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00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:17,720

The Air Force got a bum rap in these UFO investigations because it appears from the CIA documentation

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00:00:17,720 --> 00:00:21,720

that often the Air Force had to fib on behalf of the CIA.

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00:00:31,720 --> 00:00:38,720

Whenever public interest in UFOs seems to fade, a new story emerges to spark the imagination.

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00:00:38,720 --> 00:00:46,720

These Russian satellite photos displayed on the Internet in April 2000 show an abandoned Air Force base 90 miles north of Las Vegas.

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To UFO believers, the base is known as Area 51. They're convinced Area 51 is a prison for captive aliens.

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00:00:55,720 --> 00:01:06,720

Area 51 is surrounded by an air of mystery. People have taken to standing on nearby mountain ridges using telephoto lenses and trying to pierce the veil of secrecy, you might say.

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During the Cold War, Area 51 is used for experimental flights of super secret, high altitude stealth planes that are frequently mistaken for UFOs.

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00:01:17,720 --> 00:01:25,720

These sightings by ordinary citizens provide the CIA and the Air Force with a convenient cover for their clandestine operations.

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00:01:25,720 --> 00:01:32,720

So the government insisted that there was nothing happening at Area 51 and everybody knew something was going on.

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00:01:32,720 --> 00:01:36,720

Of course it had nothing to do with UFOs, but it was a cover-up.

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00:01:36,720 --> 00:01:44,720

The deception gives rise to rumors about downed UFOs and little bream men held behind Area 51's mountain wall.

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00:01:44,720 --> 00:01:54,720

People who work there are sworn to maximum secrecy. They won't even tell you much about how they get there and how they get back from it except they ride a bus.

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00:01:54,720 --> 00:01:59,720

And stories are that the buses themselves have blanked out windows.

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00:01:59,720 --> 00:02:03,720

The Air Force says there's no mystery attached to Area 51.

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00:02:03,720 --> 00:02:09,720

They insist the base is no longer in use and point to the recent Russian satellite photos as proof.

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00:02:09,720 --> 00:02:15,720

But UFO diehards cling to their belief that the government is covering up the truth.

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00:02:15,720 --> 00:02:21,720

This distrust has its roots in a bizarre incident that occurred during World War II.

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00:02:22,720 --> 00:02:34,720

In 1942, shortly after the Japanese sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, radar stations in California picked up signals from unidentified aircraft approaching Los Angeles from the sea.

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00:02:34,720 --> 00:02:45,720

The Los Angeles air alarm, as it's become known, of February 1942 is very impressive because a number of unidentified aircraft was seen including one quite large one.

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00:02:45,720 --> 00:02:52,720

The city is blacked out. Searchlights scan the skies. Anti-aircraft batteries are manned for action.

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00:02:52,720 --> 00:03:03,720

Americans considered that they were being invaded by the Japanese because only a night or so before a Japanese submarine had attacked the Los Angeles coastline.

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00:03:03,720 --> 00:03:09,720

Eye witnesses report that the mysterious air armada is immune to the exploding shells.

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00:03:09,720 --> 00:03:15,720

The aircraft hover over the city for about an hour. Then they slip away as silently as they came.

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00:03:15,720 --> 00:03:20,720

At least a million people witnessed these events.

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00:03:20,720 --> 00:03:27,720

1430 rounds of ammunition were fired at the objects. Nothing was brought down.

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00:03:27,720 --> 00:03:34,720

In the wake of the action, there are three deaths from heart attacks and damage to private property, all from friendly fire.

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00:03:34,720 --> 00:03:38,720

The incident makes the front page of the Los Angeles Times.

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00:03:38,720 --> 00:03:44,720

It's popularly believed that the government and the military suppressed this.

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00:03:44,720 --> 00:03:49,720

Now in fact, no such thing happened. I mean, a story ran in the papers the following day.

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00:03:49,720 --> 00:03:57,720

An inquiry launched by the Navy Department attributes the action to wartime jitters claiming the Army fired at an empty sky.

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00:03:57,720 --> 00:04:07,720

The Army, as confirmed in recently declassified documents, disagrees, insisting that something extraordinary happened that night in LA, something that may never be explained.

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00:04:07,720 --> 00:04:14,720

Certainly from a UFO standpoint, there was no need for them to cover it up because it was unprecedented.

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00:04:14,720 --> 00:04:27,720

But clearly it was embarrassing to have to admit the existence of unexplained vehicles of unknown origin invading United States airspace over a major city.

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00:04:27,720 --> 00:04:37,720

In July 1947, a mysterious flying object crashes in the desert near Roswell, a New Mexico town located near an Air Force Base.

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00:04:37,720 --> 00:04:47,720

This famous event is by now so riddled with government denials and distortions that the original reaction to the sighting is scarcely remembered.

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00:04:47,720 --> 00:04:57,720

Nobody thought that this was a flying saucer from outer space. There was just wreckage and the wreckage was of balsa wood and tape and bits of neoprene.

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00:04:57,720 --> 00:05:07,720

The debris is confiscated by an Air Force intelligence officer, Major Jesse Marcell, who carts away the bits and pieces in the trunk of his car.

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00:05:07,720 --> 00:05:11,720

The Air Force bundles its explanation to the public.

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00:05:11,720 --> 00:05:20,720

The initial press statement that went out was that a flying saucer had been recovered and taken to Roswell Army Airfield.

