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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: Bursting the Balloon

From: DRudiak@aol.com
Date: Sun, 27 Jul 1997 15:18:30 -0400 (EDT)
Fwd Date: Mon, 28 Jul 1997 01:06:50 -0400
Subject: Re: Bursting the Balloon

>From: Ktperehwon@aol.com [Karl Pflock]
>Date: Thu, 24 Jul 1997 18:00:37 -0400 (EDT)
>To: updates@globalserve.net
>Subject: Re: UFO UpDate: Re: Bursting the Balloon

In which the Pflockian DeBunking finger having writ moves on:

> However...

> In a 7/90 video-taped interview with Haut conducted by Fred
> Whiting for the Fund for UFO Reseach, Whiting asked Haut if he
> could remember Blanchard ever mentioning the "flying saucer" matter
> after the official weather balloon line was established. Haut
> replied that he did, at a staff meeting a week or two later. He
> recalled Blanchard opening the meeting with a comment something
> like this: "Well, we sure shot ourselves in the foot with that
> balloon fiasco. It was just something from a project at
> Alamogordo, and some of the guys were here on our base later, too.
> Anyway, it's done and over with."

Yet Blanchard later told his wives that it definitely wasn't a balloon. He later told Roswell newspaper editor Art McQuiddy that he had never seen material like it before in his life (tin foil? balsa wood?) And Haut maintains to this day that he believes Blanchard was telling the truth in the original press release -- they had recovered a real flying saucer, not a tinfoil radar target.

Blanchard may very easily have been ordered to recite the balloons as a cover story to his staff. This had already begun on July 9 with the Alamogordo launch, complete with phony date for the balloon that allegedly crashed at Brazel's place.

As to the current official story that Roswell had no prior notion of the Mogul flights, I would like to call attention to Mogul balloons #5 and #11A. Flight #5 passed directly over Roswell base on June 5, the day after the alleged Brazel crash object was launched. The balloon was being chased by a B-17, which certainly would have been picked up on radar at Roswell. This would have been a clear breach of base air space and security if the plane and balloon remained unidentified. Further, the balloon was in a descending mode, perhaps only 25,000 to 30,000 feet above the pass as it passed over, thus posing a potential navigation hazard to Roswell air traffic. In fact, by prior agreement with the civilian CAA, who knew of these flights (but allegedly not Roswell base), Mogul was definitely supposed to notify Roswell of the balloons in a situation like this. It was noted, e.g., in the Mogul Technical Report No. 1, April 1, 1948 that "Notices to airmen are to be issued if the balloon is descending within designated regions of dense air traffic."

I think this all suggest that at least some people at Roswell base were very aware of Flight #5. This probably includes people like the radar operators, the control tower operators, and perhaps some aircraft spotters. A report likely would have been written about the incident, and perhaps ended up the desks of people like Blanchard and Marcel. Being the head intelligence officer, Marcel did have some responsibility for base security, after all. The balloon was in Roswell air space.

Flight #11A crashed less than 20 miles due west of Roswell base on July 7, and only a few miles off of Highway 70 out of Roswell. It may very well be the balloon crash that AP reporter Jason Kellahin recalled seeing the next day near one of the main highways, along with military personnel recovering it. (Brazel's place wasn't anywhere near a main highway, and Kellahin wouldn't have had time to visit there between driving from Albuquerque and interviewing Brazel in Roswell later that evening.) The recovery would have been on the same day as Blanchard's press release, and again it seems likely that Roswell base would have been aware of Project Mogul in some form.

> Haut says he and the other staff
> officers took this to mean "no more talk about that, forget it."
> So they did. Unfortunately, this particular exchange didn't make
> it into the Fund's "Recollections of Roswell" tapes (nothing
> sinister here; the significance of Haut's words couldn't have been
> known at the time the editing was being done), but the entire,
> uncut interview is on tape in the Fund's files.

> Concerning Marcel, see the above re Blanchard taking the heat.

