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THE LAW AND THE UFO MAN
THE SAGA OF JOHN FORD

PART I:

Dramatis Personae

“If something happens to me, you’ll know what I said is true.”

In this millennial era of The X-Files, a man who might claim to be living the real X-Files is John Ford, a longtime resident of Bellport, Long Island, where he founded the Long Island UFO Network, or LIUFON in 1988. The land of the LIE (Long Island Expressway) is a hotbed of UFO activity and the authorities are engaged in the lie of denying it, claimed Ford and his group, who gathered reports of sightings, crashes and abductions. Since June of 1996, as if manifestation of a self-fulfilling prophecy, Ford’s activities – but hardly his imagination – have been confined to the Riverhead Correctional Facility in the county seat of Suffolk; he is charged with conspiracy to murder three public officials in the township of Brookhaven – by subjecting them to dosages of radium that would affect them over a period of time. Ford contends this is a plot by the very same parties who have been out to get him – because he became privy to the fact that the wildfires or Sunrise Fire of the late summer of 1995 had been caused by a crashed UFO.

I signed in at the prison gate and waited outside for afternoon visiting hours to begin at 12:30. It was a grey day, early in autumn. About 20 people waited, a mixed bag of black, white and in between, as well as a number of children – and infants: I counted four in strollers.

I wasn't used to this sort of thing. I felt a little...intimidated. The coils of barbed wire, extending everywhere, like some work of conceptual art, were lighter but more menacing than the clouds. Though for many the place and the wait were apparently habit; there was joking and laughter.

The time came; the guard told us we could proceed. We all walked quickly into the great building. An older man with long hair and cane lagged behind.

Inside one signed in again. And waited again. In the row of seats before me sat a white haired couple; you had the feeling they should be watering their lawn in some safe

suburb. One man sat with his back to the admittance desk, looking out the window at the grey sky, as if refusing to acknowledge where he was.

After a while, I felt less unease and simply yawned.

The name of the man I had come to see was called. I was directed to a locker where a young guard with an earring – silver, with a diamond – stood by while I put everything in my pockets as well as my belt into a locker.

Next I stood in a line and took off my shoes so they could be X-rayed for contraband, explosives devices or whatever. It felt strange to be shoeless even for a few moments as my footwear went on a belt out of sight then reappeared.

In a very small waiting area bars slid behind us. Then bars in front of us opened and there was the large visiting room where the visitor came to have an hour with the incarcerated. The free and imprisoned sat on opposite sides of a strip of Plexiglas with holes. The Plexiglas wasn't high; while sitting you could easily reach your hand over it. When I saw a couple embrace, and not have the law come down on them, I realized some exchange over the Plexiglas wall was allowed. I waited a good while after tall shaven headed guard had directed me to number five; then a middleaged, heavy set man with a mustache came out. I didn't recognize him at first; he'd put on weight and the mustache was new, at least to me. The last time I had seen John Ford was two and a half years ago. I reached out to shake his hand.

“That’s the alien head,” said Ford.

The story of John Ford, his associates, and the Long Island UFO Network is like something out of The Arabian Nights. You can begin the book anywhere, go backward and forward over what is now nearly a decade of history of alleged UFOs over Long Island, celestial mysteries enacting with the human, the latter species inhabiting the environs of prosaic towns like Shirley and Ronkonkoma where a blue collar vision of governmental conspiracy and extraterrestrial machinations has spawned an insistent, alternative reality.

A reality that says a UFO was shot down over Moriches Bay in 1989 (near where Flight 800 came down), and William Floyd Parkway was closed in the middle of the night and the debris (and ET remains?) trucked up to Brookhaven National Laboratory, north of the expressway and that another craft from space exploded over Southaven Park in Yaphank just before Thanksgiving in 1992. A year and a half later, at the end of the brutal winter of 1994, I saw a short video at John Ford's house. It had been sent to LIUFON by someone with government contacts, Ford said. It showed what might very well be rescue workers; at one point a man seemed to be spreading a blanket over something on the ground: alien bodies?

"Now watch this," Ford said.

An object swept across the screen – you had the sense something had been suddenly raised from the ground and passed quickly before the camera: two large dark circles, no, ovals, within a grey mass. "That's the alien head," said Ford.

He put it in rewind, played it back and froze it. Well, it could be the blurred image of what has become the classical alien head: bulbous, nearly featureless, with large almond shaped eyes. But the picture was indefinite enough for doubts. Those who believed, would say: There it is! Those who didn't believe would say it they didn't see that there at all. Those who worked the borderland – myself – with its dangers of suffering the madness from both sides, kept on looking.

“...The worst thing that could happen to me would be the American Gulag.”

The mid-June sun was still high when the evening news snared the watcher with the announcement of “UFO researcher...Bellport...bizarre murder plot...” I saw split second images of the house, Ford in handcuffs, squinting sadly, a cache of arms, and purported militia magazines found in the house. In an instant John Ford was electronically pulsed across the major networks of America, slipped into what had become an easy classification of villain: an anti-government conspirator. It would turn out the guns were all legal (Ford was a longtime collector), and the magazine, *The Freeman*, which perhaps understandably was at first linked with Montana's Freemen (militia-types who had just ended a stand-off with the authorities), was actually a very established and even staid conservative publication. But apparently no one in the media bothered to look inside those pages (the error was repeated all through the night); just as the media really didn't bother to look past the immediate texture of the case. Newsday ran the predictable UFO-wacko slant: “Lost in Space” was their profile on Ford. Suffolk D.A. James Catterson called Ford the “mastermind” of a plot to assassinate three politicians in Brookhaven Township: Suffolk County Republican Chairman John Powell a Republican, County Legislator Fred Towle and Brookhaven Town Senior Investigator Anthony Gazzola, a Conservative. (Gazzola was in charge of enforcing town ordinances.)

The murder weapon was: radium. On the news too were the canisters, found in Ford's pickup. It was charged that Ford, and co-conspirator, Joseph Mazzuchelli, were going to kill their victims by dousing their food, car seats and even toothpaste with radium. It would – could – produce a slow death, of course, perhaps cancer in the decades ahead. Ford and Mazzuchelli had gotten the radium from Edward Zabo, who had worked for Grumman.

“It was not unusual stuff he had,” said Mona Rowe, director of Media Relations of Brookhaven National Laboratory. “You can come by it quite easily through industry or

through hospitals.” BNL’s Radiological Assistance Program (RAP) Team had been called by the police “to assess the radioactivity of the materials confiscated,” said Ms. Rowe. Later she would tell me, “After all this happened, the joke around the lab was that if Ford put radium on someone’s car seat and they had prostate cancer, he might cure them.”

It did seem the sort of case one had to joke about: UFOs; a radium death plot. Ford’s alleged partner in crime, Mazzuchelli, was a classic drifter type, who had presented himself to Ford as a former Pagan biker with an uncle in the mob – and a police informant. He was described by one court officer, John Marafino, as “typical Shirley slime.”

John Ford himself had been a court officer, first in Brooklyn, then in Riverhead, where ironically enough he would be jailed. Marafino, who has known Ford since the ‘70s, described him as a very “law and order type guy. He made 40 arrests as a court officer, you know, with people trying to bring contraband into the courts.”

Marafino also scoffed at Ford being the instigator of a violent plot. “You ask anybody at work. John Ford? He’s a lamb. I’ll tell you what kind of guy John Ford is. One day he was giving me a ride to the train station and he accidentally ran over a cat that had run in front us. There was no way he could have not hit it. He was so upset he started to cry. He’s not a violent guy at all.

“I head that tape where John is supposed to be talking about what he’s going to do with the radium. It sounded like a bunch of guys who had a few beers and were goofing around. If it were filmed it could’ve been on America’s Funniest Home Videos.”

Another co-worker of Ford’s for many years at the court, Joel Shapiro, described him as a “nice guy and the most generous person I know. He was an animal lover, he took care of his mother until she died. We have murderers out on the streets with less bail than they’ve given John.”

Ford’s bail was placed at \$500,000 or \$350,000 bond. “He’s a political prisoner in America,” said Shapiro.

A year and some months after his arrest, John Ford wrote from jail, “...the worst that could happen to me would be the American Gulag.” It was “an American policy of the cover-up to have...abductees, contactees and UFO witnesses and potentially threatening persons...certified as mentally incompetent or insane.”

Of course this was no joke to Ford. When I called him at the end of April, 1996, six weeks before his arrest, I had not spoken to him in nearly a year, since he had organized a day long seminar the previous May on the Southaven Park crash. I had barely said hello

when he said, commanded: "Write all this down," adding, "I can't go into all the details over the phone." But he certainly said a lot.

The Sunrise Fires of '95 had been caused by a crashed UFO. Since he and his colleague Preston Nichols (of the Montauk Project fame) had discovered this. There had been attempts on both their lives. A young receptionist who had heard the testimony of a man who had seen an extraterrestrial object in the woods south of Suffolk Community College had been in three suspicious car accidents and then disappeared. And there was the man from Southold who had overheard police talking about the Southaven Park crash on November 22, 1992; he mysteriously died in his bathtub. And the recent death of Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown was a result of a battle with the U.S. government and intelligence community over the whole issue of UFOs. Since the autumn of 1995, 47 UFO researchers or witnesses had either been killed or suffered suspicious accidents.

"If something happens to me, you'll know what I said is true."

I came away from that conversation thinking John Ford was a little paranoid. His subsequent arrest made me think of those words and made me look at the matter more closely.

John had a trek into the wilds of Yaphank planned.

Looking was what I did a lot of the last time I had been over John Ford's house, the last Sunday in April of 1994, a day that was bright and unseasonably hot. It was a crash course in the Southaven Park crash. Although I had spoken with and met John Ford a number of times since I had first written about LIUFON at the end of 1988, I had been to the house only once before, at the end of that March, when I saw the video of the alleged "rescue" operation. Ford said it had been smuggled to LIUFON by an individual who did not want to be presently known and whom Ford referred to as "Uncle Bob."

On the tape one saw what looked like debris burning, then what appeared to be a hand holding a flashlight playing its beam about the wreckage. From a slanted angle one saw men moving; memory says there was one in camouflage fatigues. There was the ripple of what indeed seemed to be a mylar blanket as a man in dark clothes covered over something on the ground. And there was a figure that seemed to be sitting, perhaps cloaked, perhaps not. Perhaps...alien. At the seminar in May of '95, Preston Nichols, who claims to an electronics expert, related that the tape had been analyzed frame by frame and the head of this figure had turned literally from one frame to the next. "There are 30 frames per second on video tape," said Nichols. "That's a speed that on earth only insects can match," Nichols, co-author of The Montauk Project book series, claims he once worked for a secret underground base at Camp Hero in Montauk that conducted experiments in mind control, telekinesis, psychotronics, invisibility, time travel, and alien

technology. In the John Ford case, Nichols would always loom not so much in the shadows but in disconcerting glimmers of light sometimes just to the side of the action, sometimes, in its midst. It would be Nichols who would show up at the paper I worked for in the Hamptons one midnight in July, 1996 with a copy of the warrant that had been left at Ford's house: the warrant had been dated two days after Ford's arrest.

Of course, that unseasonably hot Sunday in April, 1994, this was all in the future. I arrived at the modest development immediately north of Sunrise Highway in Bellport. Ford's house was on Sundial Lane; it seemed a name both poetic and astral. Other streets in the development were "Horizon" and "Sunburst." John Ford had been living there since the '70s with his aging mother, Kay, a pleasant, friendly woman who smoked a lot and had become hard of hearing. She was also suffering from cancer; she would die in November of the following year.

