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1966: Unidentified Flying Objects, October (folder B48-30)
Gerald R. Ford Congressional Papers

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Mr. William B. Weitzel

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October 26, 1966

presently directed towards the November 8 elections and Mr. Ford's regaining of his Congressional seat.

Perhaps at a later date I may be in a position to know of other parties to whom you may write to get more satisfaction on the Ravenna Case.

Kindest regards.

Sincerely,

Jim Bersie
Staff, Rep. Gerald R. Ford,

B/c
Encl.

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"UFO"

(WEITZEL, Wm B.)

legislative

re: Ravenna Case

October 26, 1966

Mr. William B. Weitzel, Chm
Pittsburgh Subcommittee, NICAP
45 Congress Street
Bradford, Pennsylvania 16701

Dear Mr. Weitzel:

Thank you for your letter of October 7 which I regret has gone so long unanswered. The reason for the delay is that for the past month I have been in Michigan working on Mr. Ford's campaign.

In your letter regarding the Ravenna Case, you asked me to suggest one or two other parties to whom to write who might be in a position to further effect a review of the material in Blue Book's files on this case.

Frankly, I am at a loss for such suggestions other than to express my hopes that the independent university investigations to be made will solve this matter.

Additionally, you asked whether the Ravenna Case would come under the purview of a new organization or whether it would remain as one item in the area of Blue Book's current responsibilities.

To answer this question, I am enclosing a copy of a News Release from the Air Force dated October 7. I quote "Air Force Project Blue Book files, as well as any other UFO information in the possession of the Air Force, will be made available to the team." However, the release goes on to say "the investigators will, however, conduct their research independently of and without direction from the Air Force."

It appears from this release then that the Ravenna Case would both be the better study of the new organization as well as continuing to remain as one of Blue Book's current responsibilities.

I hope this information will be helpful and I again apologize for the delay. However, as you can well imagine all of my energies are

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45 Congress St.
Bradford, Pa. 16701

October 7, 1966

Mr. James Bersie
Office of the Minority Leader
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Bersie:

Two days ago, I wrote to you concerning recent developments in NICAP's attempt to have the Air Force re-evaluate the Ravenna Case. The enclosures with this letter pertain to the same subject.

Would you be so kind as to do me a favor, which would take but a brief moment?

My problem pertains to the idea of a "higher court." Previous attempts to bring the matter of Project Blue Book's erroneous conclusion in the Ravenna Case to official attention have been unsuccessful, and Colonel Hayden Mims' recent letter to Congressman William Stanton shows a lack of concern over this matter; Colonel Mims' research for that communication was obviously hasty, to say the least. In short, I seem to have run up against a brick wall. Could you suggest one or two other parties to whom to write, who might be in a position to take some action that would effect a review of the material in Blue Book's files on this case?

The recent choice of a lead university by the Air Force complicates matters somewhat. Would the Ravenna Case come under the purview of a new organization, or would it, as I think properly, remain as one item in the area of Blue Book's current responsibilities?

I would appreciate a reply from you as soon as possible.

Sincerely yours,

William B. Weitzel

William B. Weitzel, Chairman
Pittsburgh Subcommittee, NICAP

Enclosures: 10/6 letter to Colonel Florian A. Holm
10/6 letter to Colonel Hayden P. Mims
10/7 letter to Judge Robert E. Cook

PS -- No doubt you have seen the recently publicized (Saturday Review) "sanitized version" of the Robertson Report, but in case you have not, a copy is enclosed which I typed from one obtained from the Air Force's Community Relations Branch.

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NO!

Quote
Release

45 Congress St.
Bradford, Pa. 16701

October 6, 1966

Colonel Hayden P. Mims
Congressional Inquiry Division
Office of Legislative Liaison
United States Air Force
The Pentagon
Washington, D. C.

Dear Colonel Mims:

Congressman William Stanton has forwarded to me your letter to him of September 30, 1966, answering his inquiry to Major Hector Quintanilla.

Having collected many hours of testimony and signed statements from law enforcement personnel involved in the April 17, 1966 chase of a low-flying object from Ohio to Pennsylvania, and having prepared a 126-page report for the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP), I have been concerned over the ill-considered explanation offered of this sighting by Project Blue Book. The enclosed copy of a letter to Colonel R. R. Hippler details my ideas in this regard.

Major Quintanilla shows no indication that he has examined relevant testimony, much less that he has taken it into account in his explanation, that the deputies and other officers who observed the flying object only saw an artificial satellite and Venus. To cite only two points of discrepancy: (1) The object initially came from the south, traveled overhead and returned from the north to hover directly above the deputies -- the major claims this was a satellite moving from northwest to southeast. (2) The men reported seeing Venus in addition to the object they chased, for some time before the end of the sighting; at the terminus of the sighting, they saw "one bright spot" to the south of the moon, and the object to the north of the moon -- Major Quintanilla claims the object they saw was Venus.

Furthermore, signed statements are in Blue Book's file from other police officers who corroborated the deputies' statements of their observations, including one from a patrolman in East Palestine, Ohio (Wayne Huston), who watched the object they were pursuing fly toward him and go overhead, before he joined them in pursuit.

Your letter to Mr. Stanton misrepresented, I have no doubt unknowingly, the facts of the case. I have prepared a list of comments to that letter, which is among the enclosures. I suspect that you are not in a position to take responsibility for an official review of Project Blue Book's analysis of the April 17 event, but feel you should be informed of the facts.

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It is not just my opinion that Blue Book has offered an inadequate explanation. An examination of the testimony, including that in the NICAP report, clearly indicates the inadequacy of Major Quintanilla's conclusion. Furthermore, Dr. J. Allen Hynek, who has examined this material, has gone on public record as disagreeing with that conclusion, even though, as stated by Major Quintanilla in an interview published June 8, 1966 in the Ravenna Record-Courier, Dr. Hynek's approval is required for all "astronomical" conclusions.