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00:05:20,720 --> 00:05:22,720

Later on they said it was all a mistake.

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00:05:22,720 --> 00:05:30,720

The Air Force retracts its statement almost immediately, declaring that the downed UFO was nothing more than a deflated weatherbubble.

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00:05:30,720 --> 00:05:33,720

Talk of flying saucers in Roswell ceases.

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00:05:33,720 --> 00:05:41,720

If you look in any UFO book, throughout the 50s, 60s and most of the 70s, you will not find a single reference to Roswell in there.

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00:05:41,720 --> 00:05:50,720

So the military denial that this was anything more exotic than a weather balloon was actually a story that stuck.

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00:05:50,720 --> 00:06:01,720

For 30 years the Air Force's denial is accepted by the public, leaving only hardcore UFO buffs to challenge the government's assertion that there was no cover-up at Roswell.

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00:06:01,720 --> 00:06:11,720

There was a cover-up. The cover-up was of a project that even the authorities at the Army Air Base in Roswell were unaware of.

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00:06:11,720 --> 00:06:25,720

The secret project is called Project Mogul. It's an ill-fated attempt by the Air Force to detect Soviet nuclear tests using microphones attached to high-altitude balloons that soar at 45,000 feet.

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00:06:25,720 --> 00:06:29,720

The debris found at Roswell comes from one of these balloons.

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00:06:30,720 --> 00:06:35,720

Project Mogul was secret. It's not clear that it was an important secret.

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00:06:35,720 --> 00:06:41,720

I mean, unimportant secrets are kept just as tightly as important ones. That's sort of the military mind.

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00:06:41,720 --> 00:06:56,720

Project Mogul remains a mystery for 50 years. By the time the Air Force finally discloses the truth, the Roswell legend has grown to include alien autopsies and UFOs hidden in government compounds.

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00:06:57,720 --> 00:07:05,720

The dusty desert town no one had ever heard of becomes a profitable tourist attraction and a feeding trough for UFO addicts.

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00:07:08,720 --> 00:07:16,720

For government intelligence agencies, Roswell is the beginning of a long, sometimes disastrous, involvement with UFOs.

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00:07:16,720 --> 00:07:23,720

When we continue, concerns about UFOs spread into the highest levels of the United States government.

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00:07:26,720 --> 00:07:41,720

In 1948, UFOs claim their first martyr. Captain Thomas Mantell and three other National Guard fighter pilots are on a routine flight from Kentucky to Georgia when they're ordered to pursue an unidentified flying object.

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00:07:41,720 --> 00:07:55,720

Mantell was flying a P-51 Mustang, and he rapidly climbed to a height of about 22,000 feet, which was really pushing the envelope for that particular aircraft.

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00:07:56,720 --> 00:08:06,720

One of the pilots runs out of fuel and makes a forced landing. The other two give up for lack of oxygen. Mantell alone continues the chase.

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00:08:06,720 --> 00:08:12,720

He was probably at that altitude running short of oxygen. Whatever happened, we shall probably never know.

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00:08:13,720 --> 00:08:23,720

The control tower records this final message from Mantell. Coming up on what appears to be a metallic object, tremendous in size, directly overhead and slightly above.

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00:08:23,720 --> 00:08:29,720

A few hours later, wreckage from Mantell's plane is found strewn across an open field.

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00:08:30,720 --> 00:08:39,720

This was the first time, as far as we know, that a pilot had lost his life in the pursuit of an unidentified flying object.

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00:08:39,720 --> 00:08:47,720

The official report states that Mantell died chasing a weather balloon, or perhaps he must have taken a distant planet for a UFO.

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00:08:47,720 --> 00:08:58,720

It's hard to believe that an accomplished pilot such as Thomas Mantell would have been fooled by either a balloon or the planet Venus. I simply don't believe it.

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00:08:58,720 --> 00:09:03,720

But most experts believe there's a simpler explanation for Mantell's death.

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00:09:04,720 --> 00:09:18,720

Conspiracy theorists say that Mantell's plane was shot down by a UFO. I think a more likely explanation is that he passed out because of the lack of oxygen at that height.

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00:09:18,720 --> 00:09:24,720

The Mantell incident gains attention in the press and there's no evidence of any government interference.

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00:09:25,720 --> 00:09:39,720

As the Cold War begins to heat up, UFO sightings take on a more sinister aspect. Fear of a nuclear holocaust translates into fear of the unknown.

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00:09:39,720 --> 00:09:49,720

UFO reports by ordinary Americans increase dramatically. The government feels a sense of urgency to prevent the sightings from spreading into mass hysteria.

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00:09:49,720 --> 00:10:05,720

The CIA and the Air Force were concerned that not only would public opinion be set off kilter by UFO reports, but that the country's early warning systems might be saturated, setting the United States off guard in the event of a Soviet attack.

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00:10:05,720 --> 00:10:21,720

Declassified CIA reports reveal that at the height of the Cold War, the agency took the potential threat of UFOs seriously. Some CIA analysts speculate that a saucer-shaped aircraft being developed by the British and Canadians may cause the rash of sightings.

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00:10:21,720 --> 00:10:29,720

Others believe that the Russians have designed UFO lookalikes that are flying over the United States to strike fear into the population.

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00:10:30,720 --> 00:10:43,720

And you really have to understand that the CIA was very, very concerned about the Soviet Union and their capabilities. Unless you understand that relationship, you cannot understand the UFO phenomena.

