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Oberg/Cooper rebuttal.1b

From: **Jerry Cohen** <rjcohen@li.net>
Date: Wed, 5 Feb 1997 19:19:04 -0500
Fwd Date: Wed, 05 Feb 1997 22:09:37 -0500
Subject: Oberg/Cooper rebuttal.1b

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Oberg/Cooper rebuttal.1b
continued from 1a (2 of 2)

A researcher's response to James Oberg's:=20
"IN SEARCH OF GORDON COOPER'S UFOs"
by Jerry Cohen=20
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re: GORDON COOPER'S GENERAL CREDENTIALS:
Getting back to Gordon Cooper. Although Cooper was in fact one=20
more pilot making a UFO claim(s), as Mr. Oberg noted he was a=20
special one indeed; one who's superior skills, coordination,=20
reflexes, senses, intellect for task, etc. finally led to his=20
being selected for our space program. He was not your average=20
pilot. A person of Cooper's ability and stature, who had worked=20
as hard as he must have to get where he was, certainly would not=20
place himself in a position where his judgment, character and=20
reputation in general might possibly be compromised unless he felt=20
positive about what he had seen. Cooper was certainly not known=20
to be a hallucinator or he would not have been selected for so=20
demanding a position. He had a great familiarity with things=20
flying "in the air" as it was part of his job to be familiar with=20
such things.=20

OVERLOOKED IMPORTANT PIECES OF "SOLID" EVIDENCE from Cooper's=20
statements: =20
With this firmly in mind, we therefore must also note that in=20
paragraph seven, Mr. Oberg quotes Cooper as saying "People have=20
seen flying saucers at close hand. And in many cases they have=20
been verified on radar. It is ridiculous for anyone to say that=20
they're all completely unreal."=20

J.C. In the latter portions of my essays, I will present solid,=20
certified, documented evidence to show that this statement of=20
Cooper's is not only 100% correct but also, in the case of=20
radar/visual sightings, some of the most compelling evidence=20
confirming both the existence of UFOs and their level of=20
technology.

c. Without getting lost in discussing the pages of proof=20
submitted regarding the supposed enhancements to Coopers=20
statements which Mr. Oberg attempted to demonstrate were created=20
by other individuals, I will concede that it is human nature for=20
people to build upon stories, misquote information, fabricate,=20
etc., especially if there is money to be made from same or=20

possibly, careers to be made in newspaper journalism. UFO=20 researchers are well aware of this. However, contrary to what Mr.=20 Oberg would have us believe, some professional UFO researchers=20 actually do follow a general rule that one must "take with a grain=20 of salt" second-hand accounts, sources, etc. relating to UFO=20 claimed incidents and, instead concentrate on examining initial=20 reports and how they correlate with other reports from the same=20 general time period. (i.e. Otherwise, one indeed might devote=20 inordinate amounts of time on accounts possibly containing=20 inaccurate, story-built, unreliable evidence while possibly=20 overlooking other solid, verified evidence that one never had time=20 left over to find.)

MORE ON SECOND-HAND ACCOUNTS:

This particular researcher, attempting to find "solid" evidence,=20 has tried his best to avoid this pitfall. I normally treat=20 delayed response, second-hand books or accounts as "second-hand"=20 evidence; material that demands extreme scrutiny and caution in=20 its use. What is important to note here, however, is that if a=20 person did accidentally fall into this trap regarding one case (if=20 actually proven via solid documentation and the accused accorded a=20 fair rebuttal), this does not prove he or she did so intentionally=20 and should not automatically refute the entire body of that=20 individual's work, especially if he/she had generally been=20 considered to be conscientious and generally meticulous in most of=20 the rest of his efforts in that area of expertise. That person's=20 research should still be examined on a case by case basis. One=20 mistake should not invalidate that person's entire work otherwise=20 Mr. Oberg's own lifetime body of criticism regarding UFOs might=20 also thereby be dismissed in total because he spent inordinate=20 time discussing these second-hand versions (a "no-no" in itself!)=20 without providing adequate solid proof to substantiate the=20 entirety of his accusations, some of which verged on slander.