The enclosed material should give you a somewhat different, and more correct, perspective on the April 17 event. A copy of the NICAP report is in Blue Book's file; if it is unavailable for some reason, NICAP's Washington office would be happy to loan you one.

Sincerely yours,

William B. Weitzel

William B. Weitzel, Chairman
Pittsburgh Subcommittee, NICAP

Enclosures: 6/12 list of points of discrepancy between testimony and the USAF conclusion (copied from NICAP report, with recent comment)
6/28 list of testimony in NICAP report
8/16 editorial from Ravenna, Ohio, Record-Courier
8/17 article from Record-Courier, on Dr. Hynek
8/23 NICAP summary, USAF disposition of 4/17 case
8/26 letter to editor, Record-Courier
8/30 letter to Colonel Florian Holm, FTD, from William Weitzel
9/13 letter to Colonel Holm from William Weitzel (both unanswered)
9/30 letter from Colonel Mims to Congressman Stanton (retyped)
10/4 comments on Colonel Mims' letter by William Weitzel
10/4 letter to Colonel R. R. Hippler from William Weitzel
10/6 letter to Colonel Holm from William Weitzel

Copy sent to: Congressman William Stanton
Mr. James Bersie

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15 Congress St.
Bradford, Pa. 16701

October 7, 1966

Honorable Robert E. Cook
Common Pleas Court
Portage County Court House
Ravenna, Ohio

Dear Judge Cook:

Congressman William Stanton has forwarded me an exceptional letter he received recently from an Air Force officer, in response to an inquiry he made several weeks ago to Major Quintanilla, concerning the April 17 UFO sighting.

I thought you might like to be appraised of the contents of this letter, and of my response to it. A reasonable hypothesis for its misleading contents is that Colonel Mims, the officer, wrote it on the basis of a brief telephone call to Major Quintanilla or one of his assistants. Whatever the reason, it is a new low in befuddlement. Ostensibly a report on the re-evaluation of the April 17 event, it is less commensurate with the facts than Project Blue Book's original analysis.

I am also enclosing some copies of recent documents which should bring you up to date on NICAP's efforts to effect a fair review of the Air Force's explanation of the sighting.

I trust you will find this information enlightening, and would be most interested to hear any comments you might have.

Sincerely yours,



William E. Weitzel, Chairman
Pittsburgh Subcommittee, NICAP

Enclosures: 6/12 list of points contradicting USAF explanation
8/23 NICAP summary, USAF disposition of the April 17 case
8/26 letter to Record-Courier
8/30 letter to Colonel Florian A. Holm (unanswered)
9/13 letter to Colonel Holm (unanswered)
9/30 letter from Colonel Hayden P. Mims to Congressman Stanton
10/1 comments on Mims' letter by William Weitzel
10/1 letter to Colonel R. R. Hippler
10/6 letter to Colonel Holm
10/6 letter to Colonel Mims

Copy to: Congressman William Stanton

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45 Congress St.
Bradford, Pa. 16701

October 6, 1966

Colonel Florian A. Holm, Commander
Foreign Technology Division
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
Dayton, Ohio 45433

Dear Colonel Holm:

This is my third attempt to reach you in connection with the April 17 chase of a low-flying object from Ohio to Pennsylvania, called by Project Blue Book "The Ravenna Case."

Colonel Hayden P. Mims recently sent a misleading letter to Congressman William Stanton, replying to Mr. Stanton's inquiry to Major Quintanilla regarding this case. Enclosed is a copy of the Colonel's letter, with some critical comments on its errors.

Having had no reply from you to my letters of August 30 and September 13, I wrote to Colonel R. R. Hippler. In case my letters to you have been somehow interrupted in Transit, copies of these are enclosed along with a copy of my letter to Colonel Hippler.

I am also enclosing a list of points incompatible with the official explanation of this sighting, taken from testimony. To this date, Major Quintanilla has not explained these points, and it is now apparent that he has not even examined them. In particular, as Colonel Mims' letter makes clear, corroborating testimony is being pointedly ignored. I am not asking you to accept this claim on faith. It is backed up by signed statements, which Blue Book has in its file.

A satellite moving from northwest to southeast does not approach from the south. Venus does not appear to be in two places at once, to the right and to the left of the moon. Neither does it fly down the road at 80 miles an hour and go overhead (Huston's observation.) Why does Major Quintanilla imply these things happened April 17?

I assure you I will continue raising such points until they are answered.

Sincerely yours,

William B. Weitzel, Chairman
Pittsburgh Subcommittee, NICAP

Enclosures: 6/12 list of points incompatible with USAF conclusion
6/28 page from NICAP report, listing testimony
8/30 letter to Colonel Holm
9/13 letter to Colonel Holm
9/30 letter from Colonel Hayden Mims to Congressman Stanton
10/4 comments by William Weitzel on Mims' letter
10/4 letter to Colonel R. R. Hippler

Copy sent to: Congressman William Stanton
Mr. James Bersie
Colonel Hayden P. Mims
Sheriff Ross Dustman
Judge Robert E. Cook

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REPORT ON UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS

17 January 1953

1. The Panel of Scientific Consultants has met to evaluate any possible threat to national security posed by Unidentified Flying Objects ("Flying Saucers"), and to make recommendations thereon. The Panel has received the evidence as presented by cognizant intelligence agencies, primarily the Air Technical Intelligence Center, and has reviewed a selection of the best documented incidents.

2. As a result of its considerations, the Panel concludes:

That the evidence presented on Unidentified Flying Objects shows no indication that these phenomena constitute a direct physical threat to national security.

We firmly believe that there is no residuum of cases which indicates phenomena which are attributable to foreign artifacts capable of hostile acts, and that there is no evidence that the phenomena indicate a need for the revision of current scientific concepts.

3. In order most effectively to strengthen the national facilities for the timely recognition and the appropriate handling of true indications of hostile action, and to minimize the concomitant dangers alluded to above, the Panel recommends:

That the national security agencies take immediate steps to strip the Unidentified Flying Objects of the special status they have been given and the aura of mystery they have unfortunately acquired.