John had a trek into the wilds of Yaphank planned, he would show me where a portion of the Southaven Park craft had come down. We turned off a major north-south road and walked into a vast stretch of woods. Ford had a backpack, a camouflage cap and smoked his habitual pipe. He held a walkie-talkie and handed me one. "In case we get separated."

It took some time, but he led me to a pit whose greatest depth was perhaps eight feet. Roots protruding from the sides of earth seemed to have been burned. Power lines stretched through this greenbelt like an ominous intrusion of technology. On wires that were directly south of the pit there was clear evidence of splicing. Ford made a gesture, connecting the splice with the line of descent of something that had come hurtling down out of the sky.

At any rate, there was certainly clear evidence heavy machinery had been here, using a more earthly path. A path that had been roughly hewn; there were the tracks of large tires. Fire fighting equipment. Ford was convinced the authorities had retrieved part of a spacecraft.

We were joined in the woods by a thin, nervous young man who was supposed to have met us earlier. I can only refer to him as "James." He said he knew a fireman who had videotaped the alien craft. He said that a portion of the wreck was in the trophy case of a firehouse in the area. All the local fire departments deny they tended to any such blaze the night of November 22, 1992.

James also said that in the summer of '93 he had been going through Southaven Park with a metal detector, had found some peculiar samples, but two men came up to him with FBI badges and asked him what he was doing and confiscated what he had found. He added that a few days later federal agents came to his job, brought him to the local

police department where he was held and questioned over night. “They asked me a lot of questions about John,” he said.

Speaking of fire: We walked about, and Ford pointed out other areas of the woods that seemed to have been burned. And on the southernmost border of these woods, a current fire raged. A huge fire. There was smoke, sirens. But Ford kept leading us southward. The smoke was ugly and we came close enough to see flames. Breathing was unpleasant. Ford puffed away on his pipe, apparently unconcerned about the conflagration, but happily amazed at all the damage we were coming across in the woods that attributed to the UFO. “The extent of this is mind boggling,” he said.

In retrospect the aftermath of the fire we saw and the fire that burned so violently was a synchronistic omen of the Sunrise Fire of the following summer and Ford’s claims as to its source; and, of course, the larger fire of the law that would imprison him as he reveled in the fantastic.

“There was a big Pathmark freezer truck the military was putting body bags in.”

It had been a long afternoon, but my education was not yet over. With the end of the day I followed John Ford’s pickup (the one that would later be found with the radium) for a half hour’s drive as he led me to “Uncle Bob’s” house, the man who had supplied the ambiguous but intriguing video.

I had spoken with Uncle Bob on the phone. As often happens, he was different in person than I had imagined him. Ford told me Uncle Bob had done a lot of covert work for the government; I had thought he would be an older man than the forty or so he appeared. He was also very thin, with a dark beard and smoked incessantly. Uncle Bob told me he had worked for a firm that the government would subcontract to analyze the electronics of retrieved satellites, whether our own or the Russians. He also told me he had been on a UFO crash retrieval: “Upstate, one winter, on the New York Connecticut border. They picked me up by helicopter at Orient Point.

“There was a farm with just this one old guy living there. The space ship was gigantic, shaped like a pyramid. It was the biggest thing I had ever seen. There was a big Pathmark freezer truck the military was putting body bags in.”

A Pathmark freezer truck? Someone fabricating this story would most likely have posited a military vehicle. Either this was a great touch of imagination, or....

“I went inside, there was writing like hieroglyphics on what looked like control panels. I took a portion of the control panels out. I was only there for the afternoon. But I saw them take the old guy away. They led him into a tent, then he came out struggling like he was crazy. I know there are drugs the government uses to make people seem like they’re crazy.”

Uncle Bob also told me about his own abduction by aliens, in the late 70s. His car was raised right off Sunrise Highway in Oakdale. He described the usual abduction experience. “They dropped me and my car back into the woods off the road; a path had to be cut into the woods to get the car out.”

Yet the next time the aliens came for Uncle Bob, quite recently, he was in bed with his girlfriend and he fought them off. The extraterrestrials ran out of the house into the suburban Long Island night. First they raise his car like a toy, then they can’t manage just him. “My girlfriend didn’t wake up,” he said.

He told me his security clearance had been canceled by the government because he had openly talked about UFOs on a national TV show that had aired earlier in the year. Things were difficult for him now, he said, but he just couldn’t keep quiet about the whole UFO thing. Even though a friend of his who worked in intelligence had come over one night and told him it was very possible he could be killed.

As we talked, Uncle Bob kept glancing at a computer monitor. He had an extensive security hookup around his house. “I’m just going to be careful,” he said.

It was Uncle Bob who called the paper the day after John Ford was arrested. Unfortunately, I wasn’t in. I wouldn’t get to talk to him until just around the time I visited Ford in prison, in September, ‘97. Now we were on a real name basis.

Joe Zuppardo had had his own run-ins with the police.

Only a month after that long night in which I had talked to him five hours, while he had chain smoked and told me of the fantastical (I had suffered a severe asthma attack the next day; I guess a combination of cigarettes and the fire in the woods) he had gotten up one morning to feed his cat....

“I heard bam-bam-bam at the door. I open it and there are two policemen pointing guns at me – one of them pointing it straight into my eyes, two feet away, the other was crouched down and had a shotgun at my stomach. I was terrified. I had never been at gunpoint. I had never been in trouble with the police. I nearly defecated.

“There were fourteen to fifteen police cars outside. They handcuff me, parade me down the street. ‘Why do you want to kill yourself?’ they ask me.

“I said, ‘What are you talking about, that’s crazy.’ I was taken to Stony Brook and examined by three doctors.”

Earlier, Zuppardo had received a phone call from someone soliciting for a charity. The police said they had gotten an out of state call from a party saying he had talked to someone who was suicidal. “I heard the recording of the tape,” Joe said. “It was just an 800 number; you just heard a one sided conversation. You heard the other guy’s voice,

not mine. He had a southern accent. Some of what he was saying could've been related to me."

Zuppardo apparently convinced the shrinks and the police he wasn't a risk to himself and went home.

"I got a copy of that tape later and had it analyzed. It seemed like it had been complied. There was no time code on it, not date. It had been clearly turned off and on."

A little over two years later, July 4, 1996, three weeks after the arrest of John Ford, the police showed up at Joe Zuppardo's door again.

"It was about eleven o'clock. I had just gotten up. I was barely awake. The kid next door had come over to mow my lawn. And suddenly there are fifteen police cars and twenty to twenty five officers surrounding the house. They told me someone had complained of fireworks. So they send the entire precinct there? I mean, there was the D.A.'s office, the bomb squad.

"They had no warrant but one cop walked straight into the living room. I'll tell you what they found: two model rockets that I got in the hobby shop in town, that any kid could walk in and buy. I had worked at the Vanderbilt Planetarium, giving model rocket demonstrations for the kids.

"The kid who had come to mow my lawn told me he saw two officers walk to one of the police cars, take out a bag with Roman candles sticking out of it, and bring it into my house.

"They brought me in to the police station just after eleven; I didn't get home until 9: 45 that night."

Zuppardo knew, he said, they had been looking for a tape he had made of police conversations on the night John Ford was arrested.

He had altered a scanner to pick up a wider range of frequencies. He claims he heard "Two detectives, saying so-and-so better get that warrant to a certain judge 'until he's too drunk to sign it.'" The judge about to be inebriated did not, apparently, sign the warrant, which was authorized by Justice Patrick Henry, based on affidavit by Detective Robert Morrell of the Suffolk County Police Department.

"If I were setting out to kill someone I wouldn't pick a poison that was so slow."

"In the name of the People of the State of New York.... You are therefore commanded, at any time of the day or night without giving notice of your authority, to seize and make a search...for the following property: handguns, bullet proof vests, criminal histories, containers of radioactive materials, Geiger counter, a list of individuals to be murdered

including John Powell and James Catterson Jr., rifles and assault weapons and a nightscope."

In Detective Morrell's "Application and Affidavit for Search Warrant," a police informant had provided information on "a conspiracy to murder public officials in Suffolk County," and goes on to state that the previous week the informant "introduced an undercover officer to an individual who sold that undercover officer a handgun. The informant reveals the handgun originally was provided to an individual identified as Joseph Mazzuchelli for the purpose of murdering public officials. Mazzuchelli instead gave the handgun to a person identified as Arthur Riva to sell."

The handgun was legally registered to John Ford. Ford would later describe how Mazzuchelli, besides borrowing money and vehicles, stole property from Ford's house, including a gun.

Morrell goes on to state that on the day of his application, the informant announced he had information about the use of radioactive material in this plot – and provided the authorities with a sample.

"An analysis of physicists working for the United States department of Energy reveals the material is in fact radioactive. Those individuals also indicate the radioactivity is of a low level and access to such material is not necessarily restricted. Among the items examined is material which is used to ensure that Geiger counters are properly functioning."

"I was part of the team that was called in that night," said Health Physicist Alan Koehner of Brookhaven National Laboratory. The lab's Radiological Assistance Program, or RAP team, oversees eleven northeastern states and the District of Columbia, responding to calls as diverse as finding the radioactive material that had been discovered at a metal shredder in a recycling facility in Pennsylvania and the darkly comic incident in which a New Jersey sixteen year old found two tritium powered Exit signs among the debris of a demolished building and took them apart while he was having a snack in his bedroom.

"I think there were about five of us there that night. The lab got the call about one in the morning. We were there about an hour and a half later. There were five canisters," which had been found in Ford's Mazda pickup. "Two of them had radium. They were transferred to the Radiological Unit at Stony Brook University."

The D.A.'s office had said the police had called the BNL Rap Team to Ford's house – after they had arrested and removed Ford and Mazzuchelli – to determine just how radioactive was the radium Ford in Ford's possession. On the other hand, based on the information in Morrell's Affidavit, they already had an idea of how potent was the radium, if not the quantity.

And just how potent was it? The D.A.'s office isn't giving out that information. "There still may be a trial," said D.A. Information Officer Drew Biondo when he was asked in October of '97. Attempts to get his information through Brookhaven Lab were also unsuccessful. Mona Rowe, Director of Media Relations, said that the head of the RAP team has been specifically told by the DA's office not to release just how radioactive that radium was.

Alan Koehner did say, "The amount Ford had was between a lot and a little."

When asked just how dangerous radium was as compared to other radioactive elements, he gave this analogy: "If you step off an eight story building you will have a health effect immediately. But if you step off a height one thousandth of that, which is an inch, 99.99 percent of the time nothing will happen, and then that one time out of a thousand someone will stumble and 99.99 percent of the time nothing will come of it, but there will be one remote case where someone will stumble, hit their head and get a blood clot and die.

"If I were setting out to kill someone I wouldn't pick a poison that was so slow. Of course, if an individual was exposed to minute doses over a period of time, it would increase the likelihood of that person getting cancer – but it wouldn't guarantee it."

Then there were the "criminal histories." In the summer of '96, in the weeks following Ford's arrest, the D.A.'s office would make no comment on what this meant. John Rouse, Ford's lawyer, said, "This would mean a rap sheet. As if they thought Ford had some dirt on someone."

For whatever reason, a year later, in the summer of '97, Biondo of the D.A.'s office freely said that "criminal histories" meant "The police were trying to find if Ford had certain information about certain parties or had access to that information." What that information was, the D.A.'s office wasn't about to say.

