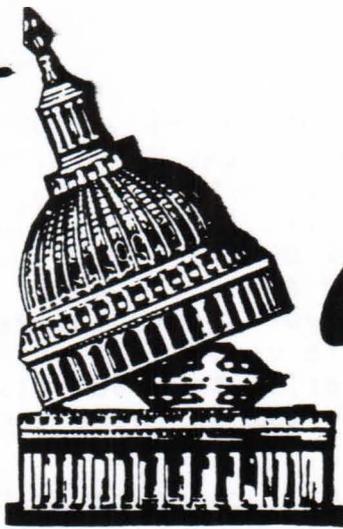


JUST



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EDITORIAL

The last quarter has seen the debate over the Roswell UFO crash continue. The Air Force report, detailed in the last and this issue, will not end the controversy over whether a flying disc had landed on this world in 1947, though with the passage of time it will become increasingly difficult for the pro-alien elements in the Roswell debate to gain ground, given the public's desire for ever-escalating sensation and the lack of hard evidence despite intensive searching. All that is required of those skeptical of crashed-disc claims is to ask questions, to challenge the accuracy of the information in an honest and reasonable way. Roswell proponents must prove their case. And in light of recent developments (see Schmitt/Randle story this issue), this has become considerably more difficult.

This issue is still behind schedule, mainly due to less available time for the editor. But Just Cause will still be published for the foreseeable future.

PROJECT 1947, the brainchild of researcher Jan Aldrich which CAUS promoted in the last mailing, is going quite well. Over 2100 newspapers have been scanned so far for news reports on the 1947 UFO wave. This effort has eclipsed all previous ones in comprehensiveness and the search is not even close to completion. Aldrich's work has given CAUS many new ideas on how UFO interest has evolved. There will surely be some surprises.

THE AIR FORCE ROSWELL REPORT - PART TWO

As I have demonstrated in the previous issue, the Air Force's report on the Roswell incident, now commonly known as the Weaver report, was hardly a slipshod cover-up effort as has been depicted by the pro-alien Roswell investigators. Similarly though, it did not produce a smoking gun to debunk the alien notion once and for all. What it did do was provide a reasonable possibility for an explanation - that the wreckage was due to the loss of a Project Mogul balloon, Flight 4, launched on June 4, 1947 and never recovered. Note the following extract from the Weaver report, page 18:

"It is very probable that this TOP SECRET project balloon train (Flight 4), made up of unclassified components; came to rest

some miles northwest of Roswell, NM, became shredded in the surface winds and was ultimately found by the rancher, Brazel, ten days later. This possibility was supported by the observations of Lt. Col. Cavitt (Atch 17-18), the only living eyewitness to the actual debris field and the material found. Lt. Col. Cavitt described a small area of debris which appeared, 'to resemble bamboo type square sticks one quarter to one half inch square, that were very light, as well as some sort of metallic reflecting material that was also very light ... I remember recognizing this material as being consistent with a weather balloon."

What has become standard procedure in the Roswell debate is that given the lack of physical evidence of either wreckage or bodies, except of course the Fort Worth photos of Roswell debris widely published in the press at the time, the weight of any of the arguments depends on who one chooses to believe. In fact many of the Roswell witnesses who had signed affidavits for Air Force investigators described debris that could certainly have been from a man-made device. Some of the most commonly used descriptions were "like aluminum foil," "tape with printing," "sticks." Yet many witnesses believed that the debris was extraterrestrial. By what standard did one measure extraterrestriality in 1947? Many of the witnesses with extraterrestrial belief who were interviewed by the Air Force were children at the time of the incident and were hardly in a position to judge whether or not aluminum foil-like material, imprinted tape and sticks were extraterrestrial. There is no way to verify this kind of observation at this point. Also at the time that the story had broken the UFO phenomena itself was barely two weeks old!

