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SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF  
UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS

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Conducted by the  
University of Colorado  
under contract No. 44620-67-C-0035  
with the  
United States Air Force

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Scientific Director

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Volume 1

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1  
00:00:39,910 --> 00:00:16,100

[Music]

2  
00:00:44,869 --> 00:00:42,229

ufos science and controversy

3  
00:00:46,069 --> 00:00:44,879

at the university of colorado by charles

4  
00:00:49,430 --> 00:00:46,079

lear

5  
00:00:51,510 --> 00:00:49,440

for a brief period in the late 1960s ufo

6  
00:00:53,510 --> 00:00:51,520

enthusiasts were encouraged by the fact

7  
00:00:55,270 --> 00:00:53,520

that some scientists were beginning to

8  
00:00:56,790 --> 00:00:55,280

take the subject seriously

9  
00:00:58,549 --> 00:00:56,800

this was due in large part to the

10  
00:01:01,110 --> 00:00:58,559

renowned atmospheric physicist

11  
00:01:02,709 --> 00:01:01,120

dr james mcdonald's coming forward and

12  
00:01:04,469 --> 00:01:02,719

publicly acknowledging that he was

13  
00:01:07,510 --> 00:01:04,479

investigating the mystery

14

00:01:09,590 --> 00:01:07,520

around the same time in 1966 project

15

00:01:11,830 --> 00:01:09,600

blue book scientific consultant dr

16

00:01:12,630 --> 00:01:11,840

j alan heineck angered many in the state

17

00:01:14,630 --> 00:01:12,640

of michigan

18

00:01:16,789 --> 00:01:14,640

by offering the possibility that some of

19

00:01:19,109 --> 00:01:16,799

the ufos reported during a flap that

20

00:01:21,030 --> 00:01:19,119

year in the state were swamp gas

21

00:01:23,030 --> 00:01:21,040

this led to a congressional hearing

22

00:01:24,310 --> 00:01:23,040

looking into the air force's handling of

23

00:01:26,469 --> 00:01:24,320

the ufo problem

24

00:01:27,670 --> 00:01:26,479

and that resulted in an air force funded

25

00:01:30,149 --> 00:01:27,680

scientific study

26  
00:01:30,950 --> 00:01:30,159  
at the university of colorado headed by

27  
00:01:33,910 --> 00:01:30,960  
physicist

28  
00:01:35,670 --> 00:01:33,920  
dr edward u condon this was something

29  
00:01:36,550 --> 00:01:35,680  
many in the ufo community had been

30  
00:01:38,469 --> 00:01:36,560  
hoping for

31  
00:01:40,069 --> 00:01:38,479  
and they were optimistic that something

32  
00:01:42,310 --> 00:01:40,079  
positive might come of it

33  
00:01:43,749 --> 00:01:42,320  
unfortunately the project ran into

34  
00:01:45,910 --> 00:01:43,759  
personality problems

35  
00:01:47,030 --> 00:01:45,920  
that nearly derailed it an article

36  
00:01:50,310 --> 00:01:47,040  
written by john g

37  
00:01:51,910 --> 00:01:50,320  
fuller and published in the may 14 1968

38  
00:01:54,149 --> 00:01:51,920

issue of look magazine

39

00:01:56,550 --> 00:01:54,159

looks deeply into the matter under the

40

00:01:58,709 --> 00:01:56,560

headline flying saucer fiasco

41

00:02:01,109 --> 00:01:58,719

the article is introduced as the

42

00:02:01,990 --> 00:02:01,119

extraordinary story of the half million

43

00:02:04,230 --> 00:02:02,000

dollar trick

44

00:02:05,830 --> 00:02:04,240

to make americans believe the condon