I also note Biondo telling me in the summer of '96 that the police had learned of the murder conspiracy, had sought a warrant arrested Ford and Mazzuchelli within "six hours." The police did not have Ford under surveillance for any length of time, Biondo said. Yet Morrell's "Affidavit" indicates that that informant came up with the "conspiracy last week," related to the matter of the gun sale and that the police had then traced the gun to Ford. Biondo might very well have been referring to the informant coming to the police the day of the application for the warrant with the news of the radium cache.

The list of what was taken from Ford's house numbers 56 items, from various types of weapons (Colt .223 caliber rifle, Beretta .380 caliber, semi automatic, Smith and Wesson .38 caliber revolver, box of assorted ammo) to a gas mask and three night sticks to "Box of assorted paperwork - Bedroom #3" and "Survey radioactive meter - Bedroom #2."

Ford contends that the police took a good deal of the UFO organization's files. "What belonged to LIUFON was not on the warrant, only what belonged to me," said Ford. "So they had no right to take it. LIUFON has a case against them."

The D.A.'s office, via Drew Biondo: "The warrant was for paperwork in Ford's possession, as those files were."

And then there was something quite interesting about the date of the warrant: June 14, 1996. John Ford was arrested and his house searched on the night of June 12, 1996.

"...the Montauk Project was 'a battle between light and dark, good and evil.'"

It was Preston Nichols who first told me about the wrong date on the warrant. "I went into John's house three days later to get John's birds and I found a copy of the warrant on the refrigerator."

It was a hot Sunday night at the end of July, 1996, when I heard a voice calling from the driveway at the office. It was nearly midnight. I was often there late on Sundays that summer. I went outside and there was the large form of Preston Nichols holding the white pages of a copy of the warrant.

The more I researched the story of John Ford, his past and character, I found a labyrinth that was by no means clear. And, as I've said, often at the side or center of that labyrinth, seeming to influence events by the fact of his presence (there's a tenet of quantum mechanics that says all observable results are influenced by the presence of the observer), was Preston Nichols. The Jeremiah of the Montauk Project, that super secret undertaking that grew directly out of the invisibility attempts of the Philadelphia Experiment of 1943, that had evolved into post war-America's attempt at mind control, psychotronics and every fantastical endeavor of not just technology but the human spirit – so that Nichols would tell an audience in Amagansett one night in August of the summer of the arrest of John Ford that the Montauk Project was "a battle between light and dark, good and evil"; that the Project had attempted such blasphemies as taking the psychic stuff out of human beings and putting this disrupted identity in children, that it had kidnapped youths, broken their spirit with brutal, evil methods and used these "Montauk Boys" as a standing, waiting army for...well, perhaps what's most unspoken and most darkest in the center of the human heart. There was the time the Project sent someone back in time to "get the blood of Christ," obviously for some vile purpose. But when confronting the Holy One the time traveller was awed and could not carry out the mission, but instead returned to the timeless morass of the Project that "crashed" on the night of August 12, 1983 (exactly 40 years after the Philadelphia Experiment), The Night of the Beast, a psychic Beast from the mind of one of the participants, the night Preston Nichols ripped out wires to bring down the psychotronics and the metaphysical Tower of

Babel slumped into muteness...only to be resurrected, perhaps in the way the Roman Empire spluttered along in the days after the Vandals and Goths, so that there are those besides Nichols who insist in that in the seven layers (the reverse of the legendary seven levels of Heaven?) or so under Montauk there still exist nefarious goings-on, and Montaukers claim to see boulders come out of the sides of the cliffs along the beach, evidence that the underground is still being quarried, and visitors to the supposedly decommissioned base at Camp Hero, not far from the Montuak Light house that George Washington commissioned in 1796, are warned by unidentified personnel (sometimes armed personnel) to stay off the premises.

Nichols says his memories of the Project were erased; then, through the second half of the of '80s, recovered. In the '90s he co-authored three books on the Project with Peter Moon, outlining the nuts and bolts and esoterica of the Project (which Nichols once said was no more than a way station in a megaProject whose scope was beyond us). In 1997 Moon published a fourth he wrote alone, detailing the Nazi connection to the Project. After all, it was the divided remnant of the Nazi scientists who got us and the Soviets into space, so it would be natural the scattered minions of the Fuhrer would be involved in America's more dark and secret sciences.

These books are read: In local libraries there is a long waiting list for them. The library in Montauk says the first book in the series is the most frequently stolen book they have. At any rate, on Long Island, especially on the East End, the Montauk Project has taken on the aura and colloquial passion of an urban legend. Once, as Southampton College, after a lecture about how unmanned and manned missions to Mars might be conducted in the near future, I overheard someone ask the speaker about the so-called faces on Mars. Striking up a conversation with this individual who related he had a copy of a video that NASA had made of UFOs that had dogged orbital flights, I asked him what he thought of the Montauk Project. His response was. "I keep away from that. I want to stay alive."

Drive out there, to land's end, and way before you reached the base, you see the looming, ageing structure of the radar tower. The area's natives remember how in the '60s there would be regular pulses of interference from the tower on TVs, radios and telephones. A young woman I work with knows four self-proclaimed Montauk Boys, troubled youths to put it mildly, their psyches being brutally tampered by the government's devil work. In exchange for the degradation they receive some sort of power. One Montauk Boy says he went back in time and helped to create the Milky Way. Hearsay has it that Preston Nichols works with these boys, that he is somehow able to interrupt the Project's control over them. In the drama of John Ford, Nichols seemed a figure not unlike Conrad's Kurtz in the Heart of Darkness: one enters a strangely peopled, half unexplored region and the stories filter back, down river, and one senses the

most disparate events are somehow connected to a man who on the surface shows no link to this or that, but then I can't begin to count the times individuals have told me, "Ask Preston," or "Preston can fill you in" or "It was Preston's contact or "Preston has the tape," etc.

"I thought we'd opened up the time portal at Montauk to God knows where."

So he sat before me, that hot summer midnight, his hands resting on his large belly, something about his face and the cut of short hair reminding me of popular depictions of the emperor Nero, a likeness I had first noted when I had seen Nichols on TV in a segment about the Philadelphia Experiment. Talk of John Ford flowed into this whole business about the wildfires.

"The story goes like this," he said. "I went out east to meet a friend of mine that Thursday the fires started. I was at Montauk, listening for signals, in the parking lot of the Montauk Lighthouse." Nichols has a van that is filled with electronic equipment." "A police car pulled up and an officer said, "Mr. Nichols, some government officials want to meet with you. I locked the van up, got into his car. I was brought into town."

Nichols said that in the only "skyscraper" in Montauk, the five story building that developer Carl Fisher had erected in the 1920s (to turn Montauk into the next Miami Beach, the subtropical swampland Fisher had transformed), he met with a Colonel John Grabreski, "the son of the man the airport in Westhampton was named after," and two scientists, who asked him Why did the particle feeder blow up?"

Nichols has long contended that rings of particle beam accelerators lie underground not only at Montauk, but in the Pine Barrens, at Brookhaven Lab and at other sites. These devices accelerate subatomic particles that, among other things, can be directed at aircraft to destroy electronic systems. I had this conversation with Nichols not long after Flight 800 had come down out of the sky (in the same area of the UFO that was said to have come down in Moriches Bay in 1989). The following year Nichols would say that if you checked the avionics report of Flight 800, that is, the condition of the electronics that had been recovered, it would be consistent with the plane being hit by a particle beam.

"I thought they were referring to what happened in Rocky Point," said Nichols of what he had been asked by the scientists in Montauk. Only days before the fire that came down along Route 51 in Riverhead and leapt over Sunrise Highway in Westhampton, there had been a huge fire in Rocky Point that had made the kind of headlines only the Sunrise Fires would overshadow.

Nichols had attributed the Rocky Point Fire to a particle beam system that ran under the old RCA site – and which was linked, eastward, to Route 51 and, further east, to Montauk.

“They were very friendly,” Nichols said. “Three times they tried to recruit me, ask me to work for the government again. This colonel had taken me to dinner once. He wanted to convince me I should come back to work for the Project.

“I got home at four in the morning. My father was watching News 12 – about the fire. For 24 hours they couldn’t touch the fire. When an accelerator breaks its vessel it can release a white glowing plasma; it’s highly ionized, like ball lightning: 4000 Centigrade and up. It melts metal. If you look at the pattern of the fire from the air, it was like a LINIAC.

“Well, on TV there was a group of federal fire fighters disembarking from a bus in Eastport. They had strange uniforms. They were black. On the chest was a white triangle with something like a stylized craft in reddish yellow, you could call it a UFO, intersecting the triangle at one side. And among the firefighters I recognized a guy I used to work with – but he looked at least ten years younger. And then my father points to another fire fighter and says, ‘That’s you.’ And it did look like me, a lot younger.

“We taped this off the TV and played it back for a friend who said it was definitely me, but much younger.

“Sunday I went out to where they had been fighting the fire and I saw these firefighters with the uniforms; they were a special Delta Force. I walked into the woods – and I saw myself. Myself younger. As I approached myself I got disoriented, dizzy. I saw myself run into the woods. The next thing I knew a deputy sheriff had his hand on my shoulder and was reading me the riot act. I had to leave.”

Nichols said this in the most believable manner. He might have been telling you he had gone to the store to buy a loaf of bread. “The told us in the Montauk Project, if you see yourself in the future, run. I guess that proved that old bucket of bolts, the time machine worked.”

Nichols said he secured the help of a hypnotherapist. “After a few weeks, the recollection came back to me. I was on a team that recovered a 120-foot object. From Montauk in 1972 we were sent to 1981 then to 1995 to recover the crashed UFO, then brought it back to ‘72.

“John and I started to look for the crash site. He would call me up, talk in code: ‘Let’s out and look at our favorite place.’ He would talk in code a lot. It could drive you crazy.”

Because he and Ford had been investigating that UFO crash, Nichols said, their lives had been threatened. Nichols found the lugs nuts on his van loosened. And he was in an accident he termed suspicious. Near his house he was hit while making a left turn. “The guy that hit me supposedly had his wife and two babies in the car. He came out, waving a

tire iron at me. But a neighbor of mine who saw the whole thing said the woman and the babies were taken out of a car that was behind the one that hit me.

“A week later, when I went out to the van, a book of road maps was opened to where the fires were and on it were spots of blood. Twelve spots. I had the blood tested; three spots were mine, nine weren’t. It was obviously a warning. I don’t know where they couldn’t gotten my blood.”

He added, “At that point I had actually stopped investigating the fires; there seemed nothing further to be learned.” Nicholas admitted that the “warnings” were also a factor in “backing off.”

Looking over my notes of that conversation a year and a season afterward, I see something I had forgotten, which Nichols had told me off the record. I can relate it now; John Ford has made it very public.

“John thinks Mazzuchelli is an agent for a foreign government.”

In a little while Preston Nichols went off into the hot night, leaving me with the fantastical so calmly told. In my notes I also find him saying: “I thought we’d opened up the time portal at Montauk to God knows where.”

“But now he feels they – the intelligence community – have abandoned him.”

“Back in time to the night of John Ford’s arrest. Joe Zuppardo’s homebuilt listening device is honing in on, he says, conversations between Joe Mazzuchelli and the Rackets Bureau.

“Mazzuchelli is using John’s cell phone.” Zuppardo says this can be ascertained because each cell phone has an electronic signature that can be determined from the tape he made of these conversations.