We suggest that this aim may be achieved by an integrated program designed to reassure the public of the total lack of evidence of inimical forces behind the phenomena, to train personnel to recognize and reject false indications quickly and effectively, and to strengthen regular channels for the evaluation of and prompt reaction to true indications of hostile measures.

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SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY PANEL ON UNIDENTIFIED
FLYING OBJECTS

11 - 17 January 1953

Evidence Presented.

1. Seventy-five case histories of sightings 1951-1952 (selected by ATIC as those best documented).
2. ATIC Status and Progress Reports of Project GRDUGE (sic) and Project BLUE BOOK (code names for ATIC study of subject).
3. Progress Reports of Project STORK (Institute contract work supporting ATIC).
4. Summary Report of Sightings at Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico.
5. Report of USAF Research Center, Cambridge, Mass., Investigation of "Green Fireball" Phenomena (Project TWINKLE).
6. Outline of Investigation of UFO's Proposed by Kirtland Air Force Base (Project BOUNCE).
7. Motion Picture Films of sightings at Tremonton, Utah, 2 July 1952 and Great Falls, Montana, August 1950.
8. Summary Report of 89 selected cases of sightings of various categories (Formations, Blinking Lights, Hovering, etc.).
9. Draft of manual: "How to Make a FLYOBRPT", prepared at ATIC.
10. Chart Showing Plot of Geographic Location of Unexplained Sightings in the United States during 1952.
11. Chart Showing Balloon Launching Sites in the United States.
12. Charts Showing Selected Actual Balloon Flight Paths and Relation to Reported Sightings.
13. Charts Showing Frequency of Reports of Sightings 1948-1952.
14. Charts Showing Categories of Explanations of Sightings.
15. Kodachrome Transparencies of Polyethylene Film Balloons in Bright Sunlight Showing High Reflectivity.
16. Motion Picture of Seagulls in Bright Sunlight Showing High Reflectivity.
17. Intelligence Reports Relating to U.S.S.R. Interest in U.S. Sightings.
18. Samples of Official USAF Reporting Forms and Copies of Pertinent Air Force, Army, and Navy Orders Relating to Subject.
19. Sample Polyethylene "Pillow" Balloon (54 inches square. (sic)
20. "Variations in Radar Coverage", JANP 101 (Manual (sic²) illustrating unusual operating characteristics of service radar).
21. Miscellaneous Official Letters and Foreign Intelligence Reports Dealing with Subject.
22. Copies of Popular Published Works Dealing with Subject (articles and periodicals, newspaper clippings).

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COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS OF UFO PANEL

General.

The Panel Members were impressed with the lack of sound data in the great majority of case histories. Among the case histories of significant sightings discussed in detail were the following:

Bellefontaine, Ohio (1 August 1952); Tremonton, Utah (2 July 1952); Great Falls, Montana (15 August 1950); Yaak, Montana (1 September 1952); Washington, D. C. area (19 July 1952); and Haneda A.F.B., Japan (5 August 1952), Port Huron, Michigan (29 July 1952); and Presque Isle, Maine (10 October 1952).

1-2 After review and discussion of these cases (and about 15 others, in less detail), the Panel concluded that reasonable explanations could be suggested for most sightings and "by deduction and scientific method it could be induced (given additional data) that other cases might be explained in a similar manner. The Panel pointed out that because of the brevity of some sightings (e.g., 2-3 seconds) and the inability of the witnesses to express themselves clearly (semantics) that conclusive explanations could not be expected for every case reported. Furthermore, it was considered that, normally, it would be a great waste of effort to try to solve most of the sightings, unless such action would benefit a training and educational program (see below). The writings of Charles Fort were referenced to show that "strange things in the sky" had been recorded for hundreds of years. It appeared obvious that there was no single explanation for a majority of the things seen.

On Lack of Danger.

The Panel concluded unanimously that there was no evidence of a direct threat to national security in the object sighted. Instances of "Foo Fighters" were cited. These were unexplained phenomena sighted by aircraft pilots during World War II in both European and Far East theaters of operation wherein "balls of light" would fly near or with the aircraft and maneuver rapidly. They were believed to be electrostatic (similar to St. Elmo's fire) or electromagnetic phenomena or possibly light reflections from ice crystals in the air, but their exact cause or nature was never defined. If the term "flying saucers" had been popular in 1943-1945, these objects would have been so labeled.

Air Force Reporting System.

2-3 It was the Panel's opinion that some of the Air Force concern over UFO's (notwithstanding Air Defense Command anxiety over fast radar tracks) was probably caused by public pressure. The result today is that the Air Force has instituted a fine channel for receiving reports of nearly anything anyone sees in the sky and fails to understand. This has been particularly encouraged in popular articles on this and other subjects, such as space travel and science fiction. The result is the mass receipt of low-grade reports which tend to overload channels of communication with material quite irrelevant to hostile objects that might some day appear. The Panel agreed generally that this mass of poor-quality reports containing little, if any, scientific data was of no value. Quite the opposite, it was possibly dangerous in having a military service foster public concern in "nocturnal meandering lights". The implication being, since the interested agency was military, that these objects were or might be potential direct threats to national security. Accordingly, the need for deemphasization made itself apparent. Comments on a possible educational program are enumerated below.

3-1 It was the opinion of one of the Panel members that the "saucer" problem had been found to be different in nature from the detection and investigation of German V-1 and V-2 guided missiles prior to their operational use in World War II. In this 1943-1944 intelligence operation (CROSSBOW), there was excellent intelligence, and by June 1944 there was material evidence of the existence of "hardware" obtained from crashed vehicles in Sweden. This evidence gave the investigating team a basis upon which to operate. The absence of any "hardware" resulting from unexplained UFO sightings lends a "will-of-the-wisp" nature to the problem. The results of the investigation, to date, strongly indicate that no evidence of hostile act or danger exists. Furthermore, the current reporting system would have little value in the case of detection of enemy attack by conventional aircraft or guided missiles; under such conditions, "hardware" would be available almost at once.

Artifacts of Extraterrestrial (sic) Origin.