During the 1947 UFO wave, there was much more serious concern that flying saucers were secret foreign devices rather than vehicles of aliens from another planet. The first book concluding that saucers were from space did not appear until 1950. What physical description of wreckage in the affidavits would rule out the possibility of the Brazel material having been from a secret foreign device rather than an extraterrestrial vehicle? There are no scientific tests documented. No photos. Nothing that would indicate that extraterrestrials were on their minds until much later. In fact it would seem that while conclusions of extraterrestriality based upon the Brazel wreckage cannot be documented at all from 1947, they can be documented only from the late 1970s onward when the present manifestation of the Roswell debate first surfaced. This was at a time when the extraterrestriality of UFOs was well-established in the public mind and could have provided psychological cannon-fodder for a rebirth of the Roswell object as a space vehicle piloted by aliens. As someone who is hard to convince regarding crashed saucers and alien bodies, I would ask this: Is there any evidence of Roswell witnesses' documented statements about the extraterrestrial nature of the object pre-dating 1978?

Some would say, "Well then, what about the bodies?" There is less evidence for this aspect of the story than that for the wreckage being extraterrestrial. The Weaver report concludes:

"Air Force research efforts did not disclose any records of the recovery of any 'alien' bodies or extraterrestrial materials."

The report also pointed out:

"...the pro-UFO groups who espouse the alien bodies theories cannot even agree among themselves as to what, how many, and where, such bodies were supposedly recovered."

In late 1977, press reports appeared which may have given rise to the later era of crashed saucers, only a matter of months afterwards. The November 26, 1977 New Orleans Times-Picayune published a story, "No UFO Probes Without 'Little Green Men,'" summarizing NASA's view that they would not launch a new UFO inquiry without "...solid evidence such as a 'little green man,' or at least a piece of metal from a UFO." NASA's Assistant for Special Projects, Dave Williamson, went on to say, "Give me one little green man - not a theory or a memory of one - and we can have a multimillion dollar program." (emphasis added). Early in 1977 a sensation was created by an alleged UFO which crashed into an ice-covered pond in Wakefield, New Hampshire. Follow-up reports on that mystery appeared in various papers on January 9, 1978. Palm Beach, Florida papers reported on a strange object crashing into the ocean (Post-Times, 1-2-78).

Many of Leonard Stringfield's sources for his first in a series of reports on crashed UFOs surfaced in 1977 and early 1978. Jesse Marcel surfaced, according to Stanton Friedman's and Don Berliner's book, Crash At Corona, on February 20, 1978, in the midst of a sudden surge of interest in crash/retrievals. A major sensation was created in July 1978 when Stringfield presented his findings, sans Roswell, at a Mutual UFO Network symposium in Dayton, Ohio. After this, serious interest in Roswell began.

The point of all this is to show that Roswell did not surface in a void, that interest in crashed UFOs had been on the incline, probably as a result of NASA's expressed willingness to invest millions of dollars if a legitimate UFO artifact or body story had been made available to them. Clearly the message had been put out that the government would not be a threat in open discussions of perceived crashed-disc cases. And they weren't, given the non-prosecution of Jesse Marcel and others. We had already noted several issues of this newsletter ago that according to the Air Force's legal department, no UFO-related case had ever been prosecuted period.

Which of the following scenarios is more likely? That charges were not filed to avoid making martyrs out of crashed saucer witnesses, or that they weren't filed because there was nothing secret to prosecute? Violations of security oaths are surely not something that the Air Force would want to have happen on a regular basis. But by letting prosecutions of Roswell witnesses go by, assuming an alien spacecraft was involved, a message would be sent that such violations are appropriate if the violators feel personally inclined to do so. This is not an acceptable scenario in that if one talks, others will follow, acting on the precedent set by non-action against the first violation. It would give the impression that there was never much of a secret to protect in the first place! It would be a legal nightmare for the Air Force.