“I knew something was going to come down that night. News 12 was told to come to John’s house. They got there before the cops. I kept calling John’s number, but it seemed as if someone kept picking up the phone and hanging up.”

At first Joseph Mazzuchelli, whom Newsday would describe as “a wiry, tattooed hot-rodder,” seemed no more than a peripheral, shady character, but Ford’s letters from the Riverhead jail more than a year after his arrest would outline a Mazzuchelli that was wholly in the center of events, in fact the instigator of events.

At the end of the summer of ‘97 Peter Moon and Preston Nichols visit Ford in Riverhead. In June, a year after his arrest, two court-appointed shrinks found Ford incompetent to stand trial,

Nicholas Aiello, a psychologist writes: “He appeared to have more than average intelligence. However, much of his discussion involving the alleged charges were delusional in nature. There was also strong paranoid, grandiose and obsessive-compulsive features. His thinking was circumstantial. He is likely to be a hostile, angry person.”

The diagnosis was: “Major depression with psychotic features.

“Prognosis: Guarded.”

Psychiatrist Navin Shah: “He was circumstantial. Mood was depressed and affect was constricted. He was delusional. Denied suicidal-homicidal ideas or hallucinations.

“Diagnosis: Major Depression, single episode with psychosis.

“Prognosis: Good with treatment.”

Moon called me up to tell me about the visit. “John said a lot of startling things. He said he was recruited by the CIA in college. He was very emotional; he broke down and cried. He said he has done work for the CIA for years – and has kept it secret from everyone. ‘I did it for love of country,’ he said. But now he feels they – the intelligence community – has abandoned him. But then he also claims to have ties the Mossad. That he is an official citizen of Israel going back to the age of six. He believes if he goes to trial the Mossad is going to show up with evidence to exonerate him. The intelligence community is very involved in this case. He says he is going to write you in detail about all of this.”

The CIA? The Mossad?

Soon afterward, the letters came – more than a hundred pages: John Ford’s story.

The Letters of John Ford

“The information I have given is the truth to the best of my recollection so help me God.”

“I hereby and publicly declare to the news media of Long Island that I, John Ford, have had ties to the Central Intelligence Agency....”

The last week of August, the letter arrived: seven handwritten pages from a yellow legal pad. It was headlined "My Statement to the Media, Part One." It would be the first of five such "statements," each handwritten on the same yellow legal paper, each longer than the previous one, in all totalling 102 pages.

"...I, John Ford, have had ties to the Central Intelligence Agency since the age of 19 when I was recruited to work for them in both counter-intelligence and para-military operations against the Soviet KGB.... I was recruited to observe and report on the activities of several Soviet KGB agents who were by the way close personal friends of mine in college at St. John's University in Jamaica, Queens.

"For some 22 years I led a double life during most of my career as a court officer for New York State. During my spare time and on arranged leaves of absence I would help

and assist in the execution of intelligence operations against Domestic operations of the Soviet KGB in the New York metropolitan area."

"For some 12 years I undertook these duties so carefully and precisely that the KGB didn't realize I was working for the CIA until an accidental disclosure....

"During this period the KGB launched a total of five assassination attempts on my life. I am one of the few people in the CIA whose death was orchestrated, planned and executed from the headquarters of the KGB in Moscow at Lubyanka Prison.... Five times they failed. There are five dead Russians buried in cemeteries in Brooklyn and Queens who never made it to their objective. The Russians began to refer to me as the Fox after these attempts."

Ford claimed to have worked on overseas assignments as well. "Many Americans were involved and unselfishly sacrificed their lives in the cause of freedom overseas. Many were friends of mine who never came back, who died in faraway places unburied and unrecognized. They were the Silent Warriors of the Cold War, the CIA's best....

"During the course of my involvement with the CIA I never asked to be paid for any of my services. I could have been a wealthy man, but my interest was not money. My calling was Patriotism, the love of my country....

Because of this there is no employment record of me with the CIA...."

"I worked for the Northeast Director of Clandestine Operations directly, not for the CIA at Langley. This was because in the 1970s and 1980s we knew the existence of Soviet KGB moles in the CIA....

"I can proudly say that in Ronald Reagan's first run for the Presidency I personally stopped a KGB penetration of the National Reagan for President Committee which could have placed Reagan in extreme danger.... This was never reported to Reagan who remains ignorant of the past danger to this present day.

"Nor did I ever tell anyone of my efforts to either friend or family. I never told friend, family or co-workers of my secret life. My father died without ever knowing. My mother died of cancer who I nursed for three and a half years was never told. I let her die in peace without worrying about my safety. Neither brother, sister, cousin, neice or nephew ever knew. I was a well disciplined agent who never broke security. I do so now because I am not a murderer or planned any murders. Rather I was the victim of well planned executions directed and planned from the office of Majestic 12...."

In the early 1980s, documents apparently once top secret came to light – one discovered in government archives – revealing that because of the UFO that crashed at Roswell, New Mexico, in July, 1947, a super-secret group, Majestic 12 (code name "MAJIC") was set up by President Truman to investigate this and any other "recovered

discs" that the government found. Not surprisingly, the authenticity of the documents is still debated, even among those in the pro-UFO camp.

In July, 1997, with the 50th anniversary of the alleged UFO crash and retrieval, Roswell was a UFO Woodstock, to which true believers thronged and where they could take bus tours out to the crash site as well as visit the International UFO Museum and Research Center that was established there in 1991. One of the founders of the museum is Lt. Walter Haut, the Public Relations Officer at the Roswell Army Air Field sent out the press release saying that a crashed UFO had been recovered. The military quickly amended that, stating the so-called flying disc was nothing more than the remains of a weather balloon. Mr. Haut – who is one of the founders of the UFO Museum – insists the first press release was true. Others in the military have eventually made similar declarations, notably Colonel Jesse Marcel, who in 1979, a few years before his death, stated that he had been the intelligence officer who had overseen the coverup of the crash of a genuine alien space craft – as well as the retrieval of extraterrestrial bodies.

In 1997, *The Day After Roswell* was published; its co-author, retired U.S. Army Colonel Philip Corso, claimed that during the early 1960s, in his role as Chief of the Army's Foreign Technology Division, he had access to the Roswell files. He details how the military cleverly farmed out the technology we were able to glean from the extraterrestrial craft to military contractors (never telling them the source of the technology) and that such contemporary commonplaces as lasers, fiber optics and night vision are the result of what was pulled off that otherworldly wreckage. Oh, and then there was the particle beam device. It was the first time I had ever seen in discussed outside of Preston Nichols and Peter Moon.

Curso went on to say that the Cold War was not merely a state of suspicion of and readiness against the Soviets, but that both the U.S. and the USSR had to be prepared for hostilities with aliens. Stars Wars was meant to not only stop a Soviet attack but an extraterrestrial one.

In his book Corso never uses the name "Majestic 12," but clearly refers to such an organization as the "working group," naming as its members a few of those who are also named in the Majestic 12 documents, such as Defense Secretary James Forrestal and Central Intelligence Director Admiral Roscoe H. Hillenkotter. (Forrestal committed suicide in May, 1947. Legend has it he went crazy, and shortly before his death was running up and down a hospital corridor shouting, "The Russians are coming, the Martians are coming!")

Curso also said that as a young soldier in 1947 he saw one of the alien bodies – in storage at Fort Riley – from the Roswell wreckage.

"The game was afoot, who or what lay ahead for me?"

Ford said he retired from the CIA in 1984. He and Richard Stout founded the Long Island UFO Network (LIUFON) in 1988, "as a result of my lifelong interest in the subject of UFOs..it kept my talents tuned and sharpened. It was fun to challenge the government's cover-up. My CIA past never played a part in my research until 1995."

Ford claims that May he was visited by the Northeast Director of Clandestine Operations, who warned him he "had ruffled many a feather" because of the Southaven Park UFO crash," and "to be careful and not to trust anybody, that I could be in grave danger."

That summer, Ford wrote, "I needed a rest from the three years of nursing my invalid mother...." She was now in a nursing home, where she would die in November. Ford took a cruise in the western Caribbean on the Majesty of the Seas.

He found it suspicious that at the last minute his stateroom was changed and that during the first day his luggage "disappeared only to turn up at midnight...opened and laying on the bed in the cabin....

"The game was afoot, who or what lay ahead for me?"

At dinner, Ford becomes convinced that those seated at the table with him were from the Mossad and that a British couple were M-15. "I knew by the end of the cruise I was under trained observation...but for what reason?

"When I returned to New York that week, the forest fires on the East End began....

"How was I to know and anticipate that old comrades and new friends would harken me to call for duty once more.... How could I turn the offer down by an obscure auto mechanic with a curious background...?

"The court says I am not competent based on these statements. Are they the ravings of a madman or the writings of a patriot and master spy?"

Ford closes with the refrain from The X-Files: "The truth is out there...."

Soon afterward Peter Moon would say to me: "I used to think John Ford was just your typical running around UFO kind of guy. Now I'm beginning to feel he is as many layered as Preston Nichols."

...fin de sicele, millennial...apocalyptic...Victorian

A second letter followed within days. In it and the subsequent letters the characters about Ford begin to emerge and often with engaging or sentimental or naive twists of description. The letters read like a magazine serial from the era of Dickens – relating the "Great Expectations" of one John Ford, a sincere honest man caught in a web of skullduggery. In fact, there was more than a little literary exposition therein. Ford's use of "the game's afoot," the oft-uttered phrase of Sherlock Holmes, would occur several times

in the letters. The second letter commences with: "It began as a phone call from a dear friend..."

If the adventure on which we, via the beleaguered Mr. Ford, are about to embark is wholly fin de siècle, millennial, indeed, apocalyptic, portraying of aliens and government conspiracies, its tone is virtually Victorian. There is Right and Wrong. Good and Evil.

The "dear friend" is Joseph Zuppardo, "with whom I always spent a Friday night watching *The Outer Limits*..." Thus we see John Ford, gentleman and scholar, the seeker of cosmic mysteries (like Wells' Time Traveller) taking both relaxation and the stimulation of his adventuresome mind with a companion in a setting that is not quite the gentleman's club in which Mycroft Holmes (Sherlock's brother) might take his leisure, yet may be its counterpart in spirit.

"I arrived at Zuppardo's door and was ushered in..." As the TV series from the early '60s was about to begin, Ford was introduced to an old friend of Zuppardo's: Joseph Mazzuchelli: "a balding, fortyish, thin built man.

"The evening's entertainment began and ended with the airing of an exceptionally interesting episode which soon caused all present to lapse into friendly conversation. Mazzuchelli and Zuppardo, life long friends, began recounting their humorous Tom Sawyerish and Huckleberry Finn adventures growing up in suburbia."

The upshot of the evening was that Mazzuchelli asked to join LIUFON. Ford would pass on to him a member's application. "My departure marked the end of an enjoyable evening, but events would mark this as an omen of things to come."

It was early in the year of 1996.

Ford then recounts a suspicious accident suffered by Preston Nichols in September, 1995 and the warnings of a retired Air Force Intelligence Lt. Colonel "referred to as Dan": Nichols had been the target of an assassination attempt, and that he, Preston, should pass on the warning to John Ford.

"...a craving for his delicious pizza."

"It was Thanksgiving and I was on Patchogue-Yaphank Road. I was intent on shopping at Edwards to complete the items necessary for the Thanksgiving feast for tomorrow. It was only a few weeks after the death of my mother and was to be the first Thanksgiving without her...."