L-5 It was interesting to note that none of the members of the Panel were loath to accept that this earth might be visited by extraterrestrial intelligence beings of some sort, some day. What they did not find was any evidence that related the objects sighted to space travelers. One of the Panel members, in his presentation, showed how he had eliminated each of the known and probable causes of sightings leaving him "extra-terrestrial" (sic) as the only one remaining in many cases. His background as an aeronautical engineer and technical intelligence officer could not be slighted. However, the Panel could not accept any of the cases cited by him because they were raw, unevaluated reports. Terrestrial explanations of the sightings were suggested in some cases, and in others the time of sighting was so short as to cause suspicion of visual impressions. It was noted by others of the Panel members that extraterrestrial artifacts, if they did exist, are no cause for alarm; rather, they are in the realm of natural phenomena subject to scientific study, just as cosmic rays were at the time of their discovery 20 to 30 years ago. This was an attitude in which another of the Panel members did not concur, as he felt that such artifacts would be of immediate and great concern not only to the U.S. but to all countries. (Nothing like a common threat to unite peoples!) It was noted that present astronomical knowledge of the solar system makes the existence of intelligence (sic) beings (as we know the term) elsewhere than on the earth extremely unlikely, and the concentration of their attention by any controllable means confined to any one continent of the earth quite preposterous.

Tremonton, Utah, Sighting.

5-6 This case was considered significant because of the excellent documentary evidence in the form of Kodachrome motion picture films (about 1600 frames). The Panel studied these films, the case history, ATIC's interpretation, and received a briefing by representatives of the USN Photo Interpretation Laboratory on their analysis of the film. This team had expended (at Air Force request) approximately 1000 man-hours of professional and sub-professional time in the preparation of graph plots of individual frames of the film, showing apparent and relative motion of objects and variation in their light intensity. It was the opinion of the P.I.L. representatives that the objects sighted were not birds, balloons or aircraft, were "not reflections because there was no blinking while passing through 60° of arc" and were, therefore, "self-luminous". Plots of motion and variation in light intensity of the objects were displayed. While the Panel Members were impressed by the evident enthusiasm, industry and extent of effort of the P.I.L. team, they would not accept the conclusions reached. Some of the reasons for this were as follows:

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a. A semi-spherical object can readily produce a reflection of sunlight without "blinking" through 60° of arc travel.

6-7

b. Although no data (sic) was (sic) available on the "albedo" of birds or polyethylene ballons in bright sunlight, the apparent motions, sizes and brightnesses of the objects were considered strongly to suggest birds, particularly after the Panel viewed a short film showing high reflectivity of seagulls in bright sunlight.

c. P.I.L. description of the objects sighted as "circular, bluish-white" in color would be expected in cases of specular reflections of sunlight from convex surfaces where the brilliance of the reflection would obscure other portions of the object.

d. Objects in the Great Falls case were believed to have probably been aircraft, and the bright lights such reflections.

e. There was no valid reason for the attempt to relate the objects in the Tremonton sighting to those in the Great Falls sighting. This may have been due to misunderstanding in their directive. The objects in the Great Falls sighting are strongly suspected of being reflections of aircraft known to have been in the area.

7-8

f. The intensity change in the Tremonton lights was too great for acceptance of the P.I.L. hypothesis that the apparent motion and changing intensity of the lights indicated extremely high speed in small orbital paths.

g. Apparent lack of guidance of investigators by those familiar with UFO reports and explanations.

h. Analysis of light intensity of objects made from duplicate rather than original film. The original film was noted to have a much lighter background (affecting relative brightness of object) and the objects appeared much less bright.

i. Method of obtaining data of light intensity appeared faulty because of unsuitability of equipment and questionable assumptions in making averages of readings.

j. No data had been obtained on the sensitivity of Kodachrome film to light of various intensities using the same camera type at the same lens openings.

k. Hand "jitter" frequencies (obtainable from early part of Tremonton film) were not removed from the plots of the "single pass plots" at the end of the film.

8

9

The Panel believed strongly that the data available on this sighting was sufficient for positive identification if further data is obtained by photographing polyethylene "pillow" balloons released near the site under similar weather conditions, checking bird flight and reflection characteristics with competent ornithologists and calculating apparent "G" forces acting upon objects from their apparent tracks. It was concluded that the results of such test would probably lead to creditable explanations of value in an educational or training program. However, the Panel noted that the cost in technical manpower effort required to follow up and explain every one of the thousand or more reports received through channels each year (1,900 in 1952) could not be justified. It was felt that there will always be sightings, for which complete data is lacking, that can only be explained with disproportionate effort and with a long time delay, if at all. The long delay in explaining a sighting tends to eliminate any detailed

9-10

elimination of popular feeling that every sighting, no matter how poor the data, must be explained in detail. Attention should be directed to the requirement among scientists that a new phenomena, to be accepted, must be completely and convincingly documented. In other words, the burden of proof is on the sighter, not the explainer.

Potential Related Dangers.

The Panel Members were in agreement that although evidence of any direct threat from these sightings was wholly lacking, related dangers might well exist resulting from:

- a. Misidentification of actual enemy artifacts by defense personnel.
- b. Overloading of emergency reporting channels with "false" information ("noise to signal ratio").
- c. Subjectivity of public to mass hysteria and greater vulnerability to possible enemy psychological warfare.

10-11

The first two of these problems may seriously affect the Air Defense intelligence system, and should be studied by experts, possibly under ADC. If UFO's become discredited in a reaction to the "flying saucer" scare, or if reporting channels are saturated with false and poorly documented reports, our capability of detecting hostile activity will be reduced. More competent screening or filtering of reported sightings at or near the source is required, and this can best be accomplished by an educational program.

Geographic Locations of Unexplained Sightings.

