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INTRODUCTION

Since World War II, tens of thousands of reports of unidentified flying objects have been gathered, officially and unofficially, by the United States Air Force and myriad other governmental and civilian investigative organizations around the world. (1) Like Astronaut McDivitt's "cylinder with antennas," these objects are often described as being mechanically structured, metallic, and very frequently behaving as if they were under intelligent control. The thousands of similar, enigmatic reports from across the world mean that no matter what realities may lie behind it, the UFO phenomenon exists as an undeniable fact of life.

The question, then, is what we should do about the disturbing mass of material which makes up this ubiquitous phenomenon. There are two polar positions. One group, to which I and a large number of investigators, scientists, and even a few committed skeptics belong, believes that the UFO phenomenon poses a tantalizing and serious problem, perhaps a profoundly revolutionary one. If there is nothing but smoke to this mass of mysterious reports, then enormous numbers of people, -from farmers to astronauts, must be hallucinating fire, which in itself would be an alarming state of affairs. The other group is made up of those who, out of lack of information or mere indifference, simply ignore the phenomenon. The first group looks into the data, the other declines to. Essentially, UFO "belief" is definable by whether or not one believes that the thousands of ongoing reports constitute a problem worth looking into, regardless of one's prejudices, theories, and assumptions. (And of these there are almost as many as there are investigators.

It has long been obvious to serious UFO researchers that the majority of UFO reports - some say up to ninety percent - are misidentifications of conventional aircraft, stars, and other natural or artificial objects. As an example, I received a phone call a few years ago from an agitated woman who had seen a UFO from her car as she drove on Manhattan's East River Drive. "It was a bright, hovering light," she told me, "much bigger than a star." She lost sight of it when a building blocked her view then she saw it again, and then finally it was gone. It appeared not to be moving, and it was very close to the horizon. I asked about its location, and she said that it had been in the northeast. "Near La Guardia Airport?" I inquired. "Why, yes," she answered, "it would have been just about over La Guardia." As she spoke she realized why I had asked the question. Her "UFO" was undoubtedly a distant plane coming in with its landing lights on against a twilight sky, just far enough away for her eyes to blend the two bright lights together into one large one. Since the plane was pointed south, towards her car, it seemed to be hovering.

Reports like these are common, and many investigators pay no attention to them at all apart from their obvious explanations. Even without its transparent cause, a report like this offers an unrewarding paucity of information in the best of circumstances. A number of scientists, naive about the complexity of the other UFO reports, assume that this sort of thing - an odd light in the night sky - is all there is to the phenomenon. Their ritual denigrations (Carl Sagan's, for instance) appear to be pro forma, akin to the similar scientific assurances we've heard about the safety of atomic energy and the ongoing flight of Skylab. Sagan wittily remarked that no one has produced "even a cocktail napkin" from a UFO. Another astronomer countered by asking, for that matter, how many Brazilian aborigines have a piece of a Boeing 747?

But what about the "other ten percent," the UFO reports which remain unexplained after investigation? These are the

detailed cases, like the 1964 Socorro, New Mexico, sighting which was investigated by officials from the White Sands proving grounds, the FBI, the Air Force, and the local police. In fact, the principal witness was a highly respected Socorro policeman. Officer Lonnie Zamora, on a sunny afternoon in April, was in his patrol Scar following a speeder when he heard a roar and saw a flame in the sky a half mile or so away. He turned away from his chase to investigate and saw a "motionless flame . . . slowly descending." Its "noise changed from high frequency to low frequency and then stopped." Zamora drove up a gravel road and saw a shiny oval object in a gully below. "It looked at first like a car turned upside down. Thought some kids might have turned it over. Saw two people in white coveralls very close to object. One of these persons seemed to turn and look straight at my car and seemed startled.... Persons appeared normal in shape - but possibly they were small adults or large kids."