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00:10:44,720 --> 00:10:59,720

In October 1955, Richard Russell, the powerful Georgia Senator who was chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, embarks on a fact-finding tour of the Soviet Union. He hopes to find out if the Russians are invading American airspace.

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00:10:59,720 --> 00:11:08,720

He was taking a trip through Russia, presumably to pick up information on the status of defensive and offensive capabilities of the Soviets.

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00:11:09,720 --> 00:11:16,720

Traveling by train through southern Russia, Russell looks out his compartment window and is confronted by an astonishing sight.

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00:11:17,720 --> 00:11:28,720

He actually saw two circular or disc-shaped aircraft as he put it, taking off vertically. They rose slowly and then shot off at high speed.

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00:11:28,720 --> 00:11:31,720

Russell races out of his compartment to find his aids.

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00:11:32,720 --> 00:11:44,720

Richard Russell ran in to the room where these men were, told them, look out the window, sure enough here's another one of these objects, and then Russell said, we've been told these things don't exist, now we know that they do.

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00:11:45,720 --> 00:11:55,720

In a report to the CIA, Russell's military advisor and witness to the sighting Colonel John Hathaway corroborates the senator's account of the remarkable sighting.

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00:11:56,720 --> 00:12:04,720

The CIA had sort of officially arrived at the conclusion that there was nothing to this problem of flying saucers.

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00:12:04,720 --> 00:12:10,720

So now all of a sudden they're confronted with what they have to consider to be a highly credible report by a credible source.

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00:12:11,720 --> 00:12:19,720

Out of respect for Russell's position in the Senate, both the CIA and the FBI conduct intensive investigations into the cause of the sightings.

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00:12:19,720 --> 00:12:32,720

Senator Russell's report was taken very seriously, they interviewed him extensively, and the determination from that was that what they had really seen were Soviet jet fighters in a very, very steep climb.

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00:12:34,720 --> 00:12:46,720

After testimony is completed, the CIA is anxious to conceal its part in the investigation. Russell's report is buried in the agency's secret files where it remains classified for 30 years.

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00:12:47,720 --> 00:12:57,720

It's very easy for us to look back on it from the year 2000 and say, well gee, you should have released that material, and they probably should have.

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00:12:59,720 --> 00:13:06,720

Sightings such as Russell spur the CIA and the Air Force into stepping up their investigations of civilian sightings in the United States.

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00:13:07,720 --> 00:13:12,720

Publicly, the CIA continues to deny its participation in UFO investigations.

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00:13:12,720 --> 00:13:22,720

The CIA never really joined with the Air Force in investigating UFOs. The Air Force had responsibility for investigating UFOs.

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00:13:23,720 --> 00:13:39,720

Since 1947, the Air Force has monitored and evaluated all UFO activity in the United States. Its investigative arm operates first as Project Sine, then as Project Grudge, and finally in 1952 as Project Blue Book.

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00:13:40,720 --> 00:13:59,720

Project Blue Book was the United States Air Force official study into the UFO phenomenon. Essentially, it ran from 47 through to 69, and it looked at the sightings again to see whether there was anything of any defense significance.

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00:14:00,720 --> 00:14:14,720

Air Force officers attached to Project Blue Book sift through endless reports and interview thousands of eyewitnesses. On January 29, 1952, General John Samford holds a press conference at the Pentagon to explain these sightings.

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00:14:15,720 --> 00:14:35,720

Out of this great massive report, we have been able adequately to explain the great bulk of them. We have been able to explain them as hoaxes, as erroneously identified friendly aircraft, as meteorological or electronic phenomena, or as light aberrations.

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00:14:35,720 --> 00:14:46,720

Out of more than 12,000 sightings investigated, the Air Force says more than 700 are unexplained. One such unexplained sighting reaches into the White House.

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00:14:46,720 --> 00:15:03,720

Well, there was a sighting in 1952 in Washington, D.C. of UFOs, and in fact they were picked up on National Airport's radar, three unidentified flying objects. So the Air Force actually scrambled fighter interceptors to find them.

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00:15:04,720 --> 00:15:21,720

Washington experiences an epidemic of UFO sightings. At least 200 people say they saw UFOs sail over the capital dome, and for three days, other sightings are reported. The reports reach CIA Director Walter Bedell Smith, who is quoted later as saying,

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00:15:21,720 --> 00:15:30,720

if it was one chance in 10,000 that this was true, we had to identify it and examine it because the national security of this country was at stake.

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00:15:31,720 --> 00:15:45,720

Now, this did disturb the Truman White House, and they began to look into this phenomena, and the Air Force then determined that it was a very natural phenomenon called a temperature inversion.

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00:15:46,720 --> 00:15:59,720

This explanation may have satisfied the White House, but UFO historians believe that President Truman is worried enough to instruct his national security advisors to draft a plan for counteracting an alien invasion.

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00:15:59,720 --> 00:16:07,720

The threat, real or imagined, soon passes, but the CIA and the military increase their surveillance of UFOs.

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00:16:08,720 --> 00:16:17,720

When we continue, a CIA investigation becomes a comedy of errors after two elderly sisters report a message sent to them from outer space.

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00:16:18,720 --> 00:16:30,720

The CIA, they believed that such tapes, however remote the chance, if these tapes were to contain extraterrestrial messages, then a major UFO incident was on their hands.