The Air Force Weaver report will not end the Roswell controversy. It is suspected that the intention in reality was to reduce the noise level and, if lucky, find the smoking gun. A reasonable possibility has been raised but support of it, as well as opposition to it, is going to have to take the form of more than "So and so said such and such" to end it. It is expected that the General Accounting Office's report on Roswell will follow similar lines, inasmuch as the Air Force had to have been a major source for the GAO. And it is expected that hoards of condemnation will come down on the GAO as well since being a government entity means that you are automatically part of the cover-up! What else can the GAO say? They are in no position to declare the truthfulness of scientific facts. They are government bean-counters! Their purpose is to make sure that government activities are being pursued with fiscal responsibility, that agencies are obeying the law. The GAO may be able to condemn the Air Force for misstatements without saying anything about

the reality of the Roswell incident or its possible extraterrestrial nature. CAUS will deal with the GAO report when available.

PROOF OF MURPHY'S LAW IN UFOLOGY

The February 1995 issue of Milwaukee Magazine published a remarkable article concerning Don Schmitt, half of the Schmitt/Randle team who have been at the forefront of investigations in the Roswell incident, who have two books under their belts, and who have a TV movie based upon their work.

The article is remarkable because charges were made by the author, Gillian Sender, that Don Schmitt was less than truthful about aspects of his background and education. Specifically, the article declared that false statements were made by Schmitt regarding his attendance at the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee and Marquette University. He also misinformed the writer about receiving a degree from Concordia College.

Additionally, the article revealed that Schmitt was a police informant on illegal drug activities rather than an employee of the police department in his area, an impression this writer had of Schmitt's employment from what little he would say about it. Narcotics agent indeed! Continuing on in the article, other curious statements by Schmitt characterized the entire membership of the Mutual UFO Network as "kooks" (this editor is a member), and that only Schmitt and partner Randle were "professionals" in the field, while "the rest are amateurs." The article ended by Schmitt indicating that he was at the top of his field, and that somehow success in the UFO field was defined by having "bestselling books" and a motion picture.

While one can dismiss some of these remarks as momentary arrogance and bluster, the false statements about Schmitt's background were not so easily brushed off. The implications are obvious - if one can disseminate exaggerated claims to boost one's personal status in such mundane areas as education and employment, what spinmeistering can be done with details of a bizarre story like Roswell?

However, this story became even more bizarre because shortly after the article in Milwaukee Magazine, Gillian Sender had been quietly informed of Schmitt's true employment status - that of a letter carrier for the U.S. Postal Service! This was an especially striking revelation for this editor because never once did Schmitt let on to me that he was a fellow postal worker and a colleague (I am a financial clerk currently and an employee since 1970). More on this later.

A follow-up letter in Milwaukee Magazine in March added more fuel to the fire. An anonymous letter writer, possibly another postal employee, said that Schmitt delivered mail out of the Hartford, Wisconsin post office, and that "If you believe half of what he tells you, you are a prospect for buying a bridge." Gillian Sender, in a follow-up comment to that said that Schmitt insisted he earned his living as a medical illustrator, but that the Hartford Postmaster, Ken Eppler, confirmed Schmitt's status, full-time, and that Schmitt had been there since 1974.

This led to a strange letter circulated by Kevin Randle to various correspondents, a letter from Postmaster Eppler to "whom it may concern." The important statement in the letter says, "...it is implied that Donald Schmitt has worked full-time for the U.S. Postal Service since 1974. Not only is this untrue, but I have never made such a statement to Milwaukee Magazine or anyone else."

Now the implication of this letter is that Schmitt does not work for the Postal Service. However, repeated confirmation by others of

Schmitt's employment at the Hartford Post Office was verified. The important words in Eppler's letter were "full time." No one begins full time in the Postal Service. My employment began in 1970 as a part-time regular, meaning you are used as needed during a trial period, after which you are then converted to a regular, full-time employee. But for all intents and purposes you come on to this job in this way as a career employee. Using the logic expressed in Postmaster Eppler's letter, I could declare myself a part-time postal worker, even though I haven't worked part-time since 1971! The letter appeared to have been an attempt to help out an employee in a bind, though it backfired.