Zamora radioed that he was investigating a possible accident when he heard another roar. His report, written a few hours after the incident in a kind of policeman's telegramsese, continues:

Stopped car, was still talking on radio, started to get out; mike fell down, reached back to pick up mike. . . . As I got out of car, at scene area, I heard two or three loud thumps, like someone hammering or shutting door hard. These thumps were possibly a second or so apart.... As soon as saw flames and heard (second) roar, turned away, ran from object but did turn head towards object. Bumped leg on car, back fender area.... Object was oval in shape. It was smooth - no windows or doors . . . Like aluminum - white. Flame was under the object. Object starting to go straight up - slowly ... rose straight up.... Thought, from roar, it might blow up. Kept running towards north with car between me and the object (for protection in case object exploded). I was scared of the roar. I turned around towards the ground, covering my face with my arms. When the roar stopped, heard nothing. It appeared to go at the same height and in a straight line, possibly ten to fifteen feet from the ground. Object was traveling very fast. It seemed to rise up and take off immediately cross country. Got into the car and radioed to Ned Lopez, the radio operator, to 'look out of the window to see if you can see an object.' As I was calling Ned . . . the object seemed to lift up slowly and to get small in the distance very fast. It seemed to just clear Box Canyon or Six Mile Canyon Mountain. It disappeared as it went over the mountains. It had no flame whatsoever as it was traveling over the ground and made no smoke or noise.

Sergeant Chavez of the Socorro Police Department came on the scene moments later in response to Zamora's radio call. "When I arrived," the record reads, "Zamora was sweating and white . . . very pale. I went down to where the object had been. I noticed the brush was burning in several places. I could see tracks on the ground. The object had left four perpendicular impressions in the ground. I noticed smoldering bushes, but they felt cold to the touch." (3) Chavez later remarked to Dr. J. Allen Hynek, then the Air Force's scientific consultant on UFOs, that never in his long association with Zamora had he seen him in anything at all approaching the state he was in when Chavez joined him. Zamora is used to accidents, bloodshed, fights, and even murders. "We all seem to agree," said Dr. Hynek, who conducted a thorough investigation for the Air Force, "that Zamora saw something that really and truly frightened him." And it had been less than one hundred feet . away.

Subsequent investigation by the Air Force, which even included a fruitless search for propellant residue on the burnt bushes and a return trip by Dr. Hynek four months later, turned up nothing that would in any way discredit Zamora's account. The Air Force's final verdict? Like the UFO sightings by the astronauts mentioned earlier, the Socorro, New Mexico, landing is officially listed as unidentified. Carl Jung was right; things are being seen which defy explanation - close up and in bright daylight!

Reports of figures, like Zamora's "small adults or large kids in white coveralls," seen in or near UFOs are surprisingly common. In fact, just about eleven hours before Zamora's encounter, a dairy farmer named Gary Wilcox of Tioga City, New York, saw what he took to be the wing tank from an airplane in one of his fields. He approached it and found that it was an oval, lightcolored craft of some sort, resting on four strutlike supports. And nearby he also saw two small men, roughly four feet tall, dressed in one-piece, apparently seamless coveralls. Researcher Ted Bloecher and David Webb have assembled in their data bank over fifteen hundred reports of such figures - "humanoids" - associated with UFOs and as we will see in the course of this book, most of these figures conform closely to a series of physical types, and have been reported by apparently reliable people. (4) So close are the descriptions in these two cases that one wonders if Mr. Wilcox's visitors didn't leave upstate New York for a flight to New Mexlco, where they encountered Officer Zamora later that afternoon.

Whatever all this means, one thing is clear - a larger segment of the scientific community should certainly be joining the investigation of what may turn out to be a watershed event - the arrival of extraterrestrial visitors. No one can deny that this is possibly the correct explanation of the UFO phenomenon, and in 1948 the Air Force personnel charged with investigating UFO reports concluded in a top secret "Estimate of the Situation" that UFOs were of extraterrestrial origin (5) The Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Hoyt Vandenberg received the report and decided that it lacked proof, but nevertheless it represented the considered opinion of the first official government investigation.

It is ironic but true that the very possibility of an extraterrestrial cause works against scientific interest in the UFO phenomenon. All of our thinking, all of our boundaries are anthropomorphically determined. Science is based upon human intelligence dealing with the empirical world. The nature of other possibly "superior" but surely different intelligences studying us is literally ungraspable. The whole business, potentially, is nothing less than a second, more devastating Copernican revolution, and none of us, scientist or not, can ever truly be prepared for that. And, of course, anyone who wishes can deliberately ignore all the photographic evidence the written reports and radar contacts, and so on, and simply take refuge in the fact that, so far as we know, the one piece of evidence we are lacking is the central one - we don't have a captured UFO parked somewhere as the final, invincible clincher, the *corpus delicti*. As a friend of mine once said to me, "I believe they're up there all right, but I won't be content till I kick the tires on one of them."

