

Summary Folder for Department of Defense Briefing 09042016 [SECRET (GINGER RELATIVITY) Clearance Only]

Oh, how this folder is classified. Not only do you need SECRET (GINGER RELATIVITY) clearance to read it, there's a rather unpleasant-looking sigil on the front cover that will give anybody with even rudimentary magical ability the heebie-jeebies. It's not that it'd normally explode your head if you look at it too hard (it'd just knock you out and set off the magical equivalent of an alarm siren); it's that the sigil is damaged, in precisely the same way that a grenade launcher with a misfire in the chamber is 'damaged.' The urge to dive to cover only gets worse, the more magic you know.

Moving on... this is a briefing by the Department of Defense to select staffers in the White House and Senate Industry Committee about why there's a black government slush fund subsidizing not only the CD industry, but also the current fad for vinyl records. The reason? ...Prayer wheels, essentially. The US government has been using mechanically-operated prayer devices to fuel the national protection theurgic grid since 1950, when the CIA smuggled crucial blueprints out from Tibet (under guise of

mere spying on Soviet atomic tests). Ordinary record players seemed well suited for providing redundant defense systems, particularly once record companies agreed to ensure that the proper subvocalized incantations were added to all American recordings. Pretty much any record will do in a pinch, although the government has some pretty sophisticated prayer records for the primary theurgic workings.

Unfortunately, technology marches on. Magnetic cassette tape proved at first tricky to adapt, but the government cracked that problem through the liberal use of backmasking. And, of course, CDs were merely a difference in degree, not kind: you could still generate the sound via laser beam. But mp3s and other electronic sound files? *Absolutely incompatible* with legacy protection systems.

So: update the system? Well, it turns out that retooling the grid would take a **lot** more money than it would to simply make sure that record companies continued to produce CD players; and, thanks to the current craze for vinyl records, the US government is now once again able to refurbish and even replace its aging collection of turntables at something less than astronomical levels. Unfortunately, these aren't the cowboy days of the early

Cold War: you have to inform the brass when you're spending money these days.

Hence, the briefing; and hence, the sigil. The absolutely last thing that the federal government wants to have happen is it to come out that it's praying *en masse* every day to keep the monsters away. There are levels and levels and levels of controversy to *that* statement, with 'monsters' on one end, and 'praying' on the other...

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