But was Blanchard in Fort Worth to protect Marcel from Ramey? No, I didn't think so. Yet Ramey praised Marcel a year later (see below). And please explain for us why at least one report wasn't written up about the whole fiasco. I think Blanchard would have had some explaining to do afterwards, including why he issued the press release, how he came to the conclusion that tinfoil was a flying disc, and how his head intelligence officer could also make such a mistake.

> Moreover, while he seems to have been a good officer, if a bit
> excitable and prone to magnify problems (as per his fitness
> reports)

This is pretty serious DeBunker Distortion of what is actually in Marcel's record. Kal Korff makes the same nonsensical and unsupported claim in his book and in his Skeptical Inquirer article. What this all comes down to is a single statement in ONE of Blanchard's evaluations of Marcel on 6 May 1948, or ten months after Roswell (Korff completely misrepresents this as "just after" Roswell). Under personal comments Blanchard wrote:

"A quiet, mature field grade officer. Exceptionally well qualified in his duty assignments. His only known weakness is to magnify problems he is confronted with. Superior moral qualities."

DeBunkers like Korff and Pflock are honing in on the phrase "prone to magnify problems he is confronted with" while totally ignoring the rest of Blanchard's evaluation, or his followup evaluation in August, which totally contradict Pflock's statement that Marcel was "a bit excitable" or Korff's distortion that Marcel had a "tendency to exaggerate things."

For example, under characteristics which BEST describe the officer, Blanchard checked "Cool under all circumstances." In August Blanchard checked "Loses his head, gets excited" as LEAST characterizing him. Under "Plan all aspects of a military situation, using judgment, initiative, and coolness" Blanchard gave him 4 out of 5, or an "excellent" mark. Under "Degree to which he is able to meet situations without emotional upset" Blanchard gave him his lowest mark of 7 out of 10, or low excellence. In August, however, he gave him his usual 8 mark, or high excellence. Under "Degree to which he is able to discriminate & evaluate to arrive at logical conclusions" Marcel received a 9, or superior marking. In another Efficiency Report dated 8 Jan 47 Blanchard gave Marcel a mark of 5 out of 7, or "high excellence" in the category "Stability Under Pressure"

Doesn't sound very "excitable" to me. Perhaps Mr. DeBunker can enlighten us as to where Blanchard was saying Marcel was "excitable?" To people with normal (not DeBunker) reading comprehension, however, Blanchard was saying EXACTLY THE OPPOSITE.

So what did Blanchard probably mean in the one statement? If we look at other efficiency reports, we see it repeatedly noted that Marcel was an extremely hard worker and a bit of a perfectionist. Overall, his

various evaluators thought these were positive traits, but there was at least one exception. Roswell Deputy Base Commander Payne Jennings wrote on 30 June 47:

"A loyal extremely diligent officer, rather lacking in imagination and initiative. He is definitely a 'Pluggger' and makes harder work of all his assignments than is necessary."

Nonetheless, Jennings gave him remarkably similar marks as Blanchard with an overall rating of high excellence. And, oh yes, under "Stability Under Pressure," he gave Marcel a mark of 5 out of 7 (high excellence), just like Blanchard.

Blanchard's remark that Marcel had a tendency to magnify problems he was confronted with, sounds like just another way of saying the same thing as Jennings, that Marcel made his work harder than was necessary. There is nothing here that shows that Blanchard's remark was in any related to the earlier events at Roswell.

> he wasn't a rated (flying or air-crew) officer,

And where did Marcel ever claim that he was? All he said was that he WAS the intelligence officer for the bomb wing and that on his combat bombing missions he sometimes acted AS a pilot, bombardier, or gunner, not the he WAS any of these. This is hardly a fantastic claim, since military personnel often take someone else's position if they are incapacitated, killed, or in need of relief, even when they aren't rated for the job. Marcel NEVER claimed to be anything other than an intelligence officer while in the service.

> and as was noted in his fitness reports, this limited his prospects in
> those days.