As Ford in his Mazda pickup was making a left, a jeep jumped the red light and almost rammed Ford, who watched it disappear "north toward Yaphank.

"I was left with the distinct impression that an attempt on my life had occurred. I was shaken up but lucky to be alive...cursed the driver of the errant vehicle as I resumed my

trip to Edwards to pick up the stuffing for the turkey. This was the first of many disturbing events."

The next holiday finds Ford resuming prosaic tasks and encountering mysterious dangers. "It was the Xmas Eve of 1995. It marked the first Xmas without my mother, who died on Nov. 3. I was in Riverhead at Caldor's shopping Plaza doing last minute shopping for my three Wire Haired Terrier dogs (all males) whom I rescued from the pound and adopted. My objective was to locate pillow beds for all the dogs who I referred to as the Boys. I was driving my 1981 Chevette sedan which I kept in tip top mechanical operation."

Ford bought the pillows and then indulged his own needs: "a visit to Sergio's Pizza Parlor in the plaza satisfied a craving for his delicious pizza."

Beginning the trip home westward on Route 58, Ford says his steering suddenly went out of control, nearly sending him into a stand of pine trees. He managed to drive home "down Route 51 South and west on Sunrise at a slow speed of 25mph and carefully aligning the steering wheel." A mechanic later told Ford it seemed as if the rack and pinion had been intentionally damaged.

In October of 1995 Ford said he recieved a call from a couple who were LIUFON members, Gary and Dorothy Tritt of Ronkonkoma, "Trained profesional hypnotists and quite the reserved, profesional type." A receptionist they had employed, Patty McDonald, had related to them a car dealer named Steven Ferrar had told her that on August 20, 1995, he had been "dirt biking in the woods near Suffolk Community College outside Riverhead."

Ferrar allegedly discovered a "circular object shaped like a classic flying saucer and showed very little damage. The heat coming from the object was very intense and had already caused little fires in the area adjacent to the crash site."

Ferrar's brother-in-law lived nearby – and was an FBI agent. When Ferrar returned with him the military had already arrived – by helicopter.

Ford says that at his urging, Steve Wick of Newsday had called Steven Ferrar, but the latter "Produced a negative reply" to the question of the UFO crash. "He did admit to having a brother-in-law in the FBI," Ford wrote.

Patty McDonald had met Steven Ferrar because he had witnessed her in a car accident and, being a car dealer, had given her his car. He supposedly revealed the above to her when she purchased a car from him, "Only to have it destroyed in another rear end accident. She then bought a new Celica."

But on New Year's Eve, 1995 she and her fiancé were "rear ended and forced off the road while travelling North on Nichols road by a Pontiac Firebird which also went off the road. The driver exited the Firebird and raced away and was never caught."

After this accident and after making a tape for the Tritts relating what Ferrar had told her, Partty McDonald "disappeared from sight." At the jail Ford had said to me, "She and her boyfriend began to feel that someone was out to get them."

Keeping in the vein of possible malfeasance by automobile, Ford wrote that on the first trip he and Preson Nichols made to the crash site, "the right front tire on Preston's van almost came off..." The bolts had been loosened and were rolling about in the hubcap.

Ford ends the letter by tersely describing several more ominous events:

Steve Iavarone, Vice President of LIUFON reported that summer "strange men in his backyard and on occasion they would appear peering into his livingroom and bedroom windows."

A recent conversation with Iavarone confirmed this. He also mentioned the threatening messages on his answering machines. "One was a strange voice, called me by name, told me to back off Southaven Park. 'Somebody thinks you have something that somebody wants.' That I should hide and run. Then there was the mechanical voice that said, "We know who you are, we know what you do, where you go."

Ford said that summer of 1995 at least three times he had returned home from visiting his mother to find that the security company for his alarm system had left messages on his answering machine. The alarm had been activated and turned off.

In May, 1995 Frank Sydor of Southold called LUIFON to claim that on the night of the Southaven Park Crash "he had overheard Southold Town Police report that a large UFO was seen over Peconic Bay.... In October, 1995, Frank Sydor was found dead in his bed. He was dead more than a month. The police stated he had fallen in his bath and died in bed from a brain concussion. If he had had a severe concussion, how did he make it to the bed. The autopsy results have been sealed."

Ford also adds the mysterious deaths of three investigators from the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON) and the suspicious car accident suffered by Tony DiTata, a LIUFON investigator, two days before Ford's arrest.

...an old biker buddy named Rocket had witnessed the Southaven Park crash

"Along Comes Mazzuchelli and the Israelis." So began Ford's third letter. It is February, 1996. Joseph Mazuchelli comes by John Ford's house to drop off his LIUFON application. "...the three dogs greeted him with a chorus of barking." At this meeting and

throughout the remainder of the winter, Mazzuchelli would insinuate himself more and more into Ford's life and paint for himself the following background:

A Special Forces Black Beret Marine in Vietnam, a martial arts master who studied in Japan and a member of the Pagan motorcycle gang. He had lived as "an outlaw biker."

He also told Ford he had had many brushes with the law, and once spent three years in prison. And he also claimed friends in law enforcement – and the mob. His uncle Mike was a big man in the Columbo crime family.

"I could tell he was a bullshit artist who had a penchant to lie," Ford writes, then adds: "I also sensed he was something other than what he was."

Ford meets Mazzuchelli's friend, Sal. The three have lunch several times in the dinner in Manorville on Country Road 111. Sal worked for a photocopying company in Mastic. "They were both divorcees who had lost everything. Joe and Sal were rooming together at "one of Joe's old girl friend's home.

It was in February that Mazzuchelli told Ford that an old biker buddy named Rocket had witnessed the Southaven Park crash. Mazzuchelli could get Rocket to make a statement when Rocket returned from being out of town. While Ford waited for this eye witness report, Mazzuchelli and Sal borrowed Ford's Mazda pickup for a trip to Tennessee to retrieve the possession of Mazzuchelli's current girlfriend from the woman's ex-boyfriend.

It was the beginning of Mazzuchelli using Ford, using Ford's desire for UFO information, using Ford's possessions and, soon, his money.

Mazzuchelli calls from Tennessee to say Rocket will meet with Ford at the Manorville diner on the 23rd. That morning Mazzuchelli calls to say everything is cancelled. Coming back to Long Island, Mazzuchelli had been forced off the road at an LIE entrance ramp. Four men jumped out of a car, dragged Mazzuchelli out of the pickup and beat him. "Stay out of our business or the next time we'll kill you!"

Ford is convinced the beating was meant for him, as Mazzuchelli was driving Ford's pickup. Mazzuchelli, "in a state of rage," said his Uncle Mike would get the four men. Mazzuchelli agrees to go to a LIUFON meeting to relate the incident, but walks out before he is to talk. Ford is embarrassed and disturbed by Mazzuchelli, but when he visits again, Ford writes: "Mazzuchelli came by and continued his harangue about seeking revenge.... He also talked about having his uncle having them killed. His talk repulsed me so that I politely asked him to leave my house."

Preston Nichol's intelligence contact came up with the names of four "goons" who supposedly had connections to Brookhaven Lab. Ford calls them up, pretends he is a salesman, and finds out that each of these individuals is retired, elderly "and not likely to chase cars off the road and beat people up."

The Northeast Director of Clandestine Operations informs Ford that in regards to the foursome “he had reached a dead end” and that “he would see to it that protection is on its way. What did he mean by that?”

Mazzuchelli is arrested as the result of a 1992 warrant for burglary – “which he says he didn’t do.” He pleads with Ford to raise \$1000 in bail; he is at the country jail in Yaphank: “....he was afraid he would be killed.” Ford and Nichols raise the bail.

At a subsequent LIUFON meeting Mazzuchelli is supposed to tell the members about the beating, but “When he was supposed to speak he got up and left the room, embarrassing me in front of everyone.”

In March Mazzuchelli and Sal drop by to say Uncle Mike wants to meet John “and thank me for helping to watch out for Joe.” The next night a limo would pick Ford up and take him to Uncle’s Mike’s house in Brooklyn. Nichols and Iavarone express their concern – but the following night no limo shows up. Mazzuchelli explains his uncle is under surveillance by the feds and had to cancel. The meeting was never rescheduled. “Also, his friend Rocket had disappeared to a bike rally in Florida....”

When Mazzuchelli comes by again he tells Ford that Uncle Mike found out the four men had definitely been hired to beat up John and were on the payroll of Brookhaven Town. But not to worry: Uncle Mike would take care of things; a few days later Mazzuchelli informs Ford Uncle Mike has, indeed, taken care of business. “I felt sickened and repulsed at the way Mazzuchelli revelled in the thought of violence.”

When Mazzuchelli comes over again he tells Ford he knows that latter does “not approve of his uncle’s family. I agreed with him on that.”

“He said it was a test to see if I would involve myself in criminal activity. He said I had a very strong moral character.”

And then Mazzuchelli tells Ford: “I am a Lt. Colonel in Israeli intelligence (the Mossad) and we have been waiting five years to make contact and enlist you and LIUFON in a 41 nation intelligence task force to overthrow the U.S. government’s UFO coverup.

“I was speechless I was stunned. Now everything began to fit.”

At the Riverhead jail I leaned into the plexiglass and said to Ford, “Just how did Mazzuchelli prove his claims to you?”

“He knew the names of my CIA colleagues and the name of the Northeast Director.”

“...through the UFO abduction process they have infiltrated the government 8-10 percent.”

Mazzucehlli tells Ford he has been “targeted” because of the ‘95 Forest Fires. That “there was indeed a UFO crash that day” and that Suffolk County Executive Robert Gaffney and Suffolk County Republican leader John Powell and Brookhaven Chief Investigator Anthony Gazzola were involved in a scheme to set additional fire to not only cover up the crash of the UFO but burn tracts of land in the Pine Barrens so their owners would sell them more easily.

“I was told that Gaffney, Powell, D’Amato and Pataki had been taken to the crash site and had seen both ships and alien bodies.”

It didn’t stop at the level of senators and governors: “the White House had sent the request for assassinations up to Majestic-12 ...Vice President Gore had organized them through Commerce Secretary Brown’s direction.” Other UFO researchers were targeted. “Secretary Brown would later die in an air crash in Bosnia that year. It was retaliation by the anti-coverup forces for the assassinations. He was shot down...by a particle beam cannon.”

Israel and 40 other countries had banded together to blast through America’s UFO coverup. “In the past ten years there were three UFO crashes in Israel which led to the detection and presence of the Greys (big black-eyed aliens) on our world.

“There exists a treaty between the Greys and the U.S. government giving them leasing rights inside the U.S. where a technology exchange was to occur. The U.S. had welcomed them as friends but the aliens had their own agenda which included influencing human institutions to form a One World Government....through the UFO abduction process they had infiltrated the U.S. government 8-10%.” Apparently by unifying the world the aliens could more easily “dominate our planet which was their long term objective.”

“At this point Mazzuchelli turned to me and asked, ‘Will you join us? It is your last mission and it may well last 5 to 15 years or the rest of your life.’

John Ford could only say “Yes.”

“Fine,” he said. “You are now a Major in Israeli intelligence, you are an Israeli citizen back dated to your sixth birthday and as an agent of the Mossad you possess Diplomatic Immunity.”

