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USAF: Roswell "Space Aliens" Were Dummies [Reuters]

From: Stig_Agermose@online.pol.dk (Stig Agermose)
Date: Tue, 24 Jun 1997 21:37:57 -0800
Subject: USAF: Roswell "Space Aliens" Were Dummies [Reuters]

USAF: Roswell "Space Aliens" Were Dummies

02:48 p.m Jun 24, 1997 Eastern

By Charles Aldinger

WASHINGTON (Reuter) - The U.S. Air Force reported Tuesday that "space aliens" who supposedly crashed in the New Mexico desert 50 years ago were only military dummies used in high-altitude parachute drops.

A 231-page Air Force report aimed at ending longstanding speculation over the so-called Roswell Incident denied the military had recovered bodies from damaged flying saucers in 1947 and had been covering up the discovery ever since.

Released a week before the incident's 50th anniversary, the report said the controversy began with reports of unusual activities near the town of Roswell but it involved recovery operations of high-altitude research balloons.

The report also said the bodies of aliens that witnesses reported seeing in the desert in separate incidents years later were dummies carried aloft by Air Force balloons and dropped in parachutes for scientific research.

"This comprehensive examination of the so-called 'Roswell Incident' found no evidence whatsoever of flying saucers, space aliens or sinister government cover-ups," it said. "The misrepresentations of Air Force activities as an extraterrestrial 'incident' is misleading to the public and is simply an affront to the truth."

To make the point, the report included photographs of human look-alike

dummies and balloons being recovered.

But the private Fund for UFO Research, based at Mount Rainier, Maryland., attacked the report, noting that the test dummies were not dropped by parachute until 1955 and that the Air Force simply claimed that the time discrepancy was due to faulty memories on the part of eyewitnesses.

"The U.S. Air Force proposes simply a naked theory to explain the first-hand testimony of witnesses," it said in a statement, adding that it was hard to imagine how all of the witnesses could have mistaken dummies for "creatures from outside the Earth."

Despite the lack of hard evidence, Roswell has become an article of faith for those who believe in extraterrestrial life and up to 100,000 people were expected in the town next week for the golden anniversary of the alleged alien landing.

But the Air Force said Tuesday facts countered the speculation. "This report is based on thoroughly documented research supported by official records, technical reports, film footage, photographs and interviews with individuals who were involved in these events," it said.

The report said claims of bodies at the Roswell Army Air Field Hospital that helped feed the speculation were most likely a combination of two separate incidents in 1956 in which 11 Air Force personnel died in a KC-97 aircraft accident and two airmen were injured in a manned balloon mishap.

Some defense officials conceded privately on Tuesday that the report was unlikely to sway hard-line believers in unidentified flying objects (UFOs) from space and the few remaining witnesses to the Roswell event.

On July 7, 1947, the Roswell Army Air Field issued a press release saying it was in possession of a "flying disk" that had fallen, but the same evening an Air Force general in Fort Worth, Texas, said the craft was in fact a weather balloon.

Walter Haut, the army press officer who put out the first news release, says he still believes it was accurate.

One of the few living witnesses, Frank Kaufmann, now 81, still insists he saw dead aliens put into body bags after their spacecraft crashed near the town 50 years ago. He was a civilian employee at Roswell Army Air Field in 1947 when he was sent to see what had crashed into a dry river bed.

Kaufmann said he got a close look at two bodies, one in the wreckage and one slumped against a rock wall in the river bed. "They were very good-looking people, ash-colored faces and skin ... about five-feet-five tall, eyes a little more pronounced, small ears, small nose, fine features and hairless," he said, adding that he saw military personnel place five corpses into body bags and remove them in jeeps.

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