First of all, try fitness report, not reports, Mr. DeBunker. Pflock is just repeating Robert Todd's nonsense, where Todd misrepresents comments written by Gen. Ramey about Marcel a year after the Roswell events. Yes, this is the same Gen. Ramey of Fort Worth weather balloon infamy. Now here are Ramey's REAL remarks about Marcel, not the DeBunking spin that Pflock and Todd are putting on it. Ramey was giving Marcel high praise, something the DeBunkers, for some reason, prefer not to mention.

"There is no regular officer in field or company grade available, within this command, to assign the position now occupied by this officer [head of intelligence at Roswell base]. The services of this

officer are OUTSTANDING [emphasis mine] and it is to the best interest of this command that he remain on active duty."

Ramey's remarks were written as Marcel was being transferred to Washington for higher intelligence work. He may have been registering a mild protest, by noting he had nobody to replace him. After some routine factual statements about Marcel's career, Ramey then wrote at the very end:

"Since this officer is not a rated pilot his assumption of the position of Commanding General is not a consideration. However, his past performance and progress have been of such a nature and calibre to justify presumption that, within the next ten years, this officer could assume a position of responsibility commensurate with that of an Air Force Commander."

All Ramey was saying was that Marcel wasn't a regular Air Force fly-boy, so he wasn't going to make General. But in spite of that, Ramey thought he would become a command officer based on the "outstanding" calibre of his past performance. That certainly doesn't sound like the description of somebody who allegedly screwed up a tinfoil ID and chased Irving Newton around Ramey's office a year earlier, does it? And it wasn't exactly saying his "prospects were limited" either.

>(The fact he wasn't rated is more than a bit
> interesting, as in 12/78, he claimed to have ~8000 hours of flight
> time, both as a civilian pilot and in the military.)

If between 1931, when he started working as an aerial cartographer, and 1950, when he left the Air Force, Marcel had averaged 8 hours of flight time a week, he would have compiled his 8000 hours. That hardly seems

fantastic at all, given his prewar job and the fact that he was in the Air Force, including flying all over the vast South Pacific during the War. There are businessmen who fly a lot more than that.

And I don't see anything in Marcel's interviews where he claimed any specific flight time as a civilian pilot, or in what capacity he may have flown. All we have in his Robert Pratt interview is the terse and ambiguous statement "Private pilot" in response to Pratt's question if he flew as part of his job. I have dealt with this in more detail in a companion response to Pflock.

> While he may
> not have suffered officially from his role in the Roswell affair,

No, not at all. The alleged "excitable" bungler got promoted to higher intelligence work, put in charge of a staff handling highly sensitive intelligence, and prepared briefings and wrote special reports for the higher brass. Doesn't sound like they considered him unreliable or "excitable" in the least.

> at least one officer who worked for him in Washington ca. 1948-49
> recalls Marcel frequently was teased about it by his peers.

Oh great! And now the anonymous officer. Who was this officer and in what capacity was he affiliated with Marcel? This sounds like another "Marcel chased me around Ramey's office" stories.

In the documented, real world, Marcel's two efficiency reports during this period from a real peer with a real name gave him extremely high marks for the job he was doing with the Special Weapons Program. This is where we can also find his job description, which indicates Marcel was the primary briefing officer and wrote special reports for the higher brass on the latest intelligence. This was supporting evidence that Marcel may very well have written a report eventually destined for the White House on the first Soviet A-bomb blast. Robert Todd, naturally, omitted all mention of these efficiency reports while labeling Marcel a liar for having said he wrote such a report.

> Marcel
> was released from active duty in Sept. 1950, at the height of the
> Korean War, on a hardship basis (to care for his aged mother) and
> after about two-months in Walter Reed Army Hospital. While there's
> nothing too odd about all this, it seems clear the USAF didn't
> consider him indispensable.

Maybe if I look for a few years I'll find a point hiding in there. Offhand, it sounds like another DeBunking cheap shot to me.

