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The UFO Evidence - Nicap - A Position Statement

From: slk <slk@EVANSVILLE.NET>
Date: Mon, 23 Mar 1998 11:46:36 -0600
Fwd Date: Tue, 24 Mar 1998 17:51:08 -0500
Subject: The UFO Evidence - Nicap - A Position Statement

THE UFO EVIDENCE - NICAP - A POSITION STATEMENT
Richard Hall

Over thirty years ago I compiled this documentary report (The UFO Evidence - 1964) for the leading UFO investigation group, the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP) in Washington, D.C. Few people at that time were aware of the scope and consistency of UFO reports by credible witnesses such as scientists, professional pilots, police officers, and even U.S. Air Force personnel. The Air Force was officially charged with conducting a UFO investigation, but maintained that nothing of any importance was being observed.

When The UFO Evidence was released in July 1964, coinciding with a new wave of sightings after a lull of several years, it received national and international news coverage as well as serious attention in the U.S. Congress. Less than two years later, as the sightings increased, the Air Force UFO project came under heavy fire and the House Armed Services Committee held hearings.

Late in 1966, with prodding from Congress, an investigation of the Air Force Project Blue Book was undertaken through a contract with the University of Colorado. When Dr. E. U. Condon, the scientific director, repeatedly made public statements ridiculing the UFO subject before the investigation was completed, the Colorado Project became equally controversial.

In short, nobody could agree on the evidence or how to go about studying it. Proponents like NICAP insisted that the focus should be on the apparent "signal" (credible reports from qualified witnesses showing strong patterns), while detractors tended to see only "noise" (many witnesses were fooled by common phenomena such as aircraft strobe lights and bright meteors). Despite obvious patterns and consistencies among the data after weak reports were screened out, scientists and public officials failed to recognize them or shied away from the subject because it was too controversial.

In one sense, little has changed since 1964. Skeptics have hardened their attitudes, science and government seem unable to deal with the issue, and many people continue to make poor and unconvincing UFO reports. However, significant reports by highly credible witnesses have multiplied. All of the patterns set forth in The UFO Evidence (1964) have been strongly confirmed by repeated observations, and several new patterns have emerged as well.

This report comprises a cross section of the UFO mystery as it appeared then. Sightings are presented by witness category and special types of evidence. The UFO Evidence remains a valuable resource and reference work, cited in nearly every major book on the subject published in the past thirty years.

A new volume that will cover the years since 1964 is now in preparation (due out this year) and will be a companion volume to the original report, bringing the subject up to date. New tables and case summaries will demonstrate that expert witnesses have continued to report exactly the same kind of objects: geometric shapes (typically disks, ellipses, or cigars) that perform in typical ways and leave typical physical traces or other evidence.

The new volume will also report the history of the Air Force Project Blue Book after 1964, the University of Colorado Project study, and other new developments in the history of UFOs. It will also address the so-called UFO abduction phenomenon, reported interactions of human beings with apparent alien beings. Abductions first began coming into public awareness late in the 1960s and 1970s, and have dominated the UFO subject in recent years.

This reprint of The UFO Evidence (1964) affords recent generations an opportunity to read and study a report that has been widely hailed as a classic of the UFO literature. Copies of the original report have become quite scarce, and those few that can be found sell at a premium on the UFO "black market." The content was eye-opening at the time, and remains even now an important summary of the case for real UFOs. Over thirty years of data since then have totally replicated its findings.

Richard Hall

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