Ford’s fourth statement to the media has Mazzuchelli picking up where he had left off. The Mossad would finance LIUFON “to the tune of between \$5.5 million and \$10 million.” Five Israeli agents had, over the past two years, settled in Ford’s development to offer protection. “He also told me that the Russians had one agent and his family in the development to keep an eye on me (I know who that person is.)”

As Mazzuchelli makes Ford seem wanted for both good and bad reasons by international forces, he raises his own worth. “He then said, ‘I am a master assassin with

close to 200 kills to my credit. I am a martial arts master and my hands are lethal weapons.’ He went on: “I will be your personal bodyguard during this whole operation.’

“After this conversation I was speechless and in a state of shock.”

“The Earth has less than seven years before they make themselves known.”

“The conversation swung back to the topic of the alien presence....The invasion was over except for the screaming.”

There was a sort of inter-species cold war between us and the aliens. We were shooting down some of their ships to garner technology, while “the aliens have established far greater number of bases on Earth” than the original treaty had called for; they had a base on “every major land mass on earth.” Hence the ire of the nations.

Majestic 12 at first had dealt with the aliens; but in time politicians and financiers have had their hand in the extraterrestrial kitty. “Such organizations as the Trilateral Commission, the Bilderburghs, the Council on Foreign Affairs...have entered into cooperating agreements with the aliens.”

The aliens have designated the continent of Africa as the site of their first major colony. AIDS and Ebola have been visited on these peoples to eliminate the human population. “Much of the political unrest in Africa...will continue...as political manipulation is carried out...that will be acceptable to the Alien presence.

There is a split in the military and intelligence communities over this. “The militia movements have been started by the military intelligence communities to...set up a nucleus of trained personnel for when the aliens make themselves known.

“We are slowly being conditioned and prepared for the event.”

That summer of Ford’s arrest Independence Day was a major hit, and for weeks I could not go to work without hearing somewhere on the dial of talk radio someone talking about UFOs, pro or con or in-between. A poll showed that 49 percent of the population believed that the government was covering up something about aliens. That fall, as The X-Files entered a season in which it would win an Emmy, another TV series, Dark Skies, attempted to make events in postwar America directly an outgrowth of Roswell and the nefariousness of Majestic 12. While some true believers applauded the fact that the truth that was “out there” seemed to be all over the place, others put a twist on the coverup. The government was making us ready for the alien presence.

When I spoke to Ford’s nephew who lived in Westbury, who told me of pleasant times visiting, going out to visit Uncle Jackie in Bellport, he added, “Rupert Murdoch owns Fox. So I can’t see something against the establishment coming out of that station.”

“The recent UFO sighting of a mile long object over Phoenix, Arizona is the beginning as such events will start occurring all around the world and in broad daylight and eventually in such a way that even the most skeptical will not doubt the existence of these craft.

“The Earth has less than seven years before they make themselves known.

“I have agreed to undertake a 15 to 25 year mission to help prepare and warn the people of the Alien mission.

“This is my last mission. I have accepted it for the good of my country and mankind. The present difficulties are only the beginning.

“Kennedy’s assassination was orchestrated and directed by Majestic 12.”

That evening there is more. Mazzuchelli returns with Sal. LIUFON would be able to tap into “the secret files of NORAD, the FBI and CIA.... We would be allowed 25 minutes access, but could not download the material.”

Mazzuchelli stressed to him how powerful Majestic 12 had become and told Ford “the heartbreaking story that John F. Kennedy’s assassination was orchestrated and directed by Majestic 12 because JFK found out about the coverup and that part of the CIA was “behind the sale of drugs to the American people in order to finance the Coverup and Alien Contact program.”

Ford adds: “It is an historic fact that days before Kennedy died he had signed an executive order removing control of covert operations from the CIA back to Army G2 intelligence. Three days after Kennedy’s death Johnson revoked the order.”

JFK had planned to announce the fact of the alien presence during his State of the Union address in January, 1964. But now, “since Kennedy’s death, every American President had had to live in fear” he too might meet “a similar fate.”

And yet...Nixon did reveal it – “to Jackie Gleason, by taking him to a classified location,” where the Great One saw “an alien space ship and the bodies of its crew.”

Ford adds: “Nixon’s Watergate problems were exacerbated by friends of the Majestic 12 Committee....”

“For the first time since I was a child I was genuinely frightened.”

“In addition, I was told that in several weeks a high level meeting between me and the Mossad would occur.... I would receive microfilms of hundreds of the secret documents of the UFO coverup...films of UFO recoveries, alien bodies, interiors of the ships...list of witnesses of the Southaven Park crash, all information on the 1989 Moriches Bay crash.”

And millions of dollars of credit would be available to LIUFON.

As he often finds himself with Mazzuchelli, Ford is in "stunned amazement." Like a man stricken with holy light, he asks why he and LUIFON "were chosen" ?

He was told: "My history of prior intelligence work...my 21 year background as a Court officer...record for valor and courage (2 medals of valor and 3 meritorious service awards)...my activity in local politics...my reputation for honesty.... I was the sturdy, reliable pillar of the community that they were looking for."

After this meeting with Joe and Sal, Ford goes upstairs to his "gun safe and removed several of my handguns. I hadn't carried a gun (even though I had a full carry permit) since I had had left my job as a court officer. Wherever I went I had at least two guns on me at all times. For the first time since I was a child I am genuinely frightened."

Mazzuchelli makes sure Ford stays frightened. He is plied with tales of assassination: "About two years before this, Anthony Gazzola on request of John Powell approached Mazzuchelli to have me killed...." The Mossad tells "double-triple agent" Mazzuchelli to stay out of it.

"She was found wandering stark naked in the Arizona desert...."

Before Mazzucehlli's revelations, Ford gets a call from a lawyer representing a man named Arthur Warren Klein who wants to speak to Ford about "A UFO incident involving his granddaughter. The attorney said Mr. Klien was a very wealthy financier who was referred to me by Budd Hopkins (Hopkins has denied any contact with the man)."

Ford is asked to meet Mr. Klein at his estate in Southampton.

In a few days, a "Monday afternoon at 1 p.m., a limousine drove up in front of my house and a white chauffeur came up the walk and rang my bell."

Ford is driven east on Sunrise Highway: "...the windows of the car were unusually dark tinted to the point where one would draw the conclusion that it was meant to prevent one from seeing out rather than to prevent harsh sunlight from coming in...to prevent you from seeing where you were going.

"When we arrived in Southampton (it could have been Westhampton for all I knew) it was in front of a very beautiful mansion (the house had at least 12 rooms) with a meticulously manicured lawn and shrubbery.

"I was led inside...." Ford found the house "furnished with very expensive furniture and antiques. A moment later a butler (a real live butler!) ushered me into the back to the sunroom in the rear of the house."

Ford meets John Gallagher, the attorney, Arthur Klein and his son, Robert. The senior Klien seems in his late sixties or early seventies. "He and his son were dark. They did look Jewish, but more Italian."

Klien told Ford about a granddaughter, sixteen years old, who had been abducted. It occurred in Arizona. Taken from the house at one in the morning, she went through what by now seems the ritual, alien examination. All the hair on her body, including her pubic hairs had been shaved. "She was found wandering stark naked in the Arizona desert by the police. On her body were six circular welts around her naval.

"I was shown pictures of her. A very pretty girl who had been shaved bald."

Klien said he wanted Ford to meet his granddaughter and investigate the matter.... "He then asked his attorney John Gallagher to hand me an envelope." Inside is a check made out to LIUFON for ten million dollars.

"I gasped. I didn't know who these people were or who they represented. They could be Israeli intelligence or they could represent the Mafia, for all I knew.

"I politely declined the offer...."

The attorney gives Ford a business card. Ford is driven back home in the limo with the dark windows. Later that week the attorney calls. Ford says LIUFON cannot accept the offer. "I turned him down (the other members of the executive committee smelled a rat) again. Some weeks later, out of curiosity," Ford calls the attorney and finds there is no connection at the number he had been given. "I called the information operator...there was no such law firm listed....

"To this date, the nature and purpose of that meeting remains a mystery."

"It Starts to Heat Up," Ford headlines the latter part of his fourth letter. Mazzuchelli says Gazzola has hired two crack addicts to kill Ford. But Mazzuchelli, the Mossad, factions of the Department of Justice and the FBI would provide protection. "I have been told by Mazzuchelli that a certain amount of FBI supervisors were sympathetic to our cause"

Mazzuchelli is living with Ford and borrowing his 1989 Chevette. He tells Ford he is "reporting to the Lt. in charge of the Narcotics Squad of the SCPD. He was providing information on drug dealers, in both Mastic and North Bellport.

It was explained to me that Gazzola was selling protection to drug dealers...."

But that is not all Ford claims for Anthony Gazzola. He had been asked to resign from the NYPD during the Knapp Commission investigation in the 70s for alleged Mafia ties an involvement in narcotics.

“He did for a number of years run a prostitution ring in North Bellport and East Patchogue.... I know a woman...whose 16 year old daughter (a runaway) in the early '80s was forced into prostitution by Mr. Gazzola. He also ran numbers....

“In 1995, The South Shore Press, dealing with the shakedowns by Mr. Gazzola using his position as Chief Investigator of Code Enforcement for Brookhaven town.... The Suffolk County D.A.'s office never prosecuted Mr. Gazzola.”

Now came “The Meetings That Never Were.” Ford is told “the meeting with the higherups and the money transfer were to be on such and such a night.” But: “...the appointments were always cancelled.”

Meanwhile Mazzuchelli is borrowing heavily from Ford: “...thousands of dollars.... He ran up a \$1300 hotel bill on my credit card and also used my cellular telephone...running up a \$2400 bill. It was a never ending drain on my fixed disability income.”

Mazzuchelli claims he has “exhausted the funds the Israelis had given him....

“As I reflect now, it was a subtle campaign to destabilize me...due to my state of mind (I was in deep depression from my mother's death) I was easily manipulated and used for his purposes.”

“...an assassin ...had planned to ambush me at SunVet Mall.”

It is the end of the winter and early spring of 1996. “The tempo began to build....”

On his way to his doctor in Patchogue for a regular therapy session for his back, Ford believes “a late tan model Chrysler New Yorker” is following him. “It was not my usual tail which was a late model Nissan.”

The car came from behind and raced around Ford, disappearing ahead. Later, returning from the doctor's visit he saw that “at the overpass below the car that had been following me before had collided with the pillars of the overpass and there were emergency vehicles there in abundance.”

That night Mazzuchelli tells him an assassin had been in the car who had planned “to ambush me at Sun Vet Mall.... Israeli agents in the other car had forced him off the road into the pillar....”

The first week of April, Mazzuchelli arrives and says that four killers have been dispatched “to assassinate me and Preston Nichols.

“He instructed me to feed the dogs and lock up the house. He also instructed me to carry two handguns and take a shotgun with me.”

They drive over to Nichols’ house. Then, “on the orders of Joe Mazzuchelli, Preston and I and drive up to Albany that night via the thruway and back down by an alternate

route.” When leaving Nichol's van for a time at a rest stop they returned to the vehicle “and found the van unlocked and the alarm disarmed. Inside the radio had been pulled out. Upon inspection Preston noted it wasn't the same radio, but a similar one.” Supposedly the Israelis had been tracking the pair through a device in the radio; now their protectors could not follow them.

Ford and Nichols got back to Long Island at 5:30 in the morning. Mazzuchelli shows up in a little while and says they had “intercepted the four agents; he said they were sent up from Langley and they were friends.... We laughed and turned away and went inside to go to bed. I was dead tired.”