Though there was a wave of sightings in the United States in 1896-7, UFO reports in large numbers turn up for the first time during the last years of World War II. (6) In fact, the American Air Force and the Luftwaffe each thought UFOs, which the American fliers called "foo-fighters," were the other side's secret weapon. The first modern wave of sightings in the United States occurred in 1947 and has been thoroughly documented by Ted Bloecher. Bloecher (7) points out the interesting fact that many of the early witnesses automatically assumed that they had seen some kind of secret craft of terrestrial origin. References to "alien spacecraft" were often embellishments added by reporters who wished to tart up their news stories. Typically, the witnesses would decide that the silvery disk which had followed their car a few hundred feet away must have been a Russian secret weapon or some new kind of American craft, so they would dutifully report it as such to the Air Force. If they called the local paper, their account most likely would appear under the headline, "Couple Sights Martian Spaceship," ridicule being a particularly instinctive weapon in the hands of uneasy people.

Over the decades, it became obvious that, whatever UFOs were, they were clearly not Russian or American or German advanced aircraft. The reports, which had a surprising consistency of detail, described craft which could move silently at incredible speeds, stop almost instantly, and in general perform like nothing aerodynamic engineers on this planet could even imagine. Instead, earthly designers continue to concentrate on building noisy, expensive rocket or jet propulsion systems, one dead end of which seems to be the Concorde SST. Wars have been fought, invasions attempted, but no nation has come forward with the strategic edge that would be provided if anyone possessed aircraft with the performance capabilities of UFOs.

In 1949 the Air Force intelligence group looking into the UFO problem hired Dr. J. Allen Hynek, an astronomer at Ohio State University, as their scientific consultant. Unofficially his task was to debunk the sighting reports which had grown to what the Air Force considered disturbing proportions. Dr. Hynek, who served the Air Force in this capacity for twenty years, was, so far as we know, privy to more official military UFO reports than any other scientist. His credentials are impeccable. He has directed the Dearborn Observatory and was Associate Director of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory. He has been Chairman of the Astronomy Department at Northwestern University and has served as a NASA consultant. He now directs the Center for UFO Studies in Evanston, Illinois, a central repository for UFO case material. As a result of his twenty years of investigations for the Air Force he became persuaded of both, the reality and the crucial importance of the UFO phenomenon, and the strong possibility that UFOs were, indeed, extraterrestrial spacecraft.

Beginning at least as far back as 1947, some reports' of landed and hovering craft included descriptions of occupants - humanoids of various types. At the time, these accounts seemed almost impossible to believe. One could accept the possibility that we were being observed, studied from some distance by alien intelligences of some sort. But *creatures*. . . *people*. . . *robots*? And then, in 1965, a story was published in a Boston newspaper about the temporary abduction of two people, Mr. and Mrs. Barney Hill, by the occupants of a UFO. Their memories had been somehow blocked, and the kidnapping, which occurred in 1961, had only recently emerged through regressive hypnosis in the course of

psychotherapy. At the time, many serious UFO researchers found the account difficult to believe, though now, a decade and a half later, the Hills' account is only one of literally hundreds very much like it.

Since 1976 I have been involved to varying degrees with the investigation of nineteen similar abduction cases involving thirty-seven people. These nineteen cases have yielded clear patterns, though the thirty-seven people involved form a random cross-section of professions, ages, and social backgrounds. They include two registered nurses, a golf pro several college students, a Wall Street lawyer, a painter, a news-media writer, a retired public school principal, an insurance underwriter, a college instructor, and so on. Seven of these nineteen cases form the heart of this book. I am convinced of the integrity of each individual witness, a trust that in some instances was reinforced by the use of polygraph tests. (This expensive step is usually not considered necessary when a thorough investigation has been undertaken.)

At this time in the unfolding history of the UFO phenomenon, it seems to me as if these quite similar abductions constitute some kind of systematic "research" program, with the human species as subject. Individuals or small groups of people are involuntarily "borrowed" and most often the memory of such an encounter is effectively erased from the individual's consciousness, presumably by some sort of post-hypnotic suggestion. UFO investigators have come to rely upon regressive hypnosis as the most efficient method of unlocking the forgotten period of time - usually an hour or two - and recovering the often harrowing account of what actually happened; psychiatrists and psychologists who practice hypnosis have thus become our most helpful allies.