To clarify the record, Postmaster Eppler released a letter dated April 19, 1995 to Robert Todd with, "Mr. Schmitt started with the Postal Service in 1974 and is currently employed as a Rural Letter Carrier."

By this time many of you are saying, "What a mess!" Indeed, by this time it was clear to everyone, including Schmitt, that it was a mess. Things had to change.

Schmitt released a statement through the Center for UFO Studies:

"Recently several parties have raised questions concerning my educational background and place of employment. Although these matters should not, and do not, have any bearing on the Roswell investigation that Kevin Randle and I have conducted, I thought it best to offer these clarifying comments.

I have been an employee of the U.S. Postal Service since 1974. I worked part-time until 1983, when I became a full-time rural letter carrier. During all this period, I have been a freelance commercial artist. I will soon receive a bachelor's degree from Concordia College with a major in Liberal Arts, and I've been accepted into a newly-established graduate program in criminal justice studies at Concordia.

I would like to offer my sincerest apologies for any false or misleading statements I made about my background. I regret any misunderstandings that may have sprung from this.

As a consequence, I have resigned, effective April 13, 1995, as Director of Special Investigations of the Center for UFO Studies. I will continue, with the support of my colleagues, as a CUFOS board member. I want to thank all those who have offered their support and friendship to me during the past few months."

Kevin Randle, in the June 5, 1995 issue of James Moseley's Saucer Smear newsletter, conceded that Schmitt had lied about his background and that he had been deceived by Schmitt's protestations of innocence. It had to have been a bitter pill to swallow after spending years of funds, time and effort in promoting the Roswell story as evidence of extraterrestrial visitation.

This was all an unexpected and unhappy development in the Roswell debate, certainly one for which it would be easy over which the Roswell critics could gloat. Whether one likes it or not, the perception of this is going to be that the entire investigation by Schmitt and Randle is tainted. If half of the investigative team has a problem telling the truth on ordinary matters, and can not only so easily deceive the other half of his team, friends and readers, but can deny the correctness of the charges to their faces, a complete reexamination of all in which he was involved is in the future. It is an example of the kind of pitfall that this editor had recognized during the MJ-12 controversy. Whether a claim is put forth containing multi-interpretational evidence or character flaws in the proponent, and that claim

tends to be extremely unorthodox, it is built upon a house of cards and a slight breeze can blow it away. I recall a discussion with Don Schmitt years back before the first book appeared in which I was assured that the Roswell case was airtight, that critics did not have a leg upon which to stand. Another researcher close to the investigation expressed the notion that the "big guns" had yet to be fired for the pro-alien Roswell evidence, this voiced less than a year ago. It appears that the gun had fired but the troops forgot to aim the barrel and, instead, demolished the battery. Such are the consequences of overstating one's case.

But the overriding question which should be at the core of anyone's thinking on this matter is why someone would want to so desperately hide their employment with the U.S. Postal Service. Exaggerating one's educational credentials is something that happens every day in the world. But hiding a full-time job is a major task. Why? To answer this, I'll be doing something I never thought I'd be doing - mixing discussion of my real world employment, the Postal Service, with my nether world occupation, UFO research. I only speak for myself and not the Postal Service, but I have been in longer than Schmitt - 25 years in mail processing and finance. I'm not a letter carrier like Don but I am in a carrier station where I work with and hear them talk every day.

There are two stereotypes of postal employees which persist in the minds of many people. One goes back quite a few years, popularized by a competing delivery company, that a postal person is a shiftless, lazy drain of funds, totally uncaring about customers. A television commercial, which many may still remember, had two postal employees at a stamp window long-windedly discussing a lucrative retirement while a horde of customers wait impatiently for service.

Another stereotype, much more recent, is that a postal employee is a potential crazed killer. A number of violent incidents at post offices in the last few years have contributed to this notion, occasionally prompting customers to ask me, albeit tongue-in-cheek, "How many people have you killed today?" Apart from a tiny percentage of the whole, these stereotypes are untrue but for an employee on the line, either a clerk or a carrier, there is hardly a week that goes by without some similar imagery being tossed in the employee's face by an angry person.