The map prepared by ATIC showing geographic locations of officially reported unexplained sightings (1952 only) was examined by the Panel. This map showed clusters in certain strategic areas such as Los Alamos. This might be explained on the basis of 24-hour watchful guard and awareness of security measures near such locations. On the other hand, there had been no sightings in the vicinity of sensitive related AE establishments while there were occasionally multiple cases of unexplained sightings in non-strategic areas. Furthermore, there appeared to be no logical relationship to population centers. The Panel could find no ready explanation for these clusters. It was noted, however, that if extraterrestrial artifacts were to be observed, it would be likely that they would be seen first near foreign areas rather than central U.S.

Instrumentation to Obtain Data.

11-12

The Panel was of the opinion that the present ATIC program to place 100 inexpensive 35 mm. stereo cameras (Videon Cameras) in the hands of various airport control tower operators would probably produce little valuable data related to UFO's. However, it was recognized that such action would tend to allay public concern in the subject until an educational program had taken effect. It was believed that procurement of these cameras was partly the result of public pressure in July 1952. With the poor results of the year-long Project TWINKLE program of 24-hour instrumentation watch (two frames of film showing nothing distinguishable), a widespread program of skywatching would not be expected to yield much direct data of value.

There was considerable discussion of a possible "sky patrol" by amateur astronomers and by wide-angle cameras. It was pointed out that at present a considerable fraction of the sky is now -- and has been for many years -- under surveillance every clear night in several meteor and aurora observing programs

as well as sky mapping programs at the various locations listed below. Although the attention of these astronomers is largely directed toward identified rather than unidentified objects, no case of any striking unidentified object is known to the Panel. Such an object would most certainly be reported if found on patrol plates.

12-13

A case was cited where an astronomer refused to interrupt his exposure in order to photograph an alleged sighting in a different part of the sky, suggesting that if a program of watching could be an adjunct of planned astronomical programs, little cost would be involved and that the trained astronomical personnel might photograph a sighting of an unidentified object.

It was agreed by the Panel that no government-sponsored program of optical nation-wide sky patrol is worthwhile at the present time, and that the encouragement of amateur astronomers to undertake such a program might have the adverse effect of over-emphasizing "flying saucer" stories in the public mind. However, the issue of radar-scope cameras for recording peculiar radar echoes would serve several purposes, including the better understanding of radar interference as well as identification of UFO's.

Radar Problem of Mutual Interference.

13-14

This characteristic problem of radar operation wherein the pulse signal (of approximately the same frequency) from station A may be picked up on the screens of station B and show as a high-speed track or series of dots was recognized to have probably caused a number of UFO reports. This problem was underlined by information received indicating ADC concern in solving this problem of signal identification before service use of very high-speed aircraft or guided missiles (1955-1956). One Panel member believed that one answer to this problem was the use of a "doppler filter" in the receiving circuit. Another suggested that the problem might be better solved by the use of a "controlled jitter" wherein the operator receiving "very fast tracks" (on the order of 1,000 - 10,000 mph) would operate a circuit which would alter slightly his station's pulse frequency rate. If the signal received on the screen had been caused by mutual interference with another station, the track would now show itself at a different distance from the center of the screen, if it still appeared at all. Such a technical solution was thought to be simpler and would cost much less than a "doppler filter".

Unexplained Cosmic Ray Phenomena.

14-15

Two reported cases were examined: one at Palomar Mountain, California, in October 1949, when cosmic ray counters went "off scale for a few seconds", apparently while a "V" of flying saucers was observed visually; and two, a series of observations by the "Los Alamos Bird Watchers Association" from August 1950 to January 1951, when cosmic ray coincidence counters behaved queerly. Circuit diagrams and records were available for the latter, and a Panel member was also quickly (sic) to point out that the recorded data were undoubtedly due to instrumental effects that would have been recognized as such by more experienced observers.

The implication that radioactive effects were correlated with unidentified flying objects in these two cases was, therefore, rejected by the Panel.

Educational Program.

The Panel's concept of a broad educational program integrating efforts of all concerned agencies was that it should have two major aims: training and "debunking".

The training aim would result in proper recognition of unusually illuminated objects (e.g., balloons, aircraft reflections) as well as natural phenomena (meteors, fireballs, mirages, noctilucous clouds). Both visual and radar recognition are concerned. There would be many levels in such education from enlisted personnel to command and research personnel. Relative emphasis and degree of explanation of different programs would correspond to the categories of duty (e.g., radar operators; pilots; control tower operators; Ground Observer Corps personnel; and officers and enlisted men in other categories). This training should result in a marked reduction in reports caused by misidentification and resultant confusion.

15-16

The "debunking" aim would result in reduction in public interest in "flying saucers" which today evokes a strong psychological reaction. This education could be accomplished by mass media such as television, motion pictures, and popular articles. Basis of such education would be actual case histories which had been puzzling at first but later explained. As in the case of conjuring tricks, there is much less stimulation if the "secret" is known. Such a program should tend to reduce the current gullibility of the public and consequently their susceptibility to clever hostile propaganda.

16-17

Members of the Panel had various suggestions related to the planning of such an educational program. It was felt strongly that psychologists familiar with mass psychology should advise on the nature and extent of the program. Also, someone familiar with mass communication techniques, perhaps an advertising expert, would be helpful. The teaching techniques used for aircraft identification during the past war were cited as an example of a similar educational task. The amateur astronomers in the U.S. might be a potential source of enthusiastic talent "to spread the gospel". It was believed that business clubs, high schools, colleges, and television stations would all be pleased to cooperate in the showing of documentary type motion pictures if prepared in an interesting manner. The use of true cases showing first the "mystery" and then the "explanations" would be forceful.

To plan and execute such a program, the Panel believed was no mean task. The current investigatory group at ATIC would, of necessity, have to be closely integrated for support with respect to not only the historical cases but the current ones. Recent cases are probably much more susceptible to explanation than older ones; first, because of ATIC's experience and, secondly, their knowledge of most plausible explanations. The Panel believed that some expansion of the ATIC effort would certainly be required to support such a program. It was believed inappropriate to state exactly how large a Table of Organization would be required.