What the purposes of these temporary abductions are, and what part of the experience may be purely psychic, we can only guess, but that they have physical dimension seems to me beyond doubt. As we will see, several abductees bear scars on their bodies from incisions made years earlier when the subjects had been children. On separate occasions, I have heard these witnesses, under hypnosis, describe in almost exactly the same words the equipment used to make these incisions. Although these abduction accounts include nothing that can be construed as being deliberately hurtful or malevolent on the part of the abductors, the pattern that emerges, nevertheless, leaves me thoroughly alarmed.

A typical abduction account follows one of several basic scenarios; in fact, it is the presence of certain familiar details in what seemed at first to have been only a routine UFO sighting which alerts the experienced investigator to inquire more deeply into the case. For this investigator, a mental red flag goes up if the witness seems confused about an unexplained loss of time, or complains of certain physical symptoms. As an example, I shall construct a hypothetical abduction case, a composite of commonly reported details from a number of actual accounts. (8) Let us assume that a young man and his wife and year-old baby are on a trip, driving late at night on a relatively deserted highway. They see a bright light moving in the sky, and suddenly it approaches their car. They realize after a moment or so that it is not a plane or helicopter or anything familiar. It is soundless; it moves erratically; it can halt suddenly; it is totally unlike any aircraft they have ever seen before. Now it passes low over their car and seems to disappear behind a stand of trees. Then, unaccountably, their engine stalls as its electrical system fails, and they come to a stop. Next, the UFO flies off from a slightly different position from where they had last seen it, and their motor starts up again, seemingly on its own accord. They are bewildered but relieved that things are normal again. What they are not aware of is that it is now two hours later. They have all three spent that time inside a landed UFO undergoing some kind of examination, and the entire experience has been blocked from their conscious memories. The events immediately before and immediately after the abduction have been seamlessly joined leaving them with little or no sense of missing time.

I have described UFO abductions as constituting an epidemic; in fact, we have no idea how many such kidnappings may already have taken place, but I believe there are vastly more than the mere two hundred or so incidents which have been investigated. Why these cases remain invisible will become evident when we return to our example. Most people having such an experience - and I mean by this only the sighting of the UFO, the part that has been consciously remembered - would not report it to any authority anywhere. There are indications that roughly seventy or eighty percent of these events go unreported, so the greatest possibility is that we would never have heard of this case in the first place.

Such is the fear of ridicule and the confusion about where to go to report such an unlikely event! But let us place my example in the small minority and assume they stop along the way somewhere and call the police to report an unidentified flying object. Chances are the report begins and ends at the police station, probably relegated to the circular file by a weary dispatcher. In this case, however, we will assume a conscientious police officer does take down the

account and phones it in, via a national toll-free hot-line, to the Center for UFO Studies, or perhaps he notifies some other UFO investigatory organization, and eventually this family will be contacted by a trained investigator.

These three assumptions we have made against the odds have kept our abduction case from sinking into invisibility. How many cases, one wonders, would have made it thus far? The UFO investigator begins his interrogation of the witnesses. He asks a few questions about the time and duration of the sighting. If the family checked the time at some point after their encounter, they would probably have become aware of the lost two hours. Very subtly, so as not to alarm them, the investigator inquires into the specifics of the time problem. He then asks if they experienced any unusual physical sensations of heat or cold or whatever, that they can recall. (These are not the precise symptoms he expects to find; he uses them merely to introduce the physical domain without leading the witnesses.) "That is interesting," the husband replies, "because there was something unusual." He and his wife each had strange red marks on their necks, he explains, and they had no idea how they got them. There was even one just like it on the baby, too. And something else. The next day he noticed a round, red mark next to his navel. It burned a little, and hurt when he touched it. In fact, he still has a little scar from it even though it's been a month since they saw the UFO. Our hypothetical investigator, knowing the significance of these frequently reported details, but not wishing for the time being to raise any disturbing possibilities, asks if the witness ever consulted a doctor about his condition. (In one case Ted Bloecher and I are currently investigating, a young man actually spent a full week in 1976 in the hospital undergoing tests for a suspected kidney tumor which turned out to be nonexistent. He neglected to tell his doctors that the peculiar marks on his abdomen, which had led them to suspect the tumor, appeared after a frightening experience in the woods with a landed UFO and a group of humanoids. A period of roughly an hour is missing from his recall. He said he knew the doctors would never believe him, but he was also reluctant himself to face the possible connection between the wounds and the UFO encounter. His companion on the camping trip still bears the faint traces of two small parallel cuts at the base of his spine which his wife discovered a day or so after his return.)