But again Ford would be terrorized. It’s another April evening and again four assassins were on their way. Mazzuchelli and Sal tell Ford to stay inside and keep the dogs out of the yard. Ford goes to his bedroom, grabs two guns and an automatic rifle with a telescopic sight. Then he goes to his den and watches TV.

He hears explosions outside. At first he attributes them to the Grucci fireworks factory that is less than a mile away. Then: “As I turned off the TV, I saw the dogs were excited as if they sensed danger. I started to hear rapid explosions.... I recognized them for being what they were, being an avid gun collector for thirty years.” Ford shuts off all the lights inside the house and without and waits in the dark.

Finally Mazzuchelli and Sal show up. “The two of them had 9mm automatics in their hands. They told me the Israelis had stopped and killed four assassins about 200 yards back in the woods on the dirt road behind the development.... I was lucky the Israelis were there, they had saved my life.”

“...animated discussions about gun collecting and camping.”

“Enclosed is the last and final part of my statement to the media. It represents the entire bulk of what happened to me.”

With the Mossad about to back LIUFON, John Ford is thinking big. The organization would “purchase 20 used vehicles for its operations.” But where to store them?

“Early in February I had been to see an old friend, ex-CIA buddy Ed Szabo who I had been on and off in contact with for the last ten years. It was for a glass of wine and cheese and animated discussions about gun collecting and camping.”

Ford and Mazzuchelli go to see Zabo, who was “taken aback” about the beating – supposedly meant for Ford – of Mazzuchelli – and agrees to store “cars on his property for a handsome retainer...”

Ford was going about gathering old friends: Richard Stout with whom he had begun LIUFON; Daryl Williams, “an old court officer buddy,” whom Ford wants to be “the new Security Chief for the organization, “for a considerable sum.” Williams agrees;

Mazzuchelli makes the stipulation “that he would have to go to Israel for six months of intensive training.

“Other persons were contacted and brought into the fold...”

Now it is well into the spring, the end of April, the beginning of May, the last spring John Ford spent as a free man. The big meeting between LIUFON and the Israelis is continually canceled. “The strain on me was showing to everybody due to the constant pressure of Mazzuchelli and the assassination attempts. The financial strain was also mounting. I was constantly giving large amounts of money to the man with no prospect of repayment.”

And Ford is always being followed, he says – on his visits to the doctor and when he goes shopping. His surveillers are in Nissans, Dodge Colts, Chryslers, Jeeps and Ford Explorers.

In early May he learns “The government has sent up a team of 12 assassins to take care of business. Preston and I were told to stay close to home.... Sal and Joe and the Israelis were busy eliminating the threat. Mazzuchelli sickened me with his gloats over their demise.”

“...the American Gulag...psychiatric drugs...towns...where they could never leave.”

One day when Ford returns from the doctor’s, Mazzuchelli and another man pull up in Ford’s truck. He is introduced to Brigadier General Saul Goldstein of Israeli Intelligence. He tells Ford the Mossad has “gone to great lengths” to protect him and tells him about the American Gulag, how individuals the government finds threatening to the UFO coverup “would be certified as mentally incompetent or insane.” They would be kept under control with hospitalization and psychiatric drugs. “He told me there were an estimated 36,000 Americans controlled in this way.”

And then there were the “towns,” where UFO persona non grata would be sent, “where they could live but never leave.... He said there were 10,000 Americans in such towns in remote parts of the country run by the Coverup.”

Goldstein and Mazzuchelli tell Ford he might be “sequestered in jail until the storm blew over. “Joe said it would be the last resort if the situation deteriorated to the point to where there was no other solution.”

Not pleasant words to hear. “Something right then and there told me to pack up my camping gear and my dogs and head for the Adirondacks and hide out in the wilderness.” Ford was now feeling uneasy about the Israelis. “Were they really friend or foe?”

At the end of May, Mazzuchelli announces the Israeli force has pulled out of the area,” leaving Ford to be guarded by Mazzuchelli and Sal and a combination of friends, stray Mossad agents and Russian agents. “The Israelis never kept their word about the meeting or the financial backing.” Mazzuchelli speculates the Russians might “pick up the operation, but...that didn’t materialize.”

The Israelis had taken Mazzuchelli and Sal’s guns when they had pulled out.

“We were on our own....”

Ford finds further reason to distrust Israeli intelligence. One day Mazzuchelli brings back Ford’s 1980 Chevette.... Ford and his mother had bought the car in ‘82; “the car had been meticulously maintained since it was purchased...” Under Mazzuchelli’s use “it was quickly run in the ground.”

But Mazzuchelli shows him that the car has been tampered with: “the timing belt had been cut and all the vacuum lines had been torn off....” Mazzuchelli also returned from a trip upstate (to see General Goldstein) after using Ford’s 1981 Cadillac and that car was suffering damage, too, to the tune of \$8,000 worth.

“I think the General ordered him to destroy my other two cars deliberately so they or someone could follow me!”

Ford had looked to the Israelis as saviors; now he concludes, “Someone in Israeli intelligence was setting me up for something.”

“...each and every man becomes a law unto himself.”

“Who is Joe Zuppardo and what part did he play in this?”

Of course there was Zuppardo’s childhood friendship with Mazzuchelli. Zuppardo had introduced Ford to Mazzuchelli, who steered Ford directly into the hands of the law. Zuppardo would later write to Ford how much he regretted that fatal introduction.

“Joe had joined LIUFON in 1989 and dropped out some six months later....He had two doctoral degrees in electronics and electronic engineering. He earned his livelihood by writing top secret manuals for the U.S. government...and also as a computer expert did frequency and harmonic analysis for the CIA or the NSA.”

“I’ve told John frequently,” said Preston Nichols, “he should be careful of Zuppardo; he still works with the CIA.”

Zuppardo had jobs and security clearance because he had smuggled to LIUFON the tape of the Southaven Park crash. “For this he would pay dearly....”

“In October, 1988 an incident occurred ...at Port Jefferson Station. A UFO buzzed a post office truck and later three Suffolk County Patrol cars at arms length before it flew

off.... All the witnesses and the cops were taken to the Sixth Precinct where they were threatened into silence by Federal authorities.”

Ford claims that a LIUFON investigator learned from the Deputy Commissioner of the precinct “the incident was true.” Not only that, “but what emerged from this conversation was that SCPD had and still does a secret operational manual distributed to deputy Inspectors and officials higher in the SCPD on how to control, suppress and detain UFO witnesses until Federal authorities are called in.”

This explains why the police came down on Zuppardo, writes Ford, and that they “had done the same to me... Once government learns to break its own laws, each and every man becomes a law unto himself as a result.”

For a good part of this period, Mazzuchelli had been staying at Ford’s house. The day he moves out Ford returns from the doctor and finds Mazzuchelli has made off with “dinnerware, linens, blankets, portable B/W TV, VCR, silverware, food from both the pantry and also freezer.” Ford was also missing an AR-15 rifle and two handguns.

Ford contacts Mazzuchelli and demands the items returned. Mazzuchelli says he will return or pay for what he took – as soon as he can access his accounts in the Bahamas where he has stashed money earned from the CIA and Mossad. He tells Ford he had to take the guns in order to protect him. “Don’t call the cops and spoil the operation. You’ll get everything back within a week.”

“At this point I was very stressed out and still deeply depressed over my mother’s death and was not thinking clearly. I was also a little afraid of the man and the situation I found myself in.” But he tells Mazzuchelli after a week he will tell the cops.

“This was a week before the arrest.”

“Who set up who for what and who fell into the trap?

Ford was arrested on a Tuesday. The Friday before that, Preston Nichols calls and tells Ford he knew there would be used Navy issue Geiger counters at a ham fest he was attending. He thought LIUFON might be able to use one. Ford agreed.

Ford asks Nichols if the latter would be going to a gun show with him that Sunday. “As a gun collector I would go to every gun show in order to look for .22 caliber target rifles; that was my main interest.” Nichols said he would accompany Ford there.

Ed Zabo was also supposed to come. He called Ford that night, asking for a ride to the gun show on Sunday. Zabo had lost his license because of a DWI conviction. “It was the common complaint by all of us that we were being stopped and checked a lot by the cops.”

That Friday night Ford also gets a call from a friend who was in the Brookhaven Conservative Party, in which he had been active some years ago. His name had been placed on a primary ballot for Assemblyman against a Republican who was seeking Conservative endorsement.

Ford had been involved in local Conservative politics, especially trying to keep the Conservative Party from siding with the Republicans whom he was convinced were corrupting local government.

Coming at the time it did, the primary nomination was not something he wanted. But whether or not he protested the news, the petition forms would be dropped off to him Sunday night.

“Little did I know how seriously the Republican leadership would take it.”

Seth Morgan was an old friend of Ford’s and his mother and an old standby in local politics. “A wealthy landed farmer who lives in Manorville...of impeccable character and patriotism.”

Morgan’s brother Jim was President of the Morgan Arms Company in California – and also president of five banks in Costa Rica as well as owner of a cattle plantation.

“Morgans Arms company is and was the chief arms supplier to Central and South American governments for the CIA.”

When Ford felt his life was in danger, Seth Morgan secured bulletproof vests from Morgan Arms “at the urging of the CIA...Morgan refuses to acknowledge publicly that he has ties to the CIA, but he does.”

It is now Sunday, June 10, 1996, two days before Ford’s arrest. Ford, Zabo, Nichols and a LIUFON associate, Mark Landers, attended the gun show in Amityville, at the American Legion Hall. Ford contends he learned afterward he was followed by Kevin Couch, the police informant. It was Mazzuchelli who would introduce Couch to Ford. “Did there exist a covert plan by the police and the D.A. to set up and frame me? The question to be asked is, ‘Who set up who for what and who fell into the trap?’”

The night before, Saturday, Mazzuchelli brings over someone to meet Ford: Arthur Riva, whose last name Ford incorrectly spells in the letters as ‘Siwa.’ “Joe said that Artie was local talent used by both the CIA and the Israelis.”

Riva complains the Israelis owe him money – \$50,000. Ford loans him \$20 for gas to get home.

“It is alleged I gave Siwa a .25 caliber gun to go and use to assassinate politicians, but

ended up being sold to an undercover cop for \$300. The money allegedly went to Mazzuchelli.

“The strange chain of events always seem to revolve around Mazzuchelli and his friends.”

That night Ford tells Mazzuchelli the stolen guns must be returned by Wednesday, “or that Thursday morning I would call the police.

“It seems that everyone he would introduce me to would allege a criminal conspiracy on my part.

“Why?”

Ford asks Steve Iavarone, the Vice President of LIUFON, to check into Mazzuchelli’s background. Iavarone had a karate partner who worked with the FBI’s office in Hauppauge. Iavarone came back with the information that Mazzuchelli was a registered police informant with the Suffolk County police.

“According to the laws of New York State, the right of discovery includes the right to information on all police informants involved in the case.” Ford’s attorney, John Rouse filed for such material, but the D.A.’s office filed an objection. “The question should be obvious. What are they trying to hide?”

Steve Iavarone, Rick Jones, Tony West and Ford hold a board meeting of LIUFON on the Sunday night before his arrest. The subject was the never materializing meeting with Mazzuchelli’s Israelis. “We took a vote. We would give Mazzuchelli until next Saturday to come up with the proof, after that we would break off all ties.”

Preston Nichols calls, telling Ford he had purchased the Navy issue Geiger counters. “He would drop them off Monday night and he said one thing – they needed to be calibrated.”

