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## UFO UpDates Mailing List

### Re: Clinging to a 'Coverup' Theory

From: [RSchatte@aol.com](mailto:RSchatte@aol.com)  
Date: Sat, 30 Aug 1997 00:22:49 -0400 (EDT)  
Fwd Date: Sat, 30 Aug 1997 12:04:51 -0400  
Subject: Re: Clinging to a 'Coverup' Theory

<http://search.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/WPlate/1997-08/27/0231-082797-idx.html>

Clinging to a 'Coverup' Theory

Wednesday, August 27, 1997; Page A18  
The Washington Post

The Post's Aug. 8 editorial "The Summer of UFOs" falsely implies that I fully endorse a recent CIA historian's report that prompted The Post's Aug. 5 news story "Cold War UFO Coverup Shielded Spy Planes." In fact, in the letter to the editor I submitted on Aug. 6 (which was not published), I sharply challenged the claim made in the article that "the Air Force and CIA willfully misled the public by claiming that thousands [my emphasis] of [UFO] sightings were caused by ice crystals, temperature inversions and other tricks of nature, when in fact they were produced by flights of high-flying super-secret [U-2, SR-71] spy planes."

My letter, based on data available for more than 30 years, revealed that during the mid to late 1950s, when the U-2's existence and covert mission were under wraps, and during the early 1960s, when the SR-71 was under wraps, the Air Force explained only 59 UFO reports as "mirages and inversions" or "clouds and contrails" -- not "thousands." If the Air Force knew that a UFO report had been generated by a covert U-2 or SR-71 flight, it could simply list it as "unidentified" -- i.e., unexplained. During this same nine-year period, the Air Force characterized 136 UFO reports as "unidentified."

The Post's editorial concludes: "It's a shame that an opportunity to help reduce people's mistrust in government was lost by agencies clinging to unnecessary secrecy." In this case, the real shame is that The Post is "clinging to unnecessary secrecy" by refusing to publish the indisputable facts that challenge its "coverup" claim.

PHILIP J. KLASS

Washington

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