

Department of Correlations

Founded via Executive Order in February of 1921. Officially under the oversight of the Department of the Interior, but no DoC-related entries appear on budgetary records. Dissolved, February of 1971. Staff: 3,930 (founding date), 3,310 (dissolve date), in ten offices (Washington DC, NYC, Chicago, San Francisco, Denver, Atlanta, Galveston, Pittsburgh, Kansas City, and Honolulu). Purpose: Unknown. Department Head: Unknown.

The existence of the Department of Correlations *should* have been revealed to the Shadow Government in February 2021, because that's when the hundred-year leases expired. Unfortunately, the US was dealing with a fairly nasty pandemic at the time, and a bunch of stuff just... fell through the cracks. It's only been recently that things have calmed down enough for the people who monitor the weird stuff to get back to work. And, to be fair: the DoC may be weird, but it's not dangerously weird. Probably.

The only federal information available is via employment records. Almost four thousand people were hired in 1921 to work for the DoC. About half of them were female, and all of the new employees were between the ages of 23

and 25. And... none of them ever left. Sixteen percent of them *died* before 1971, invariably by accident or 'misadventure;' the rest retired in February 1971 and began to draw pensions. No DoC employee was ever called up for military service.

However! The offices are still available for examination (the Shadow Government was able to stop them from being cleaned and rented out again). Each office had three hundred and thirty-one desks, arranged in open floors in groups of eleven, with one desk in its own office. Each desk had a typewriter, mechanical calculator, Fuller's cylindrical slide rule, and a set of log tables. All items date from the 1920s, show signs of use, but are otherwise in good working condition. There are no signs that the office workers personalized their space, with one exception: there are numerous planting pots scattered across the offices. Most will show signs of once having dirt in them, but the contents have long since been removed.

The offices also include galley areas (all the coffee pots and cups were carefully cleaned and left to dry), bathrooms (likewise cleaned before the officers were closed), a storage/machine shop capable of repairing or replacing any of the mechanical officer equipment, a library alcove holding the 1922 twelfth edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and the 1968 revised American

edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (the former much more used than the latter), and an entire floor of office cabinets. Each cabinet contains a set of hanging file folders; inside each file folder is a single sheet of paper. Each paper has an unique number in XXX-00000-XX-0000 format (the last four numbers appear to be the year) typed on it, plus the single word CORRELATED. There are no other records present at all. Even the used typewriter ribbons were removed.

Diligent researchers will find that former DoC employers had generally quiet retirements (the last DoC employee died on March 23, 2003, at the ripe old age of 95). More diligent researchers will discover that all of the retirees moved to a chain of senior living centers (Soteria Gardens) around their eightieth year, assuming they lived that long (most did). Those same researchers will discover that Soteria Gardens closed operations in 2004, and the corporation running it was dissolved in 2008. The sites have long since been sold, and the buildings on them razed.

Many of the retirees left families behind, but no direct descendants. Interviews with surviving family members will reveal little. Most did marry at some point in their thirties and forties, but their children either all came from their spouses' previous marriage, or were adopted. DoC

employees are universally remembered by surviving family members as being soft-spoken, pleasant, and well regarded. None spoke of their federal jobs.

Tracking down the graves of DoC employees who died at Soteria Gardens is impossible. The grave records chase each other, each document referring to a different document in a different government agency that refers to a new different document, until eventually the researcher is directed back to the original grave record. Local officials will not remember individual deaths, and Soteria Gardens was always scrupulous in its adherence to state and local regulations. The majority of its clients had perfectly normal records; it's only the DoC employees with confusing ones.

Another possible avenue for exploration would be the grave records of DoC employees who died *before* retirement. Some of those individuals were buried in the usual ways, and their final resting places can be found. Whether their bodies are *still* in those resting places will be largely dependent on how it takes for determined researchers to track them down; but even an empty grave will at least reassure the Shadow Government that *something* actively weird is going on.

And what is that actively weird something? ...Why, that's *why* the Shadow Government has field research teams: to

answer questions like that. Or to at least make sure that nothing dangerous is going on. The Illuminati love a good unsolved mystery as much as anyone else: benign inexplicable events are tolerable, and sometimes even oddly romantic in their way. *Dangerous* inexplicable events are neither.

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