17-18

The Panel believed that, with ATIC's support, the educational program of "training and debunking" outlined above might be required for a minimum of one and one-half to two years. At the end of this time, the dangers related to "flying saucers" should have been greatly reduced if not eliminated. Cooperation from other military services and agencies concerned (e.g., Federal Civil Defense Administration) would be a necessity. In investigating significant cases (such as the Tremonton, Utah, sighting), controlled experiments might be required. An example would be the photographing of "pillow balloons" at different distances under similar weather conditions at the site.

The help of one or two psychologists and writers and a subcontractor to produce training films would be necessary in addition. The Panel considered that ATIC's efforts, temporarily expanded as necessary, could be most useful in implementing any action taken as a result of its recommendations. Experience and records in ATIC would be of value in both the public educational and service training program envisaged. At least one Panel member was of the opinion that after public gullibility lessened and the service organizations, such as ADC, had been trained to sift out the more readily explained spurious sightings, there would still be a role for a very modest-sized ATIC section to cope with the residuum of items of possible scientific value. This section should concentrate on energetically following up those cases which seemed to indicate the evidence of unconventional energy artifacts. Reports of such artifacts would be expected to arise mainly from Western outposts in far closer proximity to the Iron Curtain than Lubbock, Texas!

Unofficial Investigating Groups.

18-19

The Panel took cognizance of the existence of such groups as the "Civilian Flying Saucer Investigators" (Los Angeles) and the "Aerial Phenomena Research Organization (Wisconsin)". It was believed that such organizations should be watched because of their potentially great influence on mass thinking if widespread sightings should occur. The apparent irresponsibility and the possible use of such groups for subversive purposes should be kept in mind.

Increase in Number of Sightings.

The consensus of the Panel was, based upon the history of the subject, that the number of sightings could be reasonably expected to increase again this summer.

NATIONAL INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE

ON AERIAL PHENOMENA

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20036

TELEPHONE: (202) 667-9434

August 15, 1966

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES:
1536 CONNECTICUT AVE., N.W.

MAJOR DONALD E. KEYHOE
USMC (RET.) DIRECTOR

RICHARD H. HALL
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Mr. James Bersie
Office of the Minority Leader
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Bersie:

I enjoyed our talk last week, and hope the enclosed materials will be of interest to you. I have written a brief summary of the latest action, since the June 28 NICAP report, on the Air Force's refusal to evaluate the April 17 sighting in terms of the facts. Most of the documents referred to in that summary are enclosed here.

This case, and Blue Book's activity in connection with it, bear an important relationship to the Project's current activity in setting up university teams to help them evaluate sighting reports. Among those who have followed his activities closely, Major Quintanilla has a reputation for conveniently ignoring details of sightings which his explanations fail to cover. In this case in particular, the major has had three opportunities to note the witnesses' reporting Venus in addition to the UFO; in his July 15 letter to me, however, he shows his lack of awareness of this, even stating that had they reported Venus, "new light would have been shed on the case." Furthermore, the major has asked Dr. Hynek to offer his official opinion -- Dr. Hynek is supposed to have the final say for all astronomical conclusions -- and Dr. Hynek has replied, "unknown." Yet the major ignores this, and is sticking with his original evaluation of "satellite-Venus." Surely, such an arbitrary attitude on the major's part will impede efforts to beef up the Project's work with outside scientific help.

If I can be of any assistance to you in supplying more information, please get in touch. Again, thanks for your time.

Sincerely yours,

William B. Weitzel

William B. Weitzel

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1966 August 12: SUMMARY: NICAP attempt to have USAF re-re-evaluate UFO sighting, April 17, 1966 Ohio-Pennsylvania "chase" (called by the USAF, "the Ravenna case"). These notes post-date June 28 NICAP report by investigator W. Weitzel.

- e July 3 WW letter to Lt. Col. John Spaulding: Major Quintanilla's overlooking of details of sighting. Request for explanation, and estimate of probability that case will be fairly evaluated.
- e July 13 WW letter to Major Quintanilla: Request to answer May 17 letter, signed by him (Certified Mail) May 20.
- e July 14 Congressman William Stanton letter to WW: Expect to hear from Major Quintanilla fairly soon, according to enclosure (from Col. Dwight W. Covell, USAF Congressional Inquiry Division).
- e July 15 Major Quintanilla letter to WW: Anxious to reach a scientific conclusion on case. Have weighed all points carefully. Witnesses saw a satellite coming from NW going SE, then fixed eyes on, and chased, Venus. If Venus had been reported in addition to UFO, new light would have been shed on case. (Did not answer my explicit points in May 17 letter, listed there by number, also in my June 12 letter to Congressman Stanton.)
- e July 27 (July 14 and 15 letters above were delayed in forwarding; received this date.) WW letter to General Cruikshank, FTD Commander: Major Quintanilla has not evaluated the data. Request appropriate action.
- July 29 Dr. James McDonald, Senior Physicist, Institute of Atmospheric Physics, University of Arizona phone call to Richard Hall: Talked with Major Quintanilla recently; the major indicated intention to classify case "unknown" and said he would clear through Washington, and Dr. Hynek. NICAP's June 28 report is not in Blue Book's file as expected; send another copy.
- e July 30 WW letter to Colonel DeGoes, Major Quintanilla's superior officer: Copy of June 28 NICAP report enclosed. Refer to letter to Cruikshank; Major Quintanilla has not evaluated the facts.
- e July 30 WW letter to Colonel Freeman, SAFOI, Col. Spaulding's replacement: Refer to letter to Spaulding. Query repeated briefly.
- e July 30 WW letter to Congressman Stanton: Updated information on case. Seem to have reached dead end; please advise.
- e August 4 Dr. J. Allen Hynek to Herb Taylor, NICAP member: Hynek not consulted officially on case, but told Air Force anyway, should be "unknown" classification (Taylor sent letter, and release, to NICAP.)
- August 4 WW phone call to Dr. McDonald: Updated information. Quintanilla definitely said he would reclassify case "unknown." Col. Freeman should have official press release by now.
- e August 5 WW phone call to Col. Freeman: Freeman has heard nothing, but it may be in the works. Check with Col. Hippler.
- e August 5 WW phone call to Col. Hippler: Hippler would hear nothing. Check with Major Quintanilla.