45

00:02:08,790 --> 00:02:05,840

committee was conducting

46

00:02:10,309 --> 00:02:08,800

an objective investigation after giving

47

00:02:12,949 --> 00:02:10,319

an overview of the project

48

00:02:16,150 --> 00:02:12,959

and its participants fuller references a

49

00:02:18,790 --> 00:02:16,160

story published early october 1966

50

00:02:19,430 --> 00:02:18,800

in the denver post project coordinator

51  
00:02:21,990 --> 00:02:19,440  
robert j

52  
00:02:24,309 --> 00:02:22,000  
lowe describing the ufo project as a

53  
00:02:26,470 --> 00:02:24,319  
function of the university was quoted as

54  
00:02:27,430 --> 00:02:26,480  
saying that it comes pretty close to the

55  
00:02:30,470 --> 00:02:27,440  
criteria

56  
00:02:32,869 --> 00:02:30,480  
of non-acceptability according to fuller

57  
00:02:34,229 --> 00:02:32,879  
condon was unable to spend much time in

58  
00:02:36,869 --> 00:02:34,239  
the project offices

59  
00:02:37,350 --> 00:02:36,879  
due to other responsibilities because of

60  
00:02:39,509 --> 00:02:37,360  
this

61  
00:02:42,350 --> 00:02:39,519  
low took on the majority of the decision

62  
00:02:45,110 --> 00:02:42,360  
making then on january 25

63  
00:02:46,710 --> 00:02:45,120

1967 condon made statements while

64

00:02:48,790 --> 00:02:46,720

speaking before a chapter of the

65

00:02:51,830 --> 00:02:48,800

honorary scientific fraternity

66

00:02:52,710 --> 00:02:51,840

sigma zai that strongly indicated he was

67

00:02:54,550 --> 00:02:52,720

biased

68

00:02:56,710 --> 00:02:54,560

fuller excerpts an article from the

69

00:02:59,509 --> 00:02:56,720

elmira new york star gazette

70

00:03:01,430 --> 00:02:59,519

quote unidentified flying objects are

71

00:03:03,750 --> 00:03:01,440

not the business of the air force

72

00:03:06,710 --> 00:03:03,760

dr edward yukondon said here wednesday

73

00:03:08,550 --> 00:03:06,720

night dr condon left no doubt as to his

74

00:03:10,550 --> 00:03:08,560

personal statements on the matter

75

00:03:12,630 --> 00:03:10,560

it is my inclination right now to

76  
00:03:13,670 --> 00:03:12,640  
recommend that the government get out of

77  
00:03:15,430 --> 00:03:13,680  
this business

78  
00:03:18,229 --> 00:03:15,440  
my attitude right now is that there's

79  
00:03:20,070 --> 00:03:18,239  
nothing to it with a smile he added but

80  
00:03:21,270 --> 00:03:20,080  
i'm not supposed to reach a conclusion

81  
00:03:23,670 --> 00:03:21,280  
for another year

82  
00:03:25,830 --> 00:03:23,680  
responding to criticism condon said his

83  
00:03:28,070 --> 00:03:25,840  
comments were taken out of context

84  
00:03:30,070 --> 00:03:28,080  
all the files relating to the study and

85  
00:03:30,630 --> 00:03:30,080  
the university's contract with the air

86  
00:03:32,470 --> 00:03:30,640  
force

87  
00:03:34,789 --> 00:03:32,480  
were open for perusal as part of an

88  
00:03:36,149 --> 00:03:34,799

effort to avoid any accusations of

89

00:03:38,789 --> 00:03:36,159

secrecy or cover-up

90

00:03:40,630 --> 00:03:38,799

a staff member roy craig was doing

91

00:03:41,830 --> 00:03:40,640

research for an upcoming speech at a

92

00:03:44,070 --> 00:03:41,840

teacher's conference

93

00:03:46,149 --> 00:03:44,080

when he came upon a memo labeled some

94

00:03:48,309 --> 00:03:46,159

thoughts on the ufo project

95

00:03:49,990 --> 00:03:48,319

