to determine if
any ideas of significant value to the United States war effort
could be found. His effects were examined at the Manhattan
Warehouse and Storage Company at 52nd and 7th Avenue, New York,
New York, where they apparently were taken after his death. Par-
ticipating in this examination were representatives from the
New York and Washington Offices of the Alien Property Custodian, the
Office of Scientific Research and Development at the Massa-
chusetts Institute of Technology, the Office of Naval Intel-
ligence, and United States Naval Research. The FBI did not
participate in this examination. (65-47953 section 1)

It was the considered opinion of a spokesman of those
examiners "that there exist among Dr. Tesla's papers and posses-
sions no scientific notes, descriptions of hitherto unrevealed
methods or devices, or actual apparatus which could be of
significant value to this country or which would constitute a
hazard in unfriendly hands." There was thought to be no
technical or military reason why further custody of the property
should be retained. However, our files indicate that certain
papers, which were regarded as typical of Nikola Tesla's writings
and thoughts in the period of 1925 to 1942, were removed for
the private use of the Office of the Alien Property
Custodian. (65-47953 section 1)

V-38 DE-112

MAR 25 1961

BE

(SEE NOTE PAGE THREE)

MAIL ROOM

Exec AD Inv. _____
Exec AD Adm. _____
Exec AD LES _____
Asst. Dir.: _____
Adm. Servs. _____
Crim. Inv. _____
Ident. _____
Intell. _____
Laboratory _____
Legal Coun. _____
Plan. & Insp. _____
Rec. Mgnt. _____
Tech. Servs. _____
Training _____
Public Affs. Off. _____
Telephone Rm. _____
Director's Sec'y _____

Col. A. J. MacLaran

A memo dated October 17, 1945, from our New York Office said that at that time Dr. Tesla's effects remained at the Manhattan Storage Warehouse in some 75 packing boxes and trunks under seal by the New York Department of Taxation. The rental for this storage, approximately \$15 per month, was being paid by Charlotte Muzar, 134 East 63rd Street, New York, New York, who was listed as an agent for Sava Kossanovich, Dr. Tesla's nephew and administrator of his estate. (65-47953-14)

On October 26, 1945, [redacted] a young scientist who had been Tesla's protégé, called in person at our New York Field Office. With him were [redacted] and [redacted] from a research development unit at Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio. These men carried a letter signed by [redacted] requesting that the FBI allow the bearers of the letter access to the effects of Nikola Tesla. (65-47953-15)

It was explained to [redacted] that the FBI had no jurisdiction over Tesla's effects, and they were referred to the Office of the Alien Property Custodian. Bureau files do not indicate whether the men ever examined Tesla's belongings. (65-47953-15)


The Tesla effects remained in rooms 53 and 54 of the Manhattan Storage Company. In the 1950s, FBI Agents were told by company management that the only recorded visit had been made by "Federal authorities" in January, 1943. [redacted] recalled that the men had taken numerous photographs. His description of the equipment used would tend to show that a microfilm reproduction was made of the papers of the deceased. (65-47953-27)

Our files do not reflect any pertinent information on the Tesla materials since that date. Their current whereabouts or condition are not reflected in our files.

For further information regarding this matter, you may wish to contact the Office of the Alien Property Custodian and the other Federal agencies mentioned above.

I hope that we have been of assistance to you.

Sincerely,


Royce S. Young
Assistant Director in Charge
Office of Congressional
and Public Affairs

(CONTINUED - OVER)

Lt. Col. A. J. MacLaran

NOTE: On February 9, 1981, Col. MacLaran wrote to us inquiring about the scientific papers of Dr. Nikola Tesla. In a return letter of March 9, we informed him that a thorough review of our files would be made in search of the information he requested. This was done and he is being informed of the results. Tesla's papers have been the subject of numerous inquiries by various individuals and organizations since his death. FBI received over 20 FOIA requests on this matter during the period 1973-1980. Matter coordinated with FOIA Section, RMD.