1966 August 12: SUMMARY: NICAP attempt to have USAF re-re-evaluation, cont.

- e August 5 WW phone call to Maj. Quintanilla (in D.C.): Major Quintanilla never said he would change conclusion. But he sent case file plus NICAP's June 28 report to Dr. Hynek in Ontario, where he is vacationing. If Hynek and Col. DeGoes both concur, evaluation will be changed to "unknown".
- e August 5 WW phone call to Col. DeGoes: DeGoes claimed ignorance of any of these aspects, but promised to talk to Maj. Quintanilla about all points, when Quintanilla returned to Dayton on Monday, August 8.
- e August 5 WW phone call to Col. Freeman: Freeman promised to call NICAP first thing if/when re-evaluation news comes through.
- e August 6 Colonel Florian Holm, new FTD Commander, letter to WW: Acknowledge receipt of July 27 letter to Gen. Cruikshank and July 30 letter to Col. DeGoes, and June 28 report. Continued evaluation of Blue Book depends on such material. (This letter mailed August 3.)
- August 8 Received word from private source that Dr. Hynek had been requested by Major Quintanilla to review case material, and that, on basis of the NICAP June 28 report, Dr. Hynek could only say "unknown" and that he so informed Major Quintanilla officially. This conclusion was sent on or prior to August 3rd.
- August 9 WW phone call to Mrs. Sara Hunt, SAFOI: She has heard nothing of any change of conclusion. She talked with Colonel Freeman this morning; he has gone on leave. Will notify me as soon as word comes through.
- August 10 WW visit to Mrs. Hunt at Pentagon: She called Blue Book at Wright - Patterson AFB: no change of conclusion.
- August 11 WW visit to Congressman Stanton: Discussion of how to get better response from Blue Book. He will send letter direct to someone there, after I supply summary of recent material and documents, next Monday, August 15.
- August 11 WW phone call to Project Blue Book: Lt. Marley, staff member, has heard nothing about any change of conclusion. Will check with Major Quintanilla.
- August 12 WW phone call to Project Blue Book: Lt. Marley has just checked with Col. DeGoes, who had talked with Maj. Quintanilla. They have no plans to change conclusion; have read the June 28 NICAP report. Marley does not know anything about Hynek's statement of opinion; he is in Ontario on vacation. I pointed out above facts. Marley said he would read the June 28 report when it was returned to files. He had no access to files to check on whether the May 10 hearings had resulted in any material therein, but assumed it had. Marley said the early material, collected by Major Quintanilla's (2½ minute) interview contained contradictions. I told him what ruled out the USAF explanation, and left message that NICAP was not finished in its attempt to get the facts evaluated.

FINAL SUMMARY TO DATE: Major Quintanilla and two other sources have testified as to the Major's intentions to present the case to Dr. Hynek. Dr. Hynek has said he considers the case unknown, and has both unofficially and officially indicated this to the Air Force. To date, after reviewing the NICAP material and presumably getting Dr. Hynek's official opinion to the contrary, the case is classified satellite-Venus.

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William B. White

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS FOREIGN TECHNOLOGY DIVISION (AFSC)
WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, OHIO 45433



OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER

3 August 1966

Mr. William B. Weitzel
6294 - 29th Street, N.W.
Washington, D. C. 20015

Dear Mr. Weitzel

We are in receipt of your letter of 27 July to my office and that of 30 July to Colonel DeGoes from my Division. We also acknowledge receipt of your Summary Report on the 17 April 1966 Portage County reportings.

Your personal interest in Blue Book and the copy of your Summary Report are much appreciated. Comments and suggestions such as you offer are considered as are the host of factors which relate to Project Blue Book, in those decisions which relate to its continued evaluation.

Sincerely


FLORIAN A. HOLM
Colonel, USAF
Commander

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1966 August 5: Follow-up on Ravenna April 17 UFO "chase";

Call to Col. George Freeman, SAFOI 697-9079. Asked if Major Quintanilla had informed him of altered conclusion. He said no. I said that a scientist at Wright-Patterson had heard from Quintanilla that he was going to contact Hynek and get the decision cleared through Washington. Mentioned Hynek's letter, that he thought should be "UNKNOWN". Freeman said he'd hear if it were changed. I asked about my letter to Freeman; no comment, except that we are all entitled to our opinions, and in the last analysis, any evaluation is just an opinion. I told him of Quintanilla's letter to me, stating that the evaluation might have been different had Venus been reported by the witnesses; that it had, and that Quintanilla was informed by them and by me, but was unaware of that and of other aspects of the sighting. Freeman began agreeing, even adding to one of my analogies, and volunteering that he would, himself, be upset if told he had not seen something he'd seen. Suggested calling either Quintanilla, in town today, at Andrews AFB -- 981-4208 or 981-2406 -- or Lt. Col. Hippler (R. R. Hippler) at the office of Deputy Chief of Staff for Research and Development, AFSC, OCS-211.

Call to Lt. Col. R. R. Hippler: Told him Freeman had said he might get a "piece of paper" across his desk if Quintanilla had reversed a finding; Hippler said so unless a major decision about the nature of UFOs. However, he was aware of the Ravenna case, since there had been a Congressional inquiry about it. I asked if this was from Congressman William Stanton, but he did not remember. Said that, in any event, he'd be notified only on a weekly basis, for purpose of knowing general background in case of local queries; that Quintanilla would not need the approval of anyone to change the conclusion.

Call to Major Quintanilla: Asked if he had any comment on report that he was going to change the Ravenna evaluation. He said he had not said he would, but that if Hynek and Col. DeGoes concurred, the conclusion would be changed. However, it is entirely up to them, jointly. I said Hynek had signed a statement that he had notified the Air Force of his opinion that "UNKNOWN" was a better judgment; Quintanilla denied knowing of this. Said he had sent Hynek a copy of my report, and the Blue Book case file.