it was in a file labeled air force

96

00:03:51,830 --> 00:03:50,000

contract and background

97

00:03:54,229 --> 00:03:51,840

and craig had been referred to the file

98

00:03:56,229 --> 00:03:54,239

by low the memo was written by

99

00:03:57,830 --> 00:03:56,239

low before the air force contract was

100

00:04:01,030 --> 00:03:57,840

signed and it contained

101  
00:04:04,149 --> 00:04:01,040  
these words our study would be conducted

102  
00:04:05,990 --> 00:04:04,159  
almost exclusively by non-believers who

103  
00:04:07,190 --> 00:04:06,000  
although they couldn't possibly prove a

104  
00:04:09,190 --> 00:04:07,200  
negative result

105  
00:04:10,789 --> 00:04:09,200  
could and probably would add an

106  
00:04:12,550 --> 00:04:10,799  
impressive body of evidence

107  
00:04:14,630 --> 00:04:12,560  
that there is no reality to the

108  
00:04:17,349 --> 00:04:14,640  
observations the trick would be

109  
00:04:18,310 --> 00:04:17,359  
i think to describe the project so that

110  
00:04:20,229 --> 00:04:18,320  
to the public

111  
00:04:22,950 --> 00:04:20,239  
it would appear a totally objective

112  
00:04:24,790 --> 00:04:22,960  
study but to the scientific community

113  
00:04:27,030 --> 00:04:24,800

would present the image of a group of

114

00:04:29,350 --> 00:04:27,040

non-believers trying their best to be

115

00:04:30,310 --> 00:04:29,360

objective but having almost a zero

116

00:04:32,469 --> 00:04:30,320

expectation

117

00:04:34,310 --> 00:04:32,479

of finding a saucer craig showed the

118

00:04:36,310 --> 00:04:34,320

memo to other staff members

119

00:04:38,070 --> 00:04:36,320

all were particularly disturbed by

120

00:04:39,990 --> 00:04:38,080

lowe's use of the word trick

121

00:04:42,870 --> 00:04:40,000

and the memo became known as the trick

122

00:04:44,790 --> 00:04:42,880

memo disenchantment among the staff grew

123

00:04:47,110 --> 00:04:44,800

and many options were considered

124

00:04:49,270 --> 00:04:47,120

including resigning on mass

125

00:04:50,950 --> 00:04:49,280

issuing a press release and putting out

126  
00:04:53,510 --> 00:04:50,960  
a minority report

127  
00:04:54,390 --> 00:04:53,520  
hannik mcdonald and staff members david

128  
00:04:56,950 --> 00:04:54,400  
saunders and

129  
00:04:58,110 --> 00:04:56,960  
norman levine held an informal meeting

130  
00:05:01,749 --> 00:04:58,120  
on december 12

131  
00:05:04,150 --> 00:05:01,759  
1967 in denver there they discussed the

132  
00:05:05,990 --> 00:05:04,160  
possibility of forming an organization

133  
00:05:08,150 --> 00:05:06,000  
consisting of professional level

134  
00:05:10,629 --> 00:05:08,160  
individuals that would continue with the

135  
00:05:12,629 --> 00:05:10,639  
scientific investigation of ufos

136  
00:05:13,830 --> 00:05:12,639  
regardless of the colorado study's

137  
00:05:15,670 --> 00:05:13,840  
conclusions

138  
00:05:18,150 --> 00:05:15,680

after the meeting mcdonald learned about

139

00:05:20,230 --> 00:05:18,160

the trick memo and was shocked

140

00:05:21,350 --> 00:05:20,240

lowe phoned mcdonald at the university

141

00:05:23,430 --> 00:05:21,360

of arizona

142

00:05:25,749 --> 00:05:23,440

mcdonald had offered his services as a

143

00:05:26,550 --> 00:05:25,759

consultant and mcdonald expressed his

144

00:05:28,629 --> 00:05:26,560

concerns

145

00:05:31,029 --> 00:05:28,639

