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INTRODUCTION

SO VAST IS THE COMPLEXITY OF THIS multifaceted subject that it resists a single, all-encompassing hypothesis to account for the many inherent paradoxes that confront us. In *Alien Contact*, I have chosen to concentrate on those facets of the Unidentified Flying Object (UFO) enigma which I hope will shed new light on the overall picture.

As far back as 1952, the then director of Central Intelligence, Walter Bedell Smith, recognized the need for a multidisciplinary approach to the subject. "It is my view that this situation has possible implications for our national security which transcend the interests of a single service," he wrote in a memorandum to the executive secretary of the National Security Council. "A broader, coordinated effort should be initiated to develop a firm scientific understanding of the several phenomena which apparently are involved in these reports.

Thousands of documents on UFOs have been released under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) in the United States, by agencies such as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), Department of State, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), National Security Agency (NSA), and the Air Force, Army, and Navy intelligence branches. The fact that research into UFOs by these and other agencies was long denied (with a few exceptions), and that thousands more documents remain classified and therefore exempt from disclosure, is proof, if proof were needed, of just how seriously these matters are taken.

While my last book, *Above Top Secret*, proves beyond any doubt that a massive cover-up has been in effect since the late 1940s, *Alien Contact* takes us one stage further by partially exposing what has been hitherto withheld, that is: *Some* UFOs are indeed extraterrestrial in origin; that alien bodies have been recovered; that a few craft have been testflown; and that contact has been established, even at an official, if restricted, level.

Since these claims are certain to be misrepresented, let me emphasize that only a relatively few people in governments and the intelligence community are aware of this situation. The most sensitive information about UFOs is handled at a "need-to-know" level, restricted to those with very high security clearances—in one case, as we shall learn, allegedly as high as thirty-eight levels above Top Secret.

Given that there is truth behind these allegations, I readily concede that even the knowledgeable elite remain baffled by the bewildering diversity of reports with which we are regularly confronted, and I am certain that considerable confusion exists in high circles as to the nature of the more bizarre encounters. I have not shied away from these reports, such as the animal mutilations (Chapter 2) and the extraordinary but illuminating experiences which befell several witnesses on a ranch in Colorado (Chapter 3). Much of this information is controversial and disturbing.

Alien Contact does not go into an in-depth analysis of either abduction or contact stories, except in those cases I have cited that reflect my own bias in support of certain relevant hypotheses. The stories I have selected stretch the boundaries of belief, and although skepticism is warranted, it should never be forgotten that many extraordinary technological and other human developments which we now take for granted were initially regarded with disbelief or

ridicule. How many of us would have believed, for example, that the Soviet Union would collapse in 1991? When marvelous events are said to have happened, the natural tendency is to disbelieve, partly because we do not want to appear gullible, but also because we are simply confounded when presented with unfamiliar concepts. I am certain, therefore, that the concept of extraterrestrial visitation will become increasingly acceptable in due course.

As described in Chapters 6 and 10, the American intelligence community (Appendix 1) has made several attempts at indoctrinating the public about some of the realities involved in the UFO phenomenon. Although what has been revealed is undoubtedly diluted with disinformation intended to confuse and deceive, it is important to stress that official disinformation on the UFO subject would be pointless if there was nothing to cover up. In addition, both covert and overt disinformation usually incorporate a certain amount of genuine information that sometimes provides signposts to the truth, as we shall learn in the concluding chapters.

It is my belief that there is a sincere desire on the part of those in authority to release certain unequivocal material, but that there continues to be a reluctance to do so, owing to economic, political, religious, and sociological considerations. Perhaps the revelations made available to me for publication in *Alien Contact* will facilitate the official release of some of this material in the not-too distant future.

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