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00:16:38,720 --> 00:16:47,720

During the Cold War, Americans live in a climate of uncertainty, fearful that the world is moving quickly towards Armageddon.

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00:16:47,720 --> 00:16:53,720

The U.S. government faces the dilemma of trying to minimize those fears, which now include UFOs.

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00:16:53,720 --> 00:17:05,720

A major concern for the CIA was that the UFO phenomenon and any mass hysteria that would come with it would set the American public off balance and make them vulnerable to Soviet propaganda.

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00:17:07,720 --> 00:17:14,720

A steep climb in UFO sightings creates confusion among government intelligence agencies, particularly the CIA.

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00:17:14,720 --> 00:17:21,720

For all its know-how, the agency often has no explanation for the origin of unidentified flying objects.

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00:17:22,720 --> 00:17:31,720

They didn't have the sophisticated computers and satellites and technology to allow them to detect what this is or track it.

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00:17:31,720 --> 00:17:37,720

So they had to make excuses as to what was being seen in the sky so as not to alarm the public.

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00:17:38,720 --> 00:17:46,720

The CIA is obsessed with the idea that UFO paranoia, if unchecked, could mushroom into a national crisis.

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00:17:47,720 --> 00:17:54,720

CIA agents posing as Air Force officers are sent across the country to disparage sightings and discredit witnesses.

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00:17:55,720 --> 00:17:59,720

The agency, by its charter, is banned from operating domestically.

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00:17:59,720 --> 00:18:04,720

In order to contact American citizens, often the agency would employ military cover.

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00:18:05,720 --> 00:18:13,720

The agency uses the mass media to dissuade the public from believing in UFOs and establishes a scientific board of inquiry.

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00:18:13,720 --> 00:18:27,720

The CIA became so concerned about national security implications of UFOs that by late 1952 we actually established a scientific panel of civilian scientists

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00:18:27,720 --> 00:18:37,720

to look at this phenomena and see if there was any validity to the idea that it was either Soviet weaponry or people visiting it from other planets.

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00:18:38,720 --> 00:18:42,720

The panel is headed by California physicist Dr. H. P. Robertson.

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00:18:42,720 --> 00:18:51,720

As with other government attempts to find answers to the UFO problem, the Robertson panel's findings will eventually come under attack by UFO believers,

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00:18:51,720 --> 00:18:56,720

who maintain that some of the panel members are acting as flunkies for the CIA.

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00:18:57,720 --> 00:19:08,720

CIA convened the Robertson panel in 1953 to officially address the UFO question, but to do so covertly, as the CIA does most things.

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00:19:09,720 --> 00:19:15,720

The panel concludes its investigation, leaving questions about the origins of UFOs unanswered.

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00:19:16,720 --> 00:19:24,720

The scientists on the Robertson panel concluded that UFOs, whatever they were, were probably not of extraterrestrial origin.

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00:19:24,720 --> 00:19:34,720

The scientists suggested that the government engage in a public debunking campaign to minimize hysteria about UFOs.

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00:19:35,720 --> 00:19:44,720

In its eagerness to keep a lid on public reaction to UFO sightings, the CIA in 1955 becomes entangled in an embarrassing controversy.

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00:19:44,720 --> 00:19:52,720

The incident involves two eccentric sisters from Chicago, former vaudevillians named Mildred and Marie Meyer.

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00:19:54,720 --> 00:19:59,720

The Meyer sisters made a recording of what they believed were space messages.

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00:19:59,720 --> 00:20:05,720

These so-called space messages were nothing more than Morse code from a regular land-based transmitter,

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00:20:05,720 --> 00:20:11,720

but the incident caught the attention of the CIA, which was investigating UFOs at the time.

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00:20:12,720 --> 00:20:19,720

A CIA officer, DeWelt Walker, disguised in an Air Force uniform, is dispatched to interview the sisters.

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00:20:20,720 --> 00:20:27,720

They were all excited that they had talked to the officer and that the government was interested in what they had found.

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00:20:27,720 --> 00:20:36,720

Walker gets the Meyer sisters recording and brings it to Washington, where CIA analysts confirm that the so-called space message is Morse code.

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00:20:36,720 --> 00:20:41,720

The recording is classified as secret and hidden away in the CIA's files.

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00:20:41,720 --> 00:20:45,720

For a while, nothing more is heard about the Meyer sisters.

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00:20:45,720 --> 00:20:52,720

A few years later, civilian UFO researchers became interested in the case, began to dig for the facts,

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00:20:52,720 --> 00:21:02,720

and faced obfuscation and distortions from the agency that turned what might have been a tiny little incident into a major UFO controversy.

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00:21:04,720 --> 00:21:11,720

In 1957, Dr. Leon Davidson, a physicist and UFO researcher, gets wind of the Meyer story.

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00:21:11,720 --> 00:21:20,720

He goes to Chicago and interviews the sisters. There he learns about Walker's visit and suspects the Air Force officer is really a CIA agent.

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00:21:21,720 --> 00:21:28,720

Davidson hurls CIA officials to find out which agency conducted the Meyer inquiry, the CIA or the Air Force.

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00:21:28,720 --> 00:21:30,720

He gets the run-around from both.

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00:21:30,720 --> 00:21:32,720

And Davidson was no fool.

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00:21:32,720 --> 00:21:36,720

So he said, look, something's going wrong here. Tell me the truth.

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00:21:36,720 --> 00:21:41,720

And he kept writing back and the agency tried to explain and they got themselves in deeper and deeper.