about the negative bias already being

146

00:05:33,029 --> 00:05:31,039

expressed by lowe and condon

147

00:05:34,710 --> 00:05:33,039

lowe hung up angrily and mcdonald

148

00:05:35,749 --> 00:05:34,720

followed up with a letter listing his

149

00:05:37,990 --> 00:05:35,759

complaints

150

00:05:40,070 --> 00:05:38,000

he called lowe's attention to the memo

151  
00:05:41,270 --> 00:05:40,080  
saying he was puzzled by the viewpoints

152  
00:05:43,670 --> 00:05:41,280  
expressed there

153  
00:05:44,550 --> 00:05:43,680  
administrative assistant mary louise

154  
00:05:46,550 --> 00:05:44,560  
armstrong

155  
00:05:48,390 --> 00:05:46,560  
was present when lowe read mcdonald's

156  
00:05:49,909 --> 00:05:48,400  
letter she reported that he was

157  
00:05:51,909 --> 00:05:49,919  
extremely angered by it

158  
00:05:53,430 --> 00:05:51,919  
and that he felt whoever gave a copy of

159  
00:05:56,390 --> 00:05:53,440  
the memo to mcdonald

160  
00:05:57,029 --> 00:05:56,400  
should be immediately fired on february

161  
00:05:59,590 --> 00:05:57,039  
7th

162  
00:06:01,510 --> 00:05:59,600  
saunders was called to condon's office

163  
00:06:01,990 --> 00:06:01,520

saunders was asked if he knew about the

164

00:06:04,469 --> 00:06:02,000

memo

165

00:06:05,270 --> 00:06:04,479

and where it was kept saunders responded

166

00:06:06,870 --> 00:06:05,280

by saying

167

00:06:09,590 --> 00:06:06,880

that the memo was only part of the

168

00:06:11,590 --> 00:06:09,600

problem in his mind the real problem

169

00:06:13,270 --> 00:06:11,600

was that the scientific integrity of the

170

00:06:14,950 --> 00:06:13,280

study was in jeopardy

171

00:06:17,430 --> 00:06:14,960

condon stayed with the subject of the

172

00:06:19,590 --> 00:06:17,440

memo he was furious that he had not been

173

00:06:22,070 --> 00:06:19,600

told that mcdonald knew about the memo

174

00:06:23,749 --> 00:06:22,080

and said for an act like that you should

175

00:06:25,430 --> 00:06:23,759

be ruined professionally

176  
00:06:27,590 --> 00:06:25,440  
while saunders brought up that there was

177  
00:06:29,510 --> 00:06:27,600  
a gap between the views of condon and

178  
00:06:32,070 --> 00:06:29,520  
low and the rest of the staff

179  
00:06:33,029 --> 00:06:32,080  
levine was summoned to appear saunders

180  
00:06:35,430 --> 00:06:33,039  
offered to stay

181  
00:06:37,110 --> 00:06:35,440  
but was physically escorted out by low

182  
00:06:39,590 --> 00:06:37,120  
as levine was entering

183  
00:06:40,309 --> 00:06:39,600  
levine disturbed by saunders ejection

184  
00:06:42,469 --> 00:06:40,319  
was also

185  
00:06:44,629 --> 00:06:42,479  
asked about the memo as there was

186  
00:06:46,309 --> 00:06:44,639  
nothing confidential about the memo

187  
00:06:48,390 --> 00:06:46,319  
levine didn't see that there was a

188  
00:06:49,270 --> 00:06:48,400

problem with bringing it to mcdonald's

189

00:06:51,350 --> 00:06:49,280

attention

190

00:06:53,350 --> 00:06:51,360

condon asked why levine hadn't brought

191

00:06:55,029 --> 00:06:53,360

it to him and levine replied that

192

00:06:56,950 --> 00:06:55,039

condon's public statements

193

00:06:59,189 --> 00:06:56,960

made it seem unlikely that there would

194

00:07:01,029 --> 00:06:59,199

be any effective communication

195

00:07:02,950 --> 00:07:01,039

condon told armstrong that he was going