On Monday afternoon Mazzuchelli drops by. He was still in possession of Ford’s Cadillac and Chevette. Ford told him about LIUFON’s decision. But Ford still had not gone to the police about the stolen guns. Now he gave Mazzuchelli until Saturday to return them. Mazzuchelli said, “everything would be cleared up sooner than I expected.

“I warned him on both issues. I’ll have you arrested if the guns are not returned.”

On Monday night Preston Nichols arrives with the Geiger counters. Ford gave him \$120 dollars and owed him \$60. Nichols tells Ford he has come from a briefing from his intelligence contact who wanted to relay the message “that the situation was quiet but still tense, that I was still not out of danger.

Preston said the Geiger counters were a steal, but they need to be calibrated.”

That Monday night, June 11, Ford calls Ed Zabo, who supplied the radium. Ford had visited Zabo a few months before and Zabo had shown him radium samples in his garage: “radium potassium and sulfide...a radium plug and bits and pieces of radioactive materials. (Later I would learn they had been placed there by the CIA as party to this operation.) They were all very harmless items.” That night Zabo tells Ford “he still had the items.” Ford said he would need them to calibrate the Geiger counters he’d just gotten from Preston Nichols. He calls up Nichols to tell him he will have samples to calibrate the counters.

“There was no conspiracy planned or discussed.”

Tuesday afternoon. Ford returns from buying groceries. Down the block he notices a green Ford Explorer that he is sure had followed him before, “with the same gentleman driving slowly past my house.”

The driver passes the house swings back. He is talking on a cellular phone.

Ford follows the Explorer “from a distance. I followed him to Republican County Headquarters on North Ocean Avenue.”

On Tuesday evening, around six Ford takes two of the Geiger counters and goes over to Zabo’s house. The Geiger counters measure the samples as “very weak.” Ford tells Zabo he could use the radium “and when finished I could dispose of it. I had planned on burying it in the woods behind my house.”

Zabo asks to buy one of the Geiger counters “for his scout troop for \$60 (the price I paid). I sold it to him. There was no talk of poisoning people.”

Back at his house, Ford is visited by Mazzuchelli and “another one of his agents...Kevin Couche who he told me was an old friend of his who was ex-KGB and who did work since the Soviet collapse for the Israelis. Here was the fat, chubby faced guy in the Nissan who had been following me for weeks. “They sat and talked “about the operation and how the Israelis had screwed everything up.”

Couche (Ford also spells it Couch and Kouch) says he is in “the second generation KGB. His parents were KGB and they infiltrated the U.S. and settled down. He was born and raised as an American.” When he was older he was sent to the USSR for intelligence training.”

The talk drifts to the Sunrise Fire and local politicians. Couche remarks he too has little use for Anthony Gazzola.

As Mazzuchelli and Couche are about to leave, Ford mentions the radium he’d gotten from Zabo. “I said it was too weak to do adequate readings to recalibrate the Geiger

counters. Joe and I passed some wisecracks to the effect that we should give Gazzola and company some nuclear cocktails, upon which Kevin added some comments.”

Ford adds that, as a favor to Zabo, he was going to get rid of the radium. Couche said “he had some land out in Manorville where he could easily bury it. Joe said he wanted to take it because the chemicals might be resold for money.”

Ford tells them they are welcome to it, that he was picking up the rest the next night, Wednesday “and I would need help.” Couch and Mazzuchelli say they will be over.

“There was no conspiracy planned or discussed.”

It is Wednesday, June 12, 1996. Ford calls Zabo to ask what time he should pick up the rest of the radium. When he sets out “I didn’t realize I was being followed.” At Zabo’s house his daughter tells Ford her father had gone to the store. “So I took the truck over to Carvel’s to get an ice cream soda, since the day was rather hot.”

Zabo returns, riding a bicycle. He and Ford go downstairs “and talked for about an hour while we sipped some cool drinks.... I noticed for the first time a pair of deactivated hand grenades on Ed’s bar. We began to joke as I played with them.... He offered to give me the two as souvenirs but I refused the offer. I just thought they were cute.”

In the garage Zabo tells Ford to put out his pipe. In the garage were pyrotechnics that Zabo had acquired from a friend’s estate. Ford said he had worried about Zabo having so much flammable material about.

They go into the toolshed “where Ed had the stuff. Most of it was bits and pieces of metal and some ore samples...which gave off reasonably good readings. The one piece that gave off a high reading was the radium plug in a lead container. None of the materials could even kill a flea, they were harmless.”

As Ford loads his truck he notices a green Dodge sedan up the street. To him it looked like an unmarked police car. He says it followed him as he pulled away from Zabo’s house. Arriving at his development, he “noticed the green Dodge had turned into the eastbound lane of Woodside Avenue. I slowed down...so the car would pass me. The driver, Ford says, “would be one of the detectives who would arrest me.”

At home, Ford calls Preston Nichols, who says he will try to come by that night to help with the recalibration of the Geiger counters.

Mazzuchelli calls; he too, will be coming over. “I joked about the radium with him and we both laughed. I asked if Kevin were coming over to pick up some of the stuff for burial. He said he was and that he had been delayed.” Couche had gone to pay a parking ticket; he returned to his car to find it vandalized. “He was busy getting it repaired and it would be late. Joe said he had to talk to me before Kevin arrived....”

When Ford gets off the phone he notices, from his livingroom window, “my old friend. The green Explorer was back, slowly passing my house.”

“I want you to play it up big...about the politicians and the radium.”

Mazzuchelli arrives at about a quarter to seven. “He had brought back my Chevette and he had promised to bring back my guns that night.”

He tells Ford the damage to Couch’s car had been deliberate. And he said, “John I can’t tell you now, but later, I want you to play it up big with Kevin about the politicians and the radium. Like the way we were joking before last night with him.”

When Ford questions him, finding it “curious,” Mazzuchelli says, “Because I want you to, I’ll tell you later, I need to make it sound convincing.”

Ford concludes Mazzuchelli wants to play a joke on Couche. “When Kevin arrived both Joe and I started to play it up with Kevin about the politicians and the radium. For the next hour we joked about it with both Joe and Kevin encouraging me to live it up and Joe adding to it as we went along.”

During this surreal session, Ford goes to the back door to give cookies to the three dogs who are outside. “It was during this time Joe indicated to me that Kevin had a wire on him.. Joe indicated this by pointing to Kevin and Kevin laughed and nodded in agreement.”

Mazzuchelli goes to the car and comes back with one of Ford’s guns – promising to return the other two by Saturday. He tells Ford there are police cars outside. “Then I realized what was up, I remembered General Goldstein’s warning.”

But apparently this police presence doesn’t silence the odd banter between the three. “Joe motioned to keep it up and we did. We talked about explosives, poisonings, rocket launches and atomic bombs. All to take care of the politicians, who we didn’t like.”

Before Couche leaves Ford says he will get him a gas mask, so he wouldn’t have to breathe any radioactive dust. Then Couche opened Ford’s gun cabinet, setting off an alarm. “I later learned this was a signal to the cops. He must have learned it was wired from Mazzuchelli.

“Well, the rest is now public knowledge and history.”

“Shortly after Kevin and Joe walked outside, the cops rushed in and we were all arrested. It would be the last time I would see the house my mother and I shared for 18 years....the three gentle lovable dogs I had adopted would be beaten by the Suffolk County Police in a vicious effort to intimidate me.”

That day at the jail in Riverhead John Ford blinked his eyes, leaned into the plexiglass and told me that one of the officers “stuck his dick into the wire enclosure I had for the dogs in the yard and pissed on them.”

Ford wrote of his dogs, “It would be the last time I would see them together.”

After Ford's arrest the dogs were taken to the Brookhaven pound. A family member took one and the others were adopted, according to the pound.

“The cops did not search the house, they trashed it, destroying many valuable family heirlooms.... The files for LIUFON were the main objective in the search As Joe and General Goldstein said, they thought I had documentation on the forest fires. This was what they were really looking for.”

“I was not allowed to call my attorney. I was threatened by Detective Morrell with a loaded and cocked pistol. I was never read my Miranda rights. The cops attempted to intimidate and harass me during their attempted interrogation.

“Mazzuchelli was treated the same way.”

“Be glad you’re alive.”

“In the Bull Pen” – as Ford refers to the arraignment in Central Islip – Ford asks Mazzuchelli. “Why?” Mazzuchelli tells him they were set up by Kevin Couch. “I knew he was a liar. He was involved in it.”

Mazzuchelli adds: “Be glad you’re alive.”

“After the arrest Mazzuchelli (which was orchestrated by the FBI)” – Ford is referring to Mazzuchelli’s prior arrest, when he and Preston Nichols had put up bail – “was approached by the Suffolk County Police and the D.A.’s office. They wanted to check me out and asked Mazzuchelli to report on me.... They had been looking to get something on me for at least five years.” Ford says Mazzuchelli had worked out a plan to get Ford arrested. But at the same time, “While the D.A.’s office thought they were going to frame me, the CIA and the Israelis were sucking them into a trap. Couch and Mazzuchelli, both Israeli agents) were leaving a trail for the FBI, CIA and NSA to follow to document the frame up.”

Ford details the meticulously planned and executed intelligence operation: Joe Zuppardo monitored both Catterson’s cellular phone and the police Racket Squad’s radio frequencies. At Fort Meade, Maryland, the NSA was doing the same thing. Catterson and the police remarking about planting evidence at Gazzola’s house to help make it appear there was an assassination attempt on Gazzolla...The police on the scene stating how they had set me up.

“The police had planned to murder me should I put up any resistance.”

Ford further contends that across the street from him were two houses that were occupied by Israeli agents and that a year earlier his ceiling had been bugged. “The night of my arrest and for the next day and a half every word and every sentence...was recorded by Israeli/CIA operatives.”

“The next day Ed Zabo’s house was raided.

“Ed Zabo is a CIA operative with 25 years experience in covert operations. His sacrifice was very personal...but showed the courage which is typical of Mr. Zabo. He is also a childhood friend of the Northeast Section Director.”

“Why I was arrested.”

Now Ford’s arrest becomes an intelligence plot to save him.. “(1) To set up the D.A.’s office and defuse their campaign to frame me on criminal charges. (2) To put me in jail where I would be safe.” (When I visited Ford in prison that day he had said to me he’d been told that had he been “out on the street another week,” he would’ve been killed.)” (3) To give me national and international recognition of the frame up and solidify my credentials in the UFO community. (4) To diffuse the federal and local situation by destroying my public credibility, thus appeasing the local politicians. (5) By labelling me as incompetent to stand trial, a deal would be worked out to let me off the charges.... (6) Let the politicians think they have destroyed LIUFON.

“On the third day I was in custody I was notified of an attorney’s visit.... Upon entering the attorney’s room I was meet by a stranger who identified himself as a CIA attorney sent to represent me.” For whatever reason, Ford declines the offer, but asks the attorney “to relay to the CIA to seize all of LIUFON’s records.”

Later Ford learns “the D.A.’s office has admitted to Judge Corso that they have lost LIUFON’s files. The CIA seized the records from the police and D.A.’s custody.”

“I have been informed by Preston’s contact that a deal has been made for me to go into psychiatric treatment (into the Gulag) and return in six months with the charges dropped. Catterson now knows who I am and the trap he is in. This case may never be tried in court.”

“The information I have given is the truth to the best of my recollection so help me God.”