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00:21:41,720 --> 00:21:45,720

The CIA steadfastly denies that Walker is a CIA employee.

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00:21:45,720 --> 00:21:54,720

Then to his dismay, Davidson is told that all the evidence pertaining to the Meyer sisters investigation has been destroyed to conserve file space.

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00:21:54,720 --> 00:22:00,720

Davidson is now firmly convinced that the CIA is involved in a UFO cover-up.

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00:22:00,720 --> 00:22:11,720

Had they simply been able to tell him the truth and release the records to him, I think the whole thing would have gone away.

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00:22:11,720 --> 00:22:23,720

Further controversy has stirred up in 1958 when a former Marine Corps pilot, Major Donald Kehoe, tells the media that there's a government conspiracy to hush up the truth about UFOs.

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00:22:23,720 --> 00:22:31,720

Major Donald Kehoe was a great pioneer who stuck his neck out in the early days, championing the cause of the UFO situation.

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00:22:31,720 --> 00:22:44,720

And he was the founder of NYCAP, the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena, and drew to this organization dozens and dozens of highly qualified military personnel.

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00:22:45,720 --> 00:22:55,720

Kehoe argues that the government has in its possession reams of evidence proving that UFOs controlled by a superior intelligence are currently in our midst.

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00:22:55,720 --> 00:23:09,720

We are being observed by some type of device which is ahead of us, far ahead of us, and is probably controlled by a highly advanced superior civilization.

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00:23:09,720 --> 00:23:16,720

It has reached a point where many people in the Air Force have the same conclusion. In fact, the Air Force...

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00:23:16,720 --> 00:23:31,720

Kehoe's voice is soon joined by others. Air Force Captain Edward J. Ruppelt, formerly in charge of Project Blue Book, the Air Force's UFO investigative arm, confides in Kehoe that the CIA is behind

the Air Force's debunking of UFO sightings.

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00:23:31,720 --> 00:23:40,720

Ruppelt tells Kehoe, we're ordered to hide sightings whenever possible and ridicule the witness. We even have to discredit our own pilots.

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00:23:40,720 --> 00:23:47,720

An angry denial by Air Force spokesman Colonel Lawrence Tacker is broadcast on national television.

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00:23:47,720 --> 00:23:55,720

Our critics continually charge that the United States Air Force is withholding information from the general public on this subject.

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00:23:56,720 --> 00:24:02,720

This is absolutely untrue. We are not hiding anything. We have nothing to hide.

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00:24:02,720 --> 00:24:12,720

The obsessive secrecy over UFOs produces a controversial document that when made public in 1987 is condemned as bogus by UFO historians.

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00:24:12,720 --> 00:24:22,720

Called Majestic 12 or MJ12, the document bears the signatures of the biggest names in national security affairs during the late 40s.

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00:24:23,720 --> 00:24:34,720

One of the beliefs about MJ12 is that President Truman and his advisors were so concerned about UFOs that they formed this secret group to hide the truth.

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00:24:34,720 --> 00:24:42,720

The document purportedly calls for a total blackout of pertinent evidence pointing to the existence of extraterrestrial beings and spacecraft.

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00:24:43,720 --> 00:24:52,720

It's all too sensational. Real government documents, even when they talk about extraordinary things, are much more serious and sober.

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00:24:52,720 --> 00:24:56,720

The MJ12 documents read like a pop culture document.

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00:24:56,720 --> 00:25:04,720

The obvious inconsistencies in this document convert even hardened UFO believers into doubting its authenticity.

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00:25:05,720 --> 00:25:09,720

I'm convinced that these are indeed fabrications, quite clever fabrications.

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00:25:09,720 --> 00:25:18,720

And the clincher came when one of the papers in the documents is a memorandum supposedly signed by President Truman,

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00:25:18,720 --> 00:25:23,720

which clearly was lifted from a known to be authentic Truman document.

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00:25:23,720 --> 00:25:28,720

Forgery or not, the contents of the disputed document re-emerged during the 1980s

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00:25:28,720 --> 00:25:35,720

when President Ronald Reagan advocates an invisible radioactive shield in outer space to deflect a nuclear attack

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00:25:35,720 --> 00:25:40,720

and, incidentally, protect the human race from an extraterrestrial invasion.

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00:25:40,720 --> 00:25:47,720

At a summit meeting in Geneva, Reagan broaches the subject to his Russian counterpart, Mikhail Gorbachev.

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00:25:47,720 --> 00:26:00,720

Gorbachev said, the United States president discussed an extraterrestrial threat and would our forces collaborate jointly if there was such a threat.

172

00:26:00,720 --> 00:26:05,720

Towards the end of the speech to the United Nations General Assembly in 1987,

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00:26:05,720 --> 00:26:11,720

Reagan again brings up the subject of extraterrestrials. The president is reported to have said the following.

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00:26:11,720 --> 00:26:19,720

I occasionally think how quickly our differences worldwide would vanish if we were facing an alien threat from outside this world.

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00:26:19,720 --> 00:26:24,720

And yet I ask, is not an alien force already among us?

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00:26:24,720 --> 00:26:31,720

When we return, an American airbase in England is spooked by extraterrestrial visitors.

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00:26:31,720 --> 00:26:41,720

The witnesses were United States Air Force military personnel, so they were trained observers, not prone to making mistakes about things that they see.