196

00:07:03,990 --> 00:07:02,960

to fire both saunders and levine the

197

00:07:06,309 --> 00:07:04,000

next day

198

00:07:08,390 --> 00:07:06,319

armstrong had an impulse to resign but

199

00:07:09,589 --> 00:07:08,400

she decided to confront condon with the

200

00:07:11,270 --> 00:07:09,599

documentation

201  
00:07:13,909 --> 00:07:11,280  
showing the factors leading to the

202  
00:07:16,710 --> 00:07:13,919  
disagreements between him and his staff

203  
00:07:18,150 --> 00:07:16,720  
she spoke with content on february 22nd

204  
00:07:19,830 --> 00:07:18,160  
and pointed out that during her

205  
00:07:21,749 --> 00:07:19,840  
association with lo

206  
00:07:23,749 --> 00:07:21,759  
she saw strong evidence that he was

207  
00:07:24,550 --> 00:07:23,759  
trying to say as little as possible in

208  
00:07:27,350 --> 00:07:24,560  
the report

209  
00:07:29,270 --> 00:07:27,360  
in the most negative way possible condon

210  
00:07:31,350 --> 00:07:29,280  
asked her to write a follow-up letter

211  
00:07:33,350 --> 00:07:31,360  
and told her it would be unethical for

212  
00:07:36,230 --> 00:07:33,360  
her to disclose its contents

213  
00:07:36,870 --> 00:07:36,240

to anyone else armstrong decided to go

214

00:07:39,670 --> 00:07:36,880

public

215

00:07:41,430 --> 00:07:39,680

and left the project condon failed to

216

00:07:43,270 --> 00:07:41,440

respond to mcdonald's letter

217

00:07:45,350 --> 00:07:43,280

and mcdonald brought the matter to the

218

00:07:47,670 --> 00:07:45,360

attention of the executive officers

219

00:07:49,589 --> 00:07:47,680

of the national academy of sciences the

220

00:07:52,150 --> 00:07:49,599

organization that would be reviewing the

221

00:07:55,189 --> 00:07:52,160

results before the release to the public

222

00:07:56,710 --> 00:07:55,199

in a written protest meanwhile saunders

223

00:07:58,710 --> 00:07:56,720

and levine were dismissed

224

00:08:01,430 --> 00:07:58,720

and the news of their dismissal spread

225

00:08:03,589 --> 00:08:01,440

throughout the ufo community and beyond

226  
00:08:04,869 --> 00:08:03,599  
condon refused to comment on the near

227  
00:08:06,869 --> 00:08:04,879  
mutiny of his staff

228  
00:08:09,430 --> 00:08:06,879  
and lo said he would make no comment

229  
00:08:11,430 --> 00:08:09,440  
about saunders and levine's dismissals

230  
00:08:12,550 --> 00:08:11,440  
in spite of the publicity shedding light

231  
00:08:14,790 --> 00:08:12,560  
on the bias of both

232  
00:08:15,830 --> 00:08:14,800  
condon and low when the results of the

233  
00:08:18,150 --> 00:08:15,840  
study were released

234  
00:08:19,430 --> 00:08:18,160  
suggesting that ufos were unworthy of

235  
00:08:21,189 --> 00:08:19,440  
scientific study

236  
00:08:22,629 --> 00:08:21,199  
scientists who were starting to open

237  
00:08:25,589 --> 00:08:22,639  
their minds to the subject

238  
00:08:26,230 --> 00:08:25,599

retreated back into the shadows the ufos

239

00:08:28,070 --> 00:08:26,240

didn't

240

00:08:30,150 --> 00:08:28,080

and just a few years later there was a

241

00:08:31,990 --> 00:08:30,160

flap in 1973

242

00:08:33,909 --> 00:08:32,000

that was also the year that jl and

243

00:08:34,469 --> 00:08:33,919

heineck formed the center for ufo

244

00:08:36,149 --> 00:08:34,479

studies

245

00:08:49,590 --> 00:08:36,159

an organization that was filled with