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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: First Use of the term 'flap' [Curtis Peebles]

From: "Greg Sandow" <gsandow@prodigy.net>
Date: Sun, 6 Apr 1997 09:31:37 -0400
Fwd Date: Mon, 07 Apr 1997 08:37:37 -0400
Subject: Re: First Use of the term 'flap' [Curtis Peebles]

About Curtis Peebles:

> Date: Sat, 5 Apr 1997 18:45:19 -0600 (CST)
> From: MAC TONNIES <0212104@ACAD.NWMISSOURI.EDU>
> To: updates@GLOBALSERVE.NET
> Subject: Re. First Use of the term "flap"

> I think Peeble's book is largely ignored because of its very skeptical
> attitude toward UFOs, but most of the history and reporting is
> impeccable. As far as names and dates are concerned, it's probably
> one of the most valuable works in the field.

No way. See the review in IUR some time ago. The book is riddled with factual mistakes.

And I caught a particularly nasty piece of misquotation, verging on a lie. Peebles devotes space, naturally, to the Washington sightings in 1952. One major primary source is Edward Ruppelt's book, he having been just appointed head of the Air Force's Project Blue Book at the time. He wasn't in charge of the AF's reaction to the sightings -- he was too new, and not high-ranking enough -- but he was on the scene.

When he summarizes his own reactions, he gives reasons why the sightings might have been mistakes, as the Air Force claimed. He also gives reasons why they might have been real. He quotes AF pilots who were scrambled to look for the UFOs.

Peebles quotes only the first part of all this -- Ruppelt's reasons why the sightings might not have been real. This is really misleading, since you get the entirely incorrect idea that Ruppelt took the official AF position, which isn't true.

> Peebles believes UFO "flaps" are strictly sociological in nature.

That's the usual skeptical view, of course. Interestingly, the skeptics can't cite sociological data to prove they're right. Eddie Bullard wrote a detailed study of the question for IUR, showing just how difficult it is, and how wrong it is to jump to conclusions.

In my experience, the skeptical view is based on circular reasoning. Since they KNOW there aren't any real UFOs, obviously flaps must be caused by the media. And then the belief that flaps are caused by the media becomes yet another argument for the non-existence of UFOS...which proves once more that flaps are caused sociologically....

Greg Sandow

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