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00:26:44,720 --> 00:26:55,720

In September 1964, at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California, Lieutenant Robert Jacobs, a photographic officer, films a routine missile test flight.

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00:26:55,720 --> 00:26:59,720

A few days later, Jacobs screens the footage for his superiors.

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00:26:59,720 --> 00:27:07,720

Clearly visible was a disc shaped craft which flew around the Atlas missile which was flying at thousands of miles an hour by this time.

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00:27:07,720 --> 00:27:14,720

Jacobs later describes the astonishing scene. We saw a UFO swim into the picture, distinct and clear.

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00:27:14,720 --> 00:27:18,720

It circled our missile, emitting vivid flashes of light, then vanished.

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00:27:18,720 --> 00:27:25,720

Seconds later, our missile malfunctioned and tumbled out of control in the Pacific Ocean, hundreds of miles short of its target.

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00:27:26,720 --> 00:27:32,720

Jacobs is sworn to secrecy. The film has turned over to two men he is certain are CIA agents.

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00:27:32,720 --> 00:27:40,720

Jacobs remains silent until 1982 when he comes forward to accuse the Air Force and CIA of a cover up.

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00:27:40,720 --> 00:27:49,720

He decided to come out with the story. People who then investigated his background were told that he'd never been at Vandenberg Air Force Base.

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00:27:49,720 --> 00:27:54,720

He never held a position of officer in charge of filming and so forth.

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00:27:54,720 --> 00:28:02,720

Without his military record and the telltale film, Jacobs is unable to prove that his story is true.

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00:28:02,720 --> 00:28:06,720

Media interest quickly evaporates.

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00:28:07,720 --> 00:28:14,720

By being so secretive about UFOs, not only did the CIA undermine its own credibility with UFO researchers,

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00:28:14,720 --> 00:28:21,720

it gave the public further reason to question the necessity of national security secrecy.

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00:28:21,720 --> 00:28:29,720

Fronting for the CIA, the Air Force in 1966 sets up another scientific panel to investigate the UFO phenomenon.

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00:28:29,720 --> 00:28:39,720

The panel was called the Condon Commission. It's headed up by Dr. Edward Condon, a distinguished physicist at the University of Colorado.

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00:28:39,720 --> 00:28:45,720

The Condon Committee was actually run independently by the University of Colorado

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00:28:45,720 --> 00:28:55,720

and it was an attempt to look at all the project blue book files to see whether there was a need to continue the research or whether the plug should be pulled.

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00:28:55,720 --> 00:29:01,720

For two years, the Condon Commission pursues its goal to determine whether UFOs pose a real threat.

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00:29:01,720 --> 00:29:10,720

The committee's credibility is compromised when two of its members abruptly resign, claiming the commission has already prejudged the non-existence of UFOs.

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00:29:10,720 --> 00:29:14,720

Could the commission's final report be trusted?

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00:29:14,720 --> 00:29:23,720

By the time of the Condon report, the CIA and the Air Force had a very poor track record when it came to informing the public about these agencies' interests in UFOs.

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00:29:23,720 --> 00:29:29,720

Therefore, it's not surprising that public skepticism would taint the proceedings.

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00:29:29,720 --> 00:29:38,720

After conducting an intensive two-year investigation, the commission concludes that UFOs, even if they were to exist, are no threat to national security.

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00:29:38,720 --> 00:29:49,720

The commission recommends dismantling Project Blue Book. The Air Force, by now anxious to put UFOs behind them, will implement the commission's recommendation and disband Blue Book.

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00:29:49,720 --> 00:29:54,720

But doubts about the committee's objectivity linger to this day.

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00:29:54,720 --> 00:30:00,720

It's difficult to say for sure whether the Condon Committee was truly independent.

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00:30:00,720 --> 00:30:07,720

The United States Air Force may have dropped some hints that it was keen to get out of the UFO business.

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00:30:08,720 --> 00:30:12,720

But the UFO controversy refuses to go away.

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00:30:12,720 --> 00:30:19,720

In March 1966, reported sightings near Ann Arbor, Michigan, trigger the interest of the CIA and the Air Force.

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00:30:19,720 --> 00:30:26,720

Dr. Alan Heineck, an astronomy professor at Northwestern University in Chicago, is asked to investigate the sightings.

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00:30:26,720 --> 00:30:33,720

Heineck, one of the key figures in the UFO investigations of the 60s, served as an advisor to Project Blue Book.

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00:30:34,720 --> 00:30:40,720

He goes to Ann Arbor, where increasing numbers of people insist they've seen UFOs.

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00:30:40,720 --> 00:30:45,720

I wouldn't describe people that actually believe they saw UFOs as cranks.

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00:30:45,720 --> 00:30:50,720

I think a lot of legitimate Americans believe they've seen something that they can't explain.

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00:30:50,720 --> 00:30:56,720

The sightings continue for several days as more and more people get caught up in a frenzy of excitement.

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00:30:56,720 --> 00:31:04,720

Heineck declares that the Michigan sightings are hysterical reactions to misunderstood natural phenomena, and the issue was laid to rest.

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00:31:04,720 --> 00:31:11,720

But years later, Heineck reveals that he was pressured by a government intelligence agency, presumably the CIA,

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00:31:11,720 --> 00:31:18,720

into coming up with a pat answer for public consumption to prevent panic over a possible invasion from outer space.