The investigator would then ask the witnesses if they would like to undergo hypnosis with a professional psychologist to help them recall the details of their encounter that they cannot consciously remember. Herein lies the final and perhaps biggest "if" of all. Many people, possibly a majority who find themselves in this position, refuse to explore the matter any further, and for a variety of reasons. First, they are frightened of hypnosis itself, despite its increasing therapeutic use across a wide spectrum of medical situations. Many others may feel that there is really nothing more to remember about their encounter, most particularly in the cases where no physical traces exist, and an investigator is naturally hesitant to argue the point. But very often the witness senses that something odd happened to him in the period of missing time and he simply does not want to find out what it was. Several years ago, I was looking into a UFO close encounter involving seven young people who simultaneously - they were seated in three vehicles at the time - suffered a two-hour hiatus which began as they were approached by a double line of helmeted figures. The mother of one of the young women called me several days after we had discussed the issue of hypnosis with the group "You think they were abducted that night, don't you?" she asked, surprising me because I had not given voice to my suspicions. "Yes, I do," I admitted. "So do I," she answered, interrupting me, "and I don't want my daughter to know what happened to her." I replied that psychologists usually feel that it is better to ventilate a traumatic experience that might otherwise, if it is kept buried, cause difficulties. "I know that, and I agree," she answered. "But now she's doing well in school and in her social life, and I don't want to bring up any problems. If the day comes when I feel it's causing her anguish, then I'll let her undergo hypnosis. In the meantime you know the phrase, let sleeping dogs lie." I couldn't argue with her feelings, and there the matter rests. (10)

Having considered some of the numerous - and enormous - obstacles to the discovery of abduction cases, and to their subsequent in-depth investigation, one can only marvel that so many have, nevertheless, managed to come to our attention. And it seems obvious that for each single case we've heard about, investigated, and listed as an abduction or a probable abduction, (11) there may be dozens still totally unknown and that's only in the few Western countries - the U.S., England, France, and Canada where something of a widespread investigatory network exists. Fragmentary reports from everywhere else, from South Africa to Indonesia, suggest that the phenomenon is worldwide. In fact, one of the abductions I'll consider in depth occurred in France.

And so, starting with the roughly five hundred (12) individuals who, from a study of the reports, we feel reasonably sure have been abducted to date in the U.S., we can logically theorize that there may be tens of thousands of Americans whose encounters have never been revealed - bearing in mind that we are talking about abductions which came to light

through the investigation of a routine UFO sighting in which a time lapse and other suspicious details were uncovered. The discovery which impelled me to write this book is one I believe to be of extraordinary importance. The seven cases stressed in these pages involve abductions of five different individuals. Three, who incidentally have never met, were taken as seven-year-old children, and incisions were made in their bodies, for whatever purposes we can only speculate. Two of them - and possibly all three - were apparently abducted a second time, one at age sixteen, one a few years later. All three were born in 1943, and were abducted in the summer of 1950. None of them had, prior to hypnotic regression any recall whatsoever of a UFO or humanoid encounter of any kind. How they happened to undergo hypnosis in the first place involves a complex series of unlikely events, which I shall describe in later chapters. Each case is in some way intertwined with another involving a young man who was abducted in his early twenties, but who, like the others had absolutely no conscious memory of a UFO sighting; all that he had to go on was the "feeling" that "something may have happened" to him one night in 1973, on a particular road in Maryland, as he drove home from his girlfriend's house. Hypnosis revealed a classic abduction. An inescapable conclusion to be drawn from all these cases is that anyone could have been abducted, with no memory of it, no conscious recall even of a preliminary event like the sighting of a UFO. It could have happened to any one of us years ago, in childhood, or recently. No signs or clues may necessarily have remained. This, to me, is the most dramatic and disturbing possibility that has yet taken shape in all the years of UFO research. And yet what it finally means is as mysterious as ever. For all any of us knows the whole UFO phenomenon may be ultimately, blissfully benign - there is firm evidence for this position - and so having been abducted may turn out to have been a peculiar privilege. No one knows. All I can say is that I'm sure it is going on; people are being picked up, "examined" - sometimes marked for life - and released, their memories conveniently blocked. Beyond this, everything is speculation.

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