



## A Statement from Theodore Ray Mercer

### *Senior Historical Research Consultant, TRC Research Center*

For more than sixty years, I have walked the deserts of southern New Mexico, western Texas, Arizona, and northern Mexico. I've crossed dry lake beds, climbed forgotten canyons, searched for abandoned mining camps, and spent countless evenings in small towns listening to stories that most people dismissed before they were even finished. During those years, I learned one lesson above all others: the truth is rarely found in a single witness, a single photograph, or a single remarkable discovery. It is found by patiently assembling hundreds of small pieces of evidence until a larger picture begins to emerge.

That philosophy has become the foundation of the **TRC Research Center**.

Many people ask whether I believe every mystery described within *The Mesilla Files* is true. My answer has always been the same. No. Some stories are exaggerated. Some eyewitnesses are mistaken. Some discoveries have perfectly ordinary explanations. If we accepted every claim without question, we would be doing a disservice to both history and honest investigation.

Likewise, dismissing every unusual report simply because it seems improbable is equally unwise.

The purpose of research is not to prove a favorite theory. It is to examine every piece of available evidence with an open but disciplined mind.

Throughout my career, I have collected journals, maps, photographs, letters, recordings, newspaper articles, government records, and personal accounts from individuals who often had nothing in common except that they described similar events. Most never met one another. Many lived decades apart. Yet, from time to time, those independent records point toward the same places, the same symbols, the same unexplained locations, or the same recurring stories.

Those patterns deserve careful study.

The researchers at the TRC Research Center understand that responsibility. Every document entering our archive is examined, compared with existing material, cataloged, and evaluated before it becomes part of an ongoing investigation. We ask difficult questions. We challenge our

own conclusions. We frequently disagree with one another, and that's exactly how good research should work. Healthy skepticism strengthens an investigation far more than unquestioning agreement.

Our recent collaboration with the Citizens for the Truth About Aliens is an excellent example. We have already examined locations where both organizations documented the same physical evidence yet reached different conclusions. That doesn't weaken either organization. On the contrary, it forces each of us to re-examine our assumptions and justify our interpretations with evidence rather than speculation.

I have spent enough years in the field to know that certainty is often the enemy of discovery.

The deserts of the Southwest still hold countless unanswered questions. Some will eventually find ordinary explanations. Others may reshape how we understand the history of this remarkable region. Our responsibility is not to decide in advance which outcome we prefer. Our responsibility is to preserve the evidence, continue the investigation, and allow future discoveries to speak for themselves.

That is why I have confidence in the work of the TRC Research Center.

Not because we claim to have all the answers.

But because we are committed to asking the right questions.

For as long as I can contribute, I will continue to support that mission, knowing that every carefully preserved document, every verified field report, and every thoughtful investigation bring us one step closer to understanding the mysteries that have fascinated generations before us.

**Collect Everything. Verify What You Can. Question Everything Else.**

**— Theodore Ray Mercer**

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