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00:31:19,720 --> 00:31:28,720

Less easily explained is a bizarre incident involving American military personnel that occurs in 1980 at an air base in southeast England,

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00:31:28,720 --> 00:31:32,720

located in a place called Rendlesham Forest.

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00:31:34,720 --> 00:31:41,720

Over a series of nights, UFO activity was witnessed by numerous United States Air Force military personnel.

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00:31:41,720 --> 00:31:47,720

Some of them described lights in the sky performing fantastic maneuvers.

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00:31:47,720 --> 00:31:54,720

Some of them actually saw a triangular shaped metallic craft actually on the ground.

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00:31:54,720 --> 00:31:58,720

Unidentified flying objects reappear two nights later.

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00:31:58,720 --> 00:32:05,720

A team of airmen led by the base's second in command Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt goes into the forest to investigate.

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00:32:05,720 --> 00:32:10,720

In front of them loom the flashing lights from the reported spacecraft.

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00:32:10,720 --> 00:32:12,720

Halt is quoted as saying,

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00:32:12,720 --> 00:32:21,720

Here I am, a senior official who routinely denies this sort of thing and diligently works to demote them, and I'm in the middle of something I can't explain.

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00:32:21,720 --> 00:32:32,720

Subsequently, people went to the site of this encounter and found indentations on the forest floor, and they found damage to the sides of the trees.

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00:32:32,720 --> 00:32:37,720

There was undoubtedly something there, some solid craft.

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00:32:37,720 --> 00:32:44,720

Lieutenant Colonel Halt submits a report to his commanding officer, his account of the sighting backed up by his men.

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00:32:44,720 --> 00:32:48,720

The air base is suddenly put under a cloud of secrecy.

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00:32:48,720 --> 00:32:59,720

In the aftermath of the Rendlesham Forest incident, the United States Air Force submitted an official report on the incident to the British Ministry of Defence.

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00:32:59,720 --> 00:33:04,720

To me it is very strange that very little follow-up was done.

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00:33:05,720 --> 00:33:11,720

Halt still hasn't received a straight answer from the Air Force as to what went on in their report and what happened.

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00:33:11,720 --> 00:33:14,720

Rendlesham is still a mystery.

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00:33:15,720 --> 00:33:23,720

When we continue, after 50 years of deliberate deception, the CIA finally lets the public in on one of its most carefully guarded secrets.

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00:33:23,720 --> 00:33:33,720

Over time the CIA has paid a real price in terms of its public credibility because of deceptions like those that occurred in the UFO story.

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00:33:35,720 --> 00:33:45,720

The most dramatic example of suspected government interference in UFO sighting happens in Alabama in 1973.

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00:33:45,720 --> 00:33:53,720

Jeff Greenhaugh, a rural police chief, responds to a hysterical call from a woman who says she's seen an alien.

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00:33:53,720 --> 00:34:00,720

Greenhaugh drives to the remote area and finds his way blocked by a metallic-suited creature standing in the road.

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00:34:00,720 --> 00:34:02,720

He stopped the car.

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00:34:04,720 --> 00:34:12,720

Said howdy stranger, there was no response so he got his Polaroid camera from out of the glove compartment and took four photographs.

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00:34:12,720 --> 00:34:15,720

The creature then began moving away.

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00:34:15,720 --> 00:34:20,720

Greenhaugh gets back into his car and tries to follow the creature who quickly disappears.

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00:34:20,720 --> 00:34:24,720

The next day, Greenhaugh tells his story to the media.

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00:34:25,720 --> 00:34:27,720

Story came out.

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00:34:28,720 --> 00:34:34,720

First thing that happened is his mobile home was burnt down and the original Polaroids, I believe, were damaged.

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00:34:34,720 --> 00:34:36,720

Fortunately copies had been made by that time.

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00:34:36,720 --> 00:34:39,720

Greenhaugh's troubles have only begun.

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00:34:39,720 --> 00:34:45,720

In the following weeks his car engine explodes, his wife leaves him and he loses his job.

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00:34:45,720 --> 00:34:55,720

My speculation is that some government agency was involved in trying to destroy the evidence.

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00:34:55,720 --> 00:35:02,720

UFO conspiracists lay the blame for Greenhaugh's misfortunes on their favorite culprit, the CIA.

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00:35:02,720 --> 00:35:07,720

Others wonder whether Greenhaugh's sighting is merely a hoax gone haywire.

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00:35:07,720 --> 00:35:09,720

I don't think hoaxes go that far.

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00:35:09,720 --> 00:35:16,720

And as to the question, as a reason, was he hallucinating? Well, maybe he was, but the camera wasn't.

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00:35:17,720 --> 00:35:23,720

Since the late 40s, UFO buffs have accused the CIA of covering up UFO sightings.

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00:35:23,720 --> 00:35:32,720

Declassified documents released under the Freedom of Information Act in 1977 proved they were right, but for the wrong reasons.

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00:35:32,720 --> 00:35:41,720

The CIA was deliberately telling all sorts of lies to try to cover up their tests of this secret aircraft.

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00:35:42,720 --> 00:35:54,720

The agency admits that in the early 50s at the height of the Cold War, it purposely misled the public to maintain secrecy about its new spy planes, the U-2 and the SR-71.

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00:35:54,720 --> 00:36:03,720

The agency is asked by the Eisenhower administration to develop a reconnaissance aircraft that can overfly the Soviet Union.

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00:36:03,720 --> 00:36:09,720

And this, of course, is all done in secret with covert funds supplied by the CIA.