Call to Col. DeGoes, to Blue Book office in Dayton, 513-257-0916. He acknowledged my correspondence and receipt of P-13 report, said had been put into case file. Told him of above; he said he would talk to Quintanilla when he returned Monday. Asked if he knew of Hynek's statement; no, but would talk to Quintanilla about it. Mentioned reason for disturbance over Quintanilla's not evaluating the details of the case, ref. Quintanilla's letter to me, mentioned in my correspondence to DeGoes; DeGoes said he would talk to Quintanilla about it. I pointed out that Dr. Hynek was apparently disturbed over being blamed for Quintanilla's evaluation, since he had not been consulted at all. DeGoes said he would talk to Quintanilla about it. I asked how information, if conclusion was changed, would be released; DeGoes said Freeman would be notified. DeGoes was most cordial and responsive.

Call to Col. Freeman: If evaluation is changed, how can I be notified? Please call here? He agreed to, took number (NICAP).

1966 August 6 / 4.

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RECEIVED AUG 4 1966

DEARBORN OBSERVATORY
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY
EVANSTON, ILLINOIS

Box 820
Blind River, Ont
Can. July 29, 1966

Dear Mr. Taylor:

This is in answer to your letter of July 11---excuse the typing since it is being done by me in the woods in Canada. Briefly, the answers to your questions are:

(1) I believe the Air Force will give very greatly increased scientific attention to UFO's very shortly. There seems to be some difficulty in getting qualified scientists to look into the matter---they all want to steer clear of this controversial subject. But the Air Force is trying.

(2) In general, the pressure has come from more and better sightings from reliable people---e.g., the Exeter case.

(3) If they can be found, the scientists will be quite independent of the Air Force. But it is astounding how completely ignorant most scientists are about UFO sightings. They simply assume that they didn't happen.

(4) I think E-M effects and especially animal reactions quite important. We still need more data.

(5) It is unfortunately true that at times the Air Force has come to an evaluation without consulting me. An outstanding example of this is the Ravenna case which was not brought to my attention officially. The evaluation of satellite-Venus did not come from me, nor would it have. Unfortunately, since I am an astronomer, I am frequently blamed for it. My own feeling is that the Ravenna case should be considered unidentified, and I have so informed the Air Force. Please remember, I am a consultant, not a setter of policy. That is done way up in the Pentagon.

I do hope to see you the next time I am in New York. You will be interested in my Foreword to Vallee's new book, Challenge to Science, and in my forthcoming article in the British journal, Discovery.

Sincerely yours,

J. Allen Hynek
J. Allen Hynek

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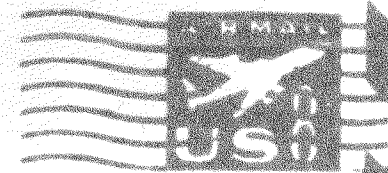
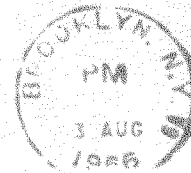
August 3, 1966

Dear Dan:

Enclosed is the letter from Spunk. Please note that you may keep the original, as I made several copies of it. Hope it helps to re-open the Havana sighting. Please send me a copy of the press account of the police sightings in the Wash., D. C. area of a few days ago. Thanks.

Yours,
Herb

H. Taylor
2555 E. 12th St.
B'klyn 35, N. Y.



Mr. Dan Berliner
c/o NICAP
1536 Connecticut Ave., N. W.
Washington 6, D. C.

NATIONAL INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE
ON AERIAL PHENOMENA

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20036

TELEPHONE: (202) 667-9434

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES:
1536 CONNECTICUT AVE., N.W.

July 30, 1966

MAJOR DONALD E. KEYHOF
USMC (RET.) DIRECTOR

RICHARD H. HALL
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Honorable William Stanton
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Stanton:

Your letter of July 14 has been forwarded to me from Pittsburgh; I am in Washington, for a while, working in the NICAP office. I had hoped to stop by your office in person this week with the enclosed material, but had better mail it before my next opportunity to see you in person.

Your help in obtaining a response from Major Quintanilla regarding the April 17 UFO sighting has resulted in a letter from him, the first word I've gotten in nine weeks. His letter (copy enclosed), has cleared up some questions, but it is unsatisfactory for all that.

Major Quintanilla is entirely unaware of one of the most significant points in the sighting -- that the officers saw Venus and the UFO at the same time. He obviously did not read my May 17 letter to him, in which I sketched the moon, Venus, and the UFO as the men saw them at the end of their observation. The other features of the sighting, of course, rule out the major's "explanation" -- but the main point is, he has shown himself to be unable, or unwilling, to see the facts, despite his statement to the contrary. He is not aware of the most elementary facts about the sighting; road direction, UFO movement, position of the moon, and so on.

I really do not know where to go from here, Mr. Stanton. My direct letters, and your transmittals to the Air Force, all seem to end up on Major Quintanilla's desk, at which point they are almost selectively confused (if such a thing is possible, I believe it has happened here). It seems monstrously unjust that one man's unwarranted opinion could cause all the trouble it has, with apparently long-lasting effects, in Portage County; but what more is there to be done?

If you have any suggestions, I would be grateful to hear them.

Sincerely yours,


William B. Waitzel

Enclosures: Letter from Maj. Q. to W.B.W.
Letter from W.B.W. to Gen. Cruikshank 7/27
Letter from W.B.W. to Col. Freeman 7/30

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6294 - 29th St. N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20015

July 30, 1966

Colonel Freeman, Director
Community Relations Division
United States Air Force
The Pentagon
Washington, D. C.

Dear Colonel Freeman:

Four weeks ago, I wrote your predecessor, Lt. Col. Spaulding, about the April 17, 1966 UFO "chase" from Ohio to Pennsylvania. I have received no reply, and thought this may be due to a change of personnel in your Division; thus I am writing to you. The letter in question was dated July 3, and its substance was my objections to Major Quintanilla's decision regarding the April 17 sighting. I asked