Again another bit of imagery was expressed by a customer to me about letter carriers in general - a guy with a pith helmet and shorts being chased down the street by a dog, spilling his mail along the way, i.e. a laughable comic figure (Cliff Clavin of TV's "Cheers"). I'm sure Don Schmitt is as aware of these stereotypes as I am.

A postal employee can react in two ways to this false imagery of his/her job. One can be good-humored about it and ignore the notions, or one can be utterly sensitive about it and not want to discuss the occupation. There are a large number of bright, inventive people working for the Postal Service. Many name UFOlogists are postal people. Schmitt certainly falls in this category of being knowledgeable and intelligent. There is little doubt too that he perceived his postal employment as a detriment to an image that he was creating - that of a researcher, investigator, author, lecturer who is hot on the trail of one of the biggest stories in history - potential contact with extraterrestrial life forms.

The fact is that most everyone who investigates UFOs must do it part-time for no salary. It is not the glamour image people have of a UFO investigator (Fox Mulder of "The X Files"), but it is reality. How many companies pay salaries with benefits to UFO investigators? The MUFON and CUFOS organizations rely mainly upon volunteer investigators.

Image is everything in the world today. You must look good to be taken seriously. Society demands it. More than one political pundit expressed the opinion that Abraham Lincoln, considered one of the United States' greatest presidents, probably could not be elected president today because his ears were too big and he was homely. Very precise imagery rules have been subjectively created by society to discern a "good," "attractive," "credible," "believable," "successful" person from a "bad," "plain," "credulous," "unreliable," "failure" of a person.

An "author, researcher, lecturer" is an acceptable image for an investigator of anything, including UFOs. A part-time UFO investigator, full-time postal worker is not an acceptable image no matter how knowledgeable that person may be. The public won't forget those stereotypes. So Don Schmitt is forced to divest himself of reality and play the games society wants played. The reward is "Celebrity" and all that goes with it. Somehow the logic of what a person says, any person, has been thrust into the background, replaced by a strange new set of standards of image and behavior.

Until society learns to cast off such predispositions, individuals will be forced to engage in petty deceptions in attempts to be successful. Deceptions, whether or not they are performed with good intentions, are still deceptions. UFO research has become littered with this kind of activity.

Is the picture becoming clear now? Can one see why the subject of crashed-discs must be seen in a very critical way? It is not an issue of mere belief in words, which in itself is a surrender of rational thought. It has been shown that spin artists can take even the most ordinary information and make it into something it is not. What can be done with a matter that is not so easily checkable (50-year-old memories, extraterrestrial encounters)? Essentially, all of us are at the mercy of the story-teller.

At this writing, the Schmitt/Randle team have split because of this problem. Where does that leave the Roswell story? As a UFOlogical "Flying Dutchman," adrift in a sea of contention, still waiting for a landfall which may never arrive?

Murphy's Law - that which says that if anything can possibly go wrong, it will - has worked again! When is UFOlogy going to change it's imagery?

RECENT NOTES

- The clipping attached on page 8, a Jack Anderson column, gives an insight on what is to come from the General Accounting Office inquiry into Roswell. From this it appears that the GAO team had the same problem as Project Sign, some of the members leaning towards an exotic explanation for Roswell, others very skeptical that aliens were involved.

- Much controversy has been generated by stories of a film taken at the scene of the Roswell crash. Said to be 91 minutes in length, the film was supposedly shot by a Jack Barnett, who held on to the film for decades. The film shows among other things an autopsy being performed on an alien. The normally conservative British press, where the film is currently being held, has reported seriously on the story, though oddly enough the UFO community has been scathing in it's criticism of details in the film. Due to the large number of people in the film's scenes and the length (If one will check Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide, there is hardly a page where one won't find a movie within one minute of 91 minutes, implying a professional production that may never have made the theaters), as well as other problems, it is very

likely a hoax. The man controlling selected viewing of the film, Ray Santilli, is uncooperative in answering questions about it, and appears to be most interested in selling the film to the highest bidder. The film may appear on television in August.