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00:36:10,720 --> 00:36:17,720

U-2 test flights are conducted out of an airbase at Groom Lake, Nevada, better known as Area 51.

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00:36:17,720 --> 00:36:25,720

U-2 flights originating from Area 51 account for more than half the sightings reported during the 1950s and 60s.

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00:36:25,720 --> 00:36:34,720

Commercial pilots flying at around 20,000 feet are confused by the strange glistening objects soaring high above them at 60,000 feet.

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00:36:34,720 --> 00:36:42,720

The U-2, when they first began testing it, was at that time polished aluminum.

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00:36:42,720 --> 00:36:52,720

And that means that when it's still dark on the Earth, at that very high altitude, it's picking up the rays of the sun, becomes very visible.

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00:36:52,720 --> 00:37:00,720

The U-2 deception continues until 1960 when a Russian missile brings down a U-2 flown by Francis Gary Powers.

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00:37:00,720 --> 00:37:10,720

The United States government tries to cover up and is caught in a red-faced lie when Russian Premier Nikita Khrushchev produces the U-2 wreckage and the pilot.

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00:37:10,720 --> 00:37:16,720

The U-2 program is scrapped and the SR-71, codenamed Blackbird, takes its place.

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00:37:16,720 --> 00:37:24,720

It could fly at 90,000 feet and faster than a rifle bullet, but the Soviets had these Sam missiles which could shoot them down.

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00:37:24,720 --> 00:37:35,720

So it never did overfly the Soviet Union. It did, however, contribute to UFO phenomena because here you had another aircraft that nobody had ever seen.

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00:37:35,720 --> 00:37:43,720

Throughout this period, the CIA continues to orchestrate the deception behind the scenes using the Air Force as its cover.

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00:37:43,720 --> 00:37:54,720

The Air Force got a bum rap in these UFO investigations because it appears from the CIA

documentation that often the Air Force had to fib on behalf of the CIA.

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00:37:54,720 --> 00:38:03,720

Any doubts about the CIA's role in the UFO flap are laid to rest in 1997 with the publication of the so-called Haines Report.

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00:38:03,720 --> 00:38:21,720

Using a giant sheaf of internal CIA documents to tell the story of the agency's involvement with UFOs, Gerald Haines, a CIA historian, has given us the most complete account of how the agency handled the UFO phenomenon from the 1950s to the present.

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00:38:21,720 --> 00:38:28,720

What makes the Haines Report unique is the author's inference that perhaps the whole story has not been told.

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00:38:28,720 --> 00:38:37,720

Now a lot of people would like a lot more, but you have to understand that this agency deals in secrets, so it's not going to really be able to reveal everything it does. It simply can't.

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00:38:37,720 --> 00:38:49,720

By the 1990s, the CIA has lost all interest in UFOs, but UFO fanatics keep up their attacks on the government, holding to their belief in a vast conspiracy.

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00:38:49,720 --> 00:39:04,720

The ufologists have a real stake in this. I mean, this is their life's work. I mean, who of us, after years working on something, could suddenly decide there was nothing to it? That's really hard for human beings to do.

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00:39:04,720 --> 00:39:19,720

Ufologists' suspicions are constantly refueled by new sightings, such as one in Phoenix, Arizona, in 1997, where hundreds of spectators swear they saw a formation of unidentified flying objects pass over the city.

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00:39:19,720 --> 00:39:32,720

My group, CoA, Citizens Against UFO Secrecy, has evidence, overwhelming evidence, that the citizens of Arizona are the subject of innovation in the skies and their homes.

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00:39:32,720 --> 00:39:46,720

Another field day for true believers is the reawakening in the 90s of the now legendary Roswell incident. In the intervening years since the original sighting in 1947, Roswell has turned into a carnival for UFO buffs.

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00:39:46,720 --> 00:39:49,720

Rumors of government cover-ups are rampant.

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00:39:49,720 --> 00:40:01,720

Crashed sources, dead aliens, sinister men in black, death threats, cover-ups, the works, everything that could possibly be pulled out has been pulled out for Roswell.

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00:40:01,720 --> 00:40:15,720

The Pentagon has besieged with requests for information about Roswell, anxious to put the incident behind them. The Air Force comes clean, admitting that it encouraged the UFO story in order to cover up its high-altitude balloon experiments.

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00:40:15,720 --> 00:40:22,720

The admission leads to a frenzy of anti-government excitement during Roswell's 50th anniversary celebration.

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00:40:22,720 --> 00:40:38,720

The only thing about UFOs that wasn't selling in Roswell at that 50th anniversary celebration, I think, was the government report that revealed every detail and had pictures of the wreckage and pictures of the people who found it.

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00:40:39,720 --> 00:40:58,720

Roswell symbolizes the heated controversy that's still going on between UFO believers and debunkers. The U.S. government insists it's no longer investigating UFOs, but die-hard conspiracists claim it's just another CIA smokescreen.

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00:40:58,720 --> 00:41:12,720

We'll possibly never know the full story of the CIA's involvement with the UFO mystery, simply because, you know, it's impossible ever to get to the bottom of so large and nebulous a subject.

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00:41:14,720 --> 00:41:19,720

Europe's dark ages were over, and a new creative age took over Italy.

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00:41:19,720 --> 00:41:29,720

The Italian Renaissance is as overwhelmingly mind-blowing as it is beautiful, and it's the time when that nameless builder will become the architect.