ON THE HUMAN IMPERFECTION OF SCIENTISTS:

Likewise, one might be forced to discount the bulk of Dr. Edward=20 Condon's previously fine work after many scientists realized the=20 conclusions he reached in the Colorado Study were not supported by=20 the data in the Colorado Study itself. One would also be forced=20 to consider a similar indictment concerning members of the=20 National Academy of Sciences who endorsed it. This of course=20 would be ludicrous. (This preceding historical highlight will be=20 completely discussed in my documented essays)

ON COOPER'S UFOs OVER GERMANY:

Mr. Oberg, himself, goes to great length analyzing what he claims=20 are such cases of inaccurate story building from various books and=20 sources he mentions in order to point this out to us.=20 (Unfortunately, omitting solid documentation in certain key places=20 that might provide proof of his claims.) One example occurs in=20 his analysis concerning Gordon Cooper's claims of UFOs over=20 Germany. He has used supposed "witness" accounts from a dozen or=20 so people who responded to him saying they never had the=20 experience which Cooper claims to have had, to prove to us that=20 Cooper was mistaken in what he says he saw and that (=B6 74 "The=20 popular version of the legend, placing the action in Germany in=20 1951, simply cannot have occurred as Cooper has described it -- if=20 the vast majority of the witnesses are to be believed.") =20

However, what rightly should have been said was "...if the vast=20 majority of people who RESPONDED are to be believed." Readers=20 must, in all fairness, realize that since they didn't "see it,"=20 those individuals cannot be properly referred to as "witnesses." =20 Dr. J. Allen Hynek, after studying UFO reports as a prime=20 scientific consultant for the Air Force for many years had this to=20 say in his "The UFO Experience" Henry Regnery Company=20 1972.hardcover.Chapter 1.The Laughter of Science.p.9 =B6 4:

"some of the very best reports have come from scientifically=20 trained people.... These reports are usually rarely published=20 however, because the person usually requests anonymity." =20

Therefore, it is certainly not "written in stone" that the people=20 who actually witnessed what Cooper says he did would readily come=20 forth to talk about it. In reality, one must totally understand=20 the Air Force's position on UFOs, the penalties it imposes on=20 those that break the silence, and observed it from Hynek's=20 perspective as consultant to the Air Force in order to properly=20 determine the true validity of some of Mr. Oberg's data in this=20 regard.

COOPER'S ATTEMPT TO RETAIN THE ACCURACY OF HIS CLAIMS:

As Mr. Oberg mentioned, Cooper went out of his way to counter=20 anyone who attributed statements to him he did not make. (Oberg =B6=20 12-16 "Columbia Pictures case", =B6 18 "In spite his often=20 involuntary association with such activities, the quality of=20 Cooper's testimony has been universally recognized. His=20 integrity, intelligence, and technical competence have never been=20 questioned.", =B6 31 "In a 1978 letter to me, Cooper stressed 'the=20 non-occurrence of a sighting on Mercury 9' ") =20

Although stopping short of saying Cooper lied concerning his=20 claimed sightings, it was implied that Cooper exaggerated, his=20 memory wasn't accurate or Cooper was guilty of "story building"=20 regarding his accounts. Since Mr. Oberg, himself, demonstrated=20 that Cooper made repeated attempts to keep the accuracy of his=20 initial claim in tact, sans extraneous details provided by others,=20 it becomes difficult for this reader to accept that Cooper was=20 guilty of "story building." Furthermore, as previously stated, it=20 is not fair or necessarily accurate to claim that some of the=20 researchers in question did not carefully check their sources=20 before printing the body of information they displayed, without=20 some sort of rebuttal from them. Unfortunately, some of the=20 finest of the ones mentioned are not alive today to make that=20 rebuttal. Since expecting the dead to perform this feat is asking=20 something just slightly beyond the capabilities of even the most=20 competent, professional researcher, others like myself will have=20 to do some of it for them, the best we can.

DISAGREEMENT CONCERNING SLANDEROUS STATEMENTS AND INNUENDO:

Another bone of contention occurs when Hynek is slandered at the=20 essays end with the following statement: (=B6 76, 77) , "But=20 solving the cases was the last thing the UFO promoters were=20 interested in."

J.C. This statement shows a general lack of knowledge=20 concerning Dr. Hynek's life, career and motives. This statement=20 does not lie true with what I and others have personally=20 researched concerning Hynek over the years. Inadequate proof has=20 been presented to make so broad an assumption. I will demonstrate=20 this completely as we proceed in these essays.

"People who have used Cooper's stories to 'prove' the reality=20 of UFOs (respected ufologists such as Frank Edwards, Leonard=20 Stringfield, J. Allen Hynek, and less respected ones such as=20 Timothy Beckley) seem to have neither known nor really cared about=20 the real truth behind the stories....."

J.C. This, too, is a blanket statement concerning all the=20 individuals mentioned and has certainly not been adequately proven=20 concerning any one of them. Also, it has not been proven that=20 Cooper was not telling the truth. Hynek, Stringfield and Edwards=20 have passed on and cannot respond to this. However, Hynek's=20 revelations concerning Project Blue Book and my own to-be-illustrated connection between the cases I will present from 1957=20 will certainly demonstrate the possibility, if not probability,=20 that Cooper may well have been telling the truth.

"Their goal evidently was to piggyback on Cooper's reputation=20 to further their own ufological careers, not to take the=20 opportunity to see what Cooper's actual experiences could teach=20 them about the real UFO phenomenon. The truth behind Cooper's=20 stories was the last thing that seemed to interest them."

J.C. Again, an assumption on the author's part. Unless one was=20 there with Gordon Cooper, no one can know what his actual=20 experiences were. I can speak with confidence from my own=20 research that Dr. Hynek's work was sincere. The following=20 statement attributed to Hynek by Mr. Oberg does not appear to have=20 been made by a person trying to hide his mistakes.

"Oberg =B6 15 Hynek later admitted he had made a mistake=20 in allowing the newspaper to compile the article from his previous=20 publications while paying him a fee for the use of his name as=20 author -- since he hadn't reviewed the written material prior to=20 publication. Such are the perils of UFO journalism."

Being misled by the intentions of a publisher in one instance, if=20 the facts are actually as Mr. Oberg has stated, should certainly=20 not brand one a general fabricator. I would hope there would be=20 others who will rise to Dr. Hynek's defense in this regard. Dr.=20 James McDonald is certainly due this accord as well.

BRIEFLY REGARDING MCDONALD:

Oberg =B6 47 In fact, McDonald had described his findings on=20 July 29,1968, during his testimony on UFOs to a congressional=20 committee. This is the way he described it: "James D. Bittick and=20 John R. Gettys... were at the time Askania cameramen on the test=20 range, and spotted the domed disk UFO just as they reached Askania=20 #4 site at Edwards, a bit before 8:00 AM that day [JEO: Compare=20 this with Beckley's account of "after lunch" -- evidently pure=20 dramatization]. They immediately got into communication with the=20 range director, Frank E. Baker, and asked if anyone else was=20 manning an Askania that could be used to get triangulation shots.=20 Since no other camera operators were on duty at other sites, Baker=20 told them to fire manually, and they got a number of shots before=20 the object moved off into the distance. Bittick estimated that the=20 object lay about a mile away when they got off the first shot,=20 though when first seen he put it at no more than 500 yards off. He=20 and Gettys both said it had a golden color, looked somewhat like=20 an inverted plate with a dome on top, and had square holes or=20 panels around the dome. Gettys thought that the holes were=20 circular, not square. It was moving away from them, seemed to glow=20 with its own luminosity, and had a hazy, indistinct halo around=20 its rim, both mentioned. The number of shots taken is uncertain:=20 Gettys thought perhaps thirty. The object was lost from sight by=20 the time it moved out to about five miles or so, and they did not=20 see it again.... The photos were shortly taken by base military=20 authorities and were never seen again by the men. In a session=20 later that day, Bittick [was] informed that they had seen a=20 weather balloon distorted by the desert atmospheric effects."

Oberg =B6 48 When I told Gettys in 1982 that McDonald had=20 used his case in congressional testimony, the UFO witness was=20 pleased but surprised McDonald had never gotten back to him about=20 the use he'd put his testimony to. So the pro-UFO people kept some=20 secrets, too!.

Dr. McDonald brings a recorded, documented case to a congressional=20 committee and, Dr. Oberg, because of Air Force statements claiming=20 the preceding was a "weather balloon...distorted by the desert=20 atmospheric effects." (500 yards away?) assumes that Dr.=20 McDonald's case is invalid and goes even further, intimating that=20 McDonald did something devious in bringing the case to the=20 committee. Additionally, Oberg clearly states that the witness=20 was pleased that McDonald had done so. Is it possible that=20 McDonald knew he would be pleased? No, that darned McDonald is=20 just trying to be sneaky.

Further along, I will provide 1) another case that McDonald=20 presented to the various science groups that leaves no doubt as to=20 meticulousness of the man and the completeness and honesty of his=20 research and 2) that statistics regarding UFOs, derived from the=20 Air Force's "Project Blue Book" were, as Hynek put it, "a=20 travesty," and additional clear evidence, dating back to at least=20 1957, that the Air Force has not been telling us everything they=20 know regarding UFOs.

ON CLOSED-MINDED SKEPTICS LOOKING FOR EVIDENCE OF UFOs

Since facts count, it is also important to be aware of the=20 following: If a person, not necessarily consciously, does not=20 want to find evidence of UFOs (or any subject for that matter), he=20 could spend an eternity finding an infinite number of places this=20 evidence does NOT exist. He could look in people's homes, travel=20 to other countries, visit an unimaginable number of uninhabitable=20 planets (if he were capable), examine every "story built, second=20 hand account" in existence relating to that subject, or ask every=20 person that never had that experience, and certainly find in that=20 multitude of places and people, proof that the evidence he is=20 telling himself he is searching for, does not exist.

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 End: Oberg/Cooper rebuttal.1b
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For documented evidence #1, please see: "Oberg/Cooper rebuttal.2"

Respectfully submitted,

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