Washington Post June 1, 1995

JACK ANDERSON and MICHAEL BINSTEIN

'Roswell Incident' Revisits Air Force

Investigators at the General Accounting Office are quietly skeptical about whether the Air Force told the truth when responding to a controversial request for information by a member of Congress in 1993. So far, however, investigators are not planning to voice their concerns in public, or in a report to be released soon.

At issue are events that took place nearly half a century ago in Roswell, N.M.—the so-called Roswell Incident—and whether the Air Force has told the truth about what it knows. Over the years, the Roswell Incident has become a cornerstone of UFO myth, chronicled frequently on television and in at least four books.

It all began in July 1947, when a rancher northwest of Roswell found debris from a crashed object he thought was a flying saucer. Aluminum foil-like bits and pieces were reported to be impervious to burning or ripping, and returned to their original shape after crumpling.

When the then-Army Air Corps investigated, the first official press release issued by local officers declared the military had found remnants of a flying saucer. Within hours, however, higher-ups declared the first press release a mistake and explained that the debris was merely a downed weather balloon.

The story died for decades until the late 1970s, when television picked up on the story. Consistent denials by the Air Force—and the disappearance of related documents—only added fuel for the conspiracy theorists.

The issue finally made it to Capitol Hill when a UFO skeptic, Rep. Steven Schiff (R-N.M.), decided to get to the bottom of things. In March 1993 he asked the Air Force to declassify and provide him with all material relating to the incident. But rather than search through their records, Air Force officials referred Schiff to the National Archives—a move that Schiff took as an insult. The archives promptly told Schiff it had no information.

"Typically, the Pentagon is eager to comply with congressional requests for information," a Schiff spokesman told us. "Yet they just shunted us off to the archives." Seven months later, Schiff called in the GAO (the investigative arm of Congress) to look for documents and to find out if the Air Force lied to him.

Once the GAO launched its inquiry, Air Force officials suddenly found documents—not in the National Archives, but in their files. They issued a

short report last September claiming the debris was part of Project Mogul, an experiment aimed at detecting future Soviet nuclear blasts by monitoring sound waves in the high atmosphere using airborne balloons and sensors. At the time of the Roswell Incident, however, the Soviets were still two years away from detonating their first nuclear bomb.

Although the GAO is not satisfied with the Air Force's explanation, it has confirmed the existence of Project Mogul. GAO officials add emphatically that no one involved in the audit believes the Air Force is covering up a UFO incident.

"But we do believe that something did happen at Roswell," said one source close to the investigation. "Something big. We don't know if it was a plane that crashed with a nuclear device on it . . . or if it was some other experimental situation. But everything we've seen so far points to an attempt on the part of the Air Force to lead anybody that looks at this down another track."

Enough things were happening around Roswell in 1947 to give the public a mistaken impression that UFOs were landing. Roswell was the home of the 509th Bomb Group, the atomic weapons unit that bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki two years earlier. Not far away was Alamogordo and the Trinity Site, where the first atomic bomb was exploded. White Sands Missile Range had begun its top secret tests as well.

The Air Force predicts it will get a clean bill of health from the GAO. A GAO spokesman angrily predicted we would be "embarrassed" if we suggested its soon-to-be-issued report was slated to be accusatory.

Another GAO source took a different tack: "What we have found so far is that the Air Force has not told Schiff the whole truth. But we aren't pursuing the truth, either. All our auditors have done is verify that some of the information that was given to Mr. Schiff was very wrong. But we may not call it that way in the end, depending on the way you look at it."

While our sources say the Air Force has been less than forthcoming, the GAO may not make the case in its upcoming report, especially since it might imply that the GAO believes a UFO landed at Roswell. "We will tend to err on the side of not fueling UFO theories," one GAO official explained.