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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Incident at Exeter, Pt. 2 of 2 (Hynek).repost

From: "Jerry Cohen" <rjcohen@li.net>
Date: Tue, 21 Jan 1997 22:53:03 -0500
Fwd Date: Sun, 26 Jan 1997 11:26:41 -0500
Subject: Incident at Exeter, Pt. 2 of 2 (Hynek).repost

As mentioned in part one, the following excerpt is taken from:

Hynek, J. Allen . "The Hynek UFO Report" . paperback, pp 154-166 . Dell Publishing Co. 1977 : and also, material therein from Blue Book files.

"Incident at Exeter" - continued (part 2 of 2)

Dr. Hynek: It is interesting to note that Maj. Quintanilla had used the term "before a final evaluation of your sighting can be made," whereas the Pentagon had in fact already issued its evaluation (attributing the sighting to Operation Big Blast) some time before Quintanilla wrote his letter.

Maj. Quintanilla received a prompt reply from Officers Bertrand and Hunt. Their letter of December 2, 1965, reads:

"Dear Sir:

We were very glad to get your letter during the third week in November, because as you might imagine, we have been the subject of considerable ridicule since the Pentagon released its "final evaluation" of our sighting of September 3, 1965. In other words, both Patrolman Hunt and myself saw this object at close range, checked it out with each other, confirmed and reconfirmed the fact that this was not any kind of conventional aircraft, that it was at an altitude of not more than a couple of hundred feet and went to considerable trouble to confirm that the weather was clear, there was no wind, no chance of weather inversion, and that what we were seeing was in no way a military or civilian craft. We entered this in a complete official police report as a supplement to the blotter of the morning of September 3rd (not September 2 as your letter indicates).

Since our job depends on accuracy and the ability to tell the difference between fact and fiction, we were naturally disturbed by the Pentagon report issued which attributed the sighting to "multiple high-altitude objects in area" and "weather inversion." What is a little difficult to understand is the fact that your letter arrived considerably after the Pentagon release. Since your letter says that you are still in the process of making a final evaluation, it seems that there is an inconsistency here. Ordinarily, this would not be too important except for the fact that in a situation like this, we are naturally very reluctant to be considered irresponsible in our official report to the police station. One of us (Patrolman Bertrand) was in the Air Force for four

years, engaged in refueling operations, with all kinds of military aircraft; it was impossible to mistake what we saw for any kind of military operation, regardless of altitude. It was also definitely not a helicopter or balloon. Immediately after the object disappeared, we did see what probably was a B-47 at high altitudes, but it bore no relation to the object that we saw.

Another fact is that the time of our observation was nearly an hour after two A.M. which would eliminate the Air Force Operation Big Blast since as you say, this took place between midnight and 2 A.M. Norman Muscarello, who first reported this object before we went to the site, saw it somewhere in the vicinity of 2 A.M. but nearly an hour had passed before he got to the police station and we went out to the location with him.

We would both appreciate it very much if you would help us eliminate the possible conclusion that some people have made in that we might have: (a) made up the story, (b) were incompetent observers. Anything that you could do along this line would be very much appreciated, and I am sure that you can understand the position we are in.

We appreciate the problem that the Air Force must have with the number of irresponsible reports on this subject, and don't want to cause you unnecessary trouble. On the other hand, we think that you probably understand our position. Thanks very much for your interest.

Sincerely,
Patrolman Eugene Bertrand
and Patrolman David Hunt

Dr. Hynek: They received no reply to this letter. They wrote again on December 29:

Dear Sir:

Since we have not heard from you since our letter of December 2, we are writing this to request some kind of an answer since we are still upset about what happened after the Pentagon released its news that we had just seen stars or planets, or high-altitude air exercises.

As we mentioned in our last letter to you, it could not have been the Operation Big Blast you mentioned since the time of our sighting was an hour after that exercise and it may not have even been the same date since you refer to our sighting as September 2. Our sighting was on September 3. In addition, as we mentioned, we are both familiar with all the B-47's and B-52's and helicopters and jet fighters which are going over this place all the time. On top of this, Patrolman Bertrand had four years of refueling experience in the Air Force and knows regular aircraft of all kinds. It is important to remember that this craft that we saw was not more than one hundred feet in the air and it was absolutely silent with no rush of air from jets or chopper blades whatever. And it did not have any wings or tail. It lit up the entire field, and two nearby houses turned completely red. It stopped, hovered, and turned on a dime.

What bothers us most is that many people are thinking that we were either lying or not intelligent enough to tell the difference between what we saw and something ordinary. Three other people saw this same thing on September 3 and two of them appear to be in shock from it. This was absolutely not a case of mistaken identity.

We both feel that it is very important for our jobs and our reputations to get some kind of letter from you to say that story put out by the Pentagon was not true; it could not possibly be because we were the people who saw this, not the Pentagon.

Can you please let us hear from you as soon as possible?

Signed,
Patrolman Eugene Bertrand
and Patrolman David Hunt

Dr. Hynek: More than a month later, the patrolmen received

the following response from the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force:

Gentlemen:

Based on additional information submitted to our UFO Investigation Officer, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, we have been unable to identify the object that you observed on September 3, 1965. In nineteen years of investigating over ten thousand reports of unidentified flying objects, the evidence has proved almost conclusively that reported aerial phenomena have been either objects created or set aloft by men, generated by atmospheric conditions, or caused by celestial bodies or the residue of meteoric activity.

Thank you for reporting your observation to the Air Force, and for your subsequent co-operation concerning the report. I regret any inconvenience you may have suffered as a result.

Sincerely,
John P. Spaulding
Lt. Col, USAF

Dr. Hynek: Whether this letter satisfied the patrolmen, I do not know. Between the lines, it still says "It can't be, therefore it isn't" and that therefore their sighting must undoubtedly have some natural explanation. At least, however, the patrolmen had the satisfaction of the final admission from the Pentagon that they had been unable to identify their sighting.

Respectfully,
Jerry Cohen

E-mail: rjcohen@li.net

P.S. To those who never read his book, author John Fuller came up with about 60 witnesses to low altitude sightings in the Exeter area in this general time period.

Again, his book:

Fuller, John G. "Incident at Exeter" . A Berkley Medallion Book . Pub. G.P. Putnam's Sons Distributed by Berkley Publishing Corporation . paperback 1/67

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