> In any event, while all of this is interesting, the fact is, it's
> essentially academic. The formerly classified record--created
> decades before FOIA--proves no flying saucer crashed in New Mexico
> or anywhere else in U.S. territory or jurisdiction at any time
> before mid-1955. Records may not have surfaced which prove what
> did "crash" at Roswell, but records most certainly have surfaced
> to show what did NOT crash at Roswell. What did NOT crash at
> Roswell was an alien spaceship. Twining's September 23, 1947,
> proves this.

Nonsense! Twining wouldn't admit to having a saucer in his basement in a memo classified at only the SECRET level and intended for wide distribution to the various government and military agencies named in the memo. The primary purpose of the memo was to get these agencies to take flying saucers seriously, and to help in the gathering of intelligence. As it was, Twining said that he and his command, including his engineering laboratories, considered the saucers to utterly real flying craft under intelligent control. The fact that he had to even include a denial of having any physical evidence is in itself interesting, and suggests that there may have been rumors circulating to the contrary. A little plausible deniability never hurts if you're trying to keep the lid on a stupendous secret.

> The companion study prepared by AF Intel at HQ USAF
> proves this. The minutes of the USAF Scientific Advisory Board
> meeting of March 17-18, 1948, prove this. The early Nov. '48
> letter from AMC chief of technical intelligence Col. Howard McCoy
> to AF chief of intel MG Charles Cabell proves this.

Just another denial from somebody who may or may not have known if there was physical evidence. To quote from Jean van Gemert on Usenet:

"McCoy at the time was chief of T-2 (located at Patterson Field),

which had an intelligence gathering function. Project Sign (which he mentions in his 1948 talk at the Pentagon) was also located there, and he was responsible for it. Now imagine if debris had been found. Would it have been shipped to T-2? Not likely! Instead, it probably would have been sent to T-3, Engineering Research and Development (at Wright Field) which wasn't McCoy's division at all. The bottom line is that McCoy could *easily* have been left in the dark because there was no need for him to know."

I think that's a good argument. Compartmentalization of the big secret could easily have kept McCoy away from it, or even if he did know, he could have even been under orders to misdirect others without proper clearance.

> So do a number
> of other documents from the same time period and later prove this.
> To any reasonable person, this is CONCLUSIVE proof of what the
> Roswell incident did NOT involve. CASE CLOSED!

Hardly conclusive in the least. The day after a spectacular green fireball incident on Jan 30, 1949, which exploded and broke up near Roswell, the FBI was briefed that the subject of flying saucers was classified Top Secret by Army and Air Force intelligence. On the same day were two Confidential Army Staff messages about the fireball incident. One of them read, "...all out investigation of possible crashed saucer, OK'd." Somebody obviously took the possibility of crashed flying saucers VERY seriously. That's rather strange if there was allegedly no evidence of any previous crashed saucers.

But the important point is that the FBI was told the subject was Top Secret. Where are all those Top Secret documents that must exist? All I generally hear about are the Secret or lower classified ones, like the Twining memo and the ones where McCoy is quoted. That hardly constitutes "proof." Further, we know that the original Top Secret Project Sign Estimate, the one that preceded the above mentioned Top Secret companion study, came to the conclusion that flying saucers were extraterrestrial. There is even an anecdote in one of Kevin Randle's books of a colonel who worked on the Estimate, who told him they originally included physical evidence of metal recovered in New Mexico. Vandenberg ordered the paragraphs removed, then ordered the final report destroyed. Not surprisingly, the follow-up companion study proved to be a lot tamer and focused on possible terrestrial origins.

I'm also waiting for even one AAF document that states that Roswell base was involved in the recovery of a Top Secret balloon. The GAO certainly couldn't find it. In the triplicate-mad military, nobody at Roswell, Fort Worth, Wright Field, or the Pentagon seems to have bothered writing one piece of paper related to the incident. That demands a PLAUSIBLE explanation. At least one report, if not many, should have been written. Where are they?

> -- KARL deBUNKER

Well, at least he got that part right.

David Rudiak

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