

What The C.I.A. Is Not Telling About Flying Saucers

what the covering

Any individuals or groups that become involved in the UFO controversy may be discredited or silenced by the C.I.A.— and not even the United States Air Force is immune . . .

flying

By JOHN A. KEEL



LT. GEN. HEWITT WHELESS, AIR FORCE ASSISTANT VICE CHIEF OF STAFF, ISSUED FAMOUS ORDER ON "IMPERSONATIONS OF AIR FORCE OFFICERS"—WHO SOME EXPERTS SAY ARE REALLY CIA "COVER-UP ARTISTS."

C.I.A. is up about

saucers

FOR nearly a generation American "flying saucer" enthusiasts have been loudly accusing the Central Intelligence Agency (C.I.A.) of pilfering their mail, tapping their telephones, and ordering random UFO witnesses to keep their mouths shut. UFO-investigating organizations have tediously collected hundreds of intriguing cases in which reliable, honest American citizens have testified that they have been the victims of unusual harassment and even of physical threats by "agents" claiming to represent the U.S. government.

The apparent purposes of such tactics

is to "suppress" information about "flying saucers."

Behind all the circumstantial evidence and sworn testimony there are strong suggestions that the blame for these harassments may actually be cleverly focussed on the U.S. Air Force and the C.I.A. by a mysterious third party.

There is mounting evidence that no known government agency takes the UFO "problem" seriously at all, but that another hidden group far behind the scenes is deliberately conducting a carefully planned campaign (Continued on page 50)

Flying Saucers

Continued from page 29

to spread confusion, suspicion, disbelief, and distrust in governmental institutions.

Public outcry was so great during the "flap" (widespread outbreak of flying saucer sightings) in 1966, and the organized UFO enthusiasts were so vociferous in their accusations against the Air Force and C.I.A., that the C.I.A. actually broke its long silence and issued the following statement to the press on October 11, 1966:

"It is indeed true that in the early 1950's the Central Intelligence Agency was active studying the matter of Unidentified Flying Objects because at that time there was no way of knowing whether such objects might be originating from sources overseas.

"All materials concerning UFOs were subsequently declassified and made available to scientists, scholars and others interested. Materials which were not declassified had nothing to do with UFOs but with the organization and methods of the C.I.A.

"The matter of UFOs currently is the responsibility of the Air Force, and C.I.A. has no interest either in building up or debunking any information or views concerning UFOs."

This statement was not widely published at the time and the UFO enthusiasts regarded it as nothing more than another "government whitewash." But as experienced investigators such as science writer Lloyd Mallan plunged into the UFO controversy they uncovered many bewildering aspects which had been overlooked by the hard-core UFO enthusiasts. For one thing, men dressed in military uniforms (usually Air Force uniforms) were turning up at UFO sites and ordering the witnesses to remain silent about what they had seen. Several common factors emerged in these cases. These "Air Force Officers" often arrived at the witnesses' homes hours—or even minutes—after their sightings, *before these people had a chance to report their observations to anyone.* Invariably they arrived in chauffeur-driven Cadillacs.

Genuine Air Force officers don't ride around in Cadillacs, but use assembly-line Chevvy's and Fords from the Base motor pool. In several cases, these "officers" carried sidearms and actually threatened the witnesses with them. In a recent instance, one such "officer" flourished a German Luger instead of a general issue, U.S.-made automatic.

Would any responsible Air Force officer actually threaten an American taxpayer with a firearm just because he or she had seen an unidentified flying object?

THE Pentagon became very concerned over the nationwide activities of these mysterious "Air Force Officers" and on March 1, 1967, Lt. General Hewitt T. Wheeler, USAF, Assistant Vice Chief of Staff issued a letter to all commands on the subject of "Impersonations of Air Force Officers." It advised all military and civilian personnel "and particularly Information Officers and UFO Investigating officers who hear of such reports" to notify military intelligence immediately.

As usual, the UFO enthusiasts regarded this as still another "white-wash." But the fact is that the F.B.I. has actively been investigating a number of these cases, and several independent civilian UFO investigators have encountered not only Air Force officer impersonators, but also "mystery men" dressed in police uniforms and driving police cars. Efforts to check out the identity of these men, trace their license numbers, etc. led to a dead end. In several cases, the license numbers on these cars *had never been issued.*

To understand the government's basic position towards the UFO phenomenon we must review, briefly, the general UFO situation of the past 30 years or so. Researchers all over the world have been digging into books, newspapers and scientific journals, and many surprising patterns have been uncovered. These patterns indicate that UFO activity has been occurring repeatedly and consistently in the same areas, year after year, long before the first "flying saucer scare" of June 1947 led to a general public awareness of the "flying saucer" mystery. The following chronology summarizes the heavily documented evidence now available to serious researchers.

1933-34—December-January. Unidentified aircraft appeared nightly over Finland and Sweden, over London. A small "war scare" resulted. Explanation offered: "smugglers and spies."

1937-38—Worldwide UFO sightings; with numerous reports from Africa and from ships at sea, particularly in the northern latitudes and around Scandinavia.

1942—A formation of unidentified flying objects appeared over Los Angeles, California. Anti-aircraft batteries opened fire without effect. A congressional inquiry into this incident was launched but no conclusions were reached.

1943-45—Many well-documented UFO sightings by military pilots and ships all over the world. Both Axis and Allied pilots reported seeing disks over Europe and the Pacific. They were dubbed "Foo Fighters." Such reports were turned over to Military Intelligence.

1945—December. Six planes and 27 men disappeared completely in clear weather off the coast of Florida in the area now known as the "Bermuda Triangle." An extensive search by land, air and sea failed to find any trace of the missing craft. UFOs had been sighted in the area.

1946—January: President Truman forms the Central Intelligence Group, forerunner of the C.I.A.

April: Congressional hearings are held to determine the fate of the 27 men who

disappeared off the coast of Florida. Relatives of the missing men were flown to Washington and sworn to secrecy. No definite conclusions were ever published.

July: Thousands of "ghost rockets" and mysterious flying objects suddenly appeared over Sweden and Scandinavia. There were many reliable observations by military men and high officials. The Swedish government later released a strong statement attesting to the reality of the phenomenon. The sightings spread throughout Europe but received almost no publicity in the United States except for a few random "human interest" stories.

August: Air Force General James Doolittle arrived in Stockholm, Sweden, allegedly to "conduct an investigation along with Swedish authorities."

1947—Numerous sightings of circular aircraft and other strange objects began to appear in isolated American newspapers that spring but the subject did not receive public attention until Kenneth Arnold, a private pilot, reported seeing nine flying disks near Mt. Ranier, Washington, on June 24, 1947. Hundreds of sightings were published in the two weeks which followed. The "flying saucer" controversy was born.

THE official Air Force investigation began. In September, the Air Technical Intelligence Center (ATIC) at Dayton, Ohio, sent a letter to the commanding general of the Air Force expressing the opinion that "flying saucers" were real and an all-out investigation should be launched.

1948—January: ATIC began *Project Sign*. A concentrated, well-financed effort, manned by highly trained Intelligence experts, began to collect and study all available UFO reports.

August: ATIC completed its initial study and drew up a "TOP SECRET ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION." Their conclusion, according to the men who worked on it, was that the UFOs were real and were extraterrestrial. This report was delivered to the Air Force Chief of Staff, General Vandenberg. He rejected the report, declaring there was insufficient evidence to back it up and that the government could not offer such a conclusion to the public without an abundance of proof. *Project Sign* was dissolved. Military Intelligence withdrew from UFO research, and a group of astronomers, UFO enthusiasts and other interested persons set to work on *Project Grudge*. This was an alternate project to "explain" the UFO phenomenon.

1949—December: The Air Force issued the 600-page *Project Grudge* report which "explained" all UFO sightings as being delusions, hoaxes and natural phenomena.

All official Air Force UFO investigations were terminated.

1950—UFO sightings continued and although no government agency was supposed to be officially interested, mystery men claiming to represent the government turned up to investigate a number of the new cases. Their identity has never been ascertained.

1951—In September, protests from concerned scientists and industrialists forced the Air Force to re-establish a UFO project. This was *Project Blue Book*, headed by the late Captain Edward Ruppelt.

1952—Ruppelt and his *Blue Book* team worked industriously to collect and analyze new UFO evidence. They carefully prepared charts and graphs of UFO activity, studied films and investigated new sightings. There were many important UFO incidents in 1952, including the sudden appearance of many objects directly over Washington, D.C. in July.

That year the National Security Agency (NSA) was brought into being. Far more mysterious than the C.I.A., the N.S.A. works with computers and elaborate electronic gear. It is headed by a physicist and a general (usually a radar specialist) in tandem. It has become one of the most secret of all the "secret" agencies in Washington.

1953—In January the C.I.A. convened a blue ribbon panel of scientists and C.I.A. agents to examine *Project Blue Book's* findings and to settle upon a policy for handling future UFO information. Captain Ruppelt and his men prepared their case carefully and spent four days presenting it to the C.I.A. panel. These meetings undoubtedly shaped the course of government policy for the 15 years to come. This was the real turning point. The panelists felt that the evidence was inadequate for any conclusive, positive governmental position. Since UFOs had already been around in great numbers for many years, it was likely that the reports of UFO sightings would continue and could conceivably present a hazard by cluttering up official communication channels with endless reports of little importance. So the panel recommended a program for debunking the subject and leading the public to disinterest. *Project Blue Book* was turned into nothing more than an understaffed public relations office dedicated to "explaining" and minimizing the importance of UFO sightings.

IN August, the Air Force issued its notorious Regulation 200-2 ordering all Air Force personnel to keep silent about UFO sightings and related matters. This censorship did not extend to other military branches, however.

By the end of 1953, the official position was well-shaped and gradually the Air Force attitudes did influence other branches of the service.

The real questions—and answers—about the government's official UFO position are now buried in history. The men who formed those policies are now either dead or retired. Most of the documents from the earlier days have been destroyed or are lost forever in the vast catacombs of files in Washington, D.C.

By sifting the available public records in Washington, we have determined that there was high level interest in the UFO phenomenon prior to Arnold's 1947 sighting. Furthermore, this interest was entirely isolated to intelligence specialists. Following standard Intelligence procedure, they were quietly collecting and

examining all the available facts on the situation. The public didn't know about "flying saucers" and they hoped to keep it that way.

Then in June-July 1947, "flying saucers" crashed into the nationwide headlines. The "secret" was out. Now the military machinery moved automatically, completely independent of the government agencies. The Air Force was responsible for protecting our skies, so the Air Force automatically began to investigate the situation. It would take time before the Air Force findings could filter through to the top, to men like Vandenberg who had the authority to control the overall policies. The men at ATIC worked hard and conscientiously, perhaps never realizing that they were simply covering ground that had been covered by civilian agencies years before. Finally they drafted their "TOP SECRET ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION" and it went all the way up to Vandenberg and Secretary of Defense Forrestal.



Consider for a moment the importance of this "ESTIMATE." A group of first-rate Air Force Intelligence specialists drafted it after long and careful study of the evidence. They knew they were presenting an outlandish hypothesis: the UFOs were extraterrestrial. They were literally laying their careers on the line. They had to believe absolutely in their conclusion. They expected to be taken seriously, and the logical action for the Chief of Staff would be to order an all-out investigation of UFOs.

Instead, General Vandenberg threw the estimate back into ATIC's face and dissolved *Project Sign* and replaced the intelligence officers with second-stringers, astronomers and college professors. If ATIC's appraisal was an accurate one, and if the UFOs were alien objects posing a potential threat—no matter how slight—to the United States, then Vandenberg's action was ill-considered. He removed the men best equipped to study and cope with the UFO "problem," and set up *Project Grudge*—an apparent whitewash.

Why?

Could it be that General Vandenberg already knew something very important about the UFO phenomenon? Something that ATIC did not even suspect? Could it have been important to keep the Air

Force in the dark? In other words, did he—and the C.I.A.—want to keep the Air Force from finding out?

ALL of this indicates that this is exactly what happened. The Intelligence officers at ATIC were convinced that UFOs were real and they were eager to learn more about them. But they were stopped before they went too far.

The whole charade was repeated again in 1953. Again, lower echelon officers in the Air Force had established a UFO investigating project—*Blue Book*. Again, hard-working men like Captain Ruppelt did their best to figure out what was going on. Later Captain Ruppelt wrote a book, *Report on Unidentified Flying Objects*, which still stands as one of the best on the subject. In that book he mentions a discussion with an unnamed scientist in an unnamed Washington agency early in June 1952. This scientist told Ruppelt flatly that a big "flap" was about to break shortly and that it would occur over either New York or Washington. A few weeks later the sightings over Washington took place; the objects were picked up by radar, pursued by Air Force Fighters, and viewed by hundreds of people on the ground. The point is: Even in 1952 some scientist or group of scientists already understood the UFO patterns and were able to accurately predict a forthcoming "flap."

Obviously, the government—or someone in government—knew a great deal about "flying saucers." And obviously they had no intention of ever letting this become public knowledge.

Ruppelt's busy technicians had to be stopped. So in 1953, the C.I.A. reviewed their findings, dismissed them, and laid the groundwork for the present government policy. The panel included many distinguished scientists but it was only necessary for the C.I.A. to insert a single "ringer" onto the panel. A man with orders to twist everything around convincingly enough so that the others would follow his lead and reject Ruppelt's evidence. Having accomplished this, the C.I.A.'s role in the UFO muddle was finished.

Since 1953, the Air Force's UFO "investigations" have been downright laughable. The annual UFO statistics issued by *Project Blue Book* are so carelessly assembled that the columns of figures haven't even been correctly added in some years. *Blue Book's* "staff" of two officers, a sergeant and a secretary labor to answer "kiddie mail" and hand out "explanations" of sightings with a total disregard for the reported facts.

For years the UFO enthusiasts and their organizations have battled with the Air Force and denounced the C.I.A. But it appears that Ruppelt and his successors were merely pawns in some larger game. The C.I.A. has neither the authority nor the responsibility to investigate UFO incidents.

In a sense, the Air Force and the C.I.A. have already told us a good deal by refusing to tell us anything. The problems are deeper and more complex than we can comprehend or accept.

MALE, April 1969- "WHAT THE C.I.A. IS NOT TELLING ABOUT FLYING SAUCERS". Heavily edited version of original text. Summarizes historical events which may have led to the official conclusions. "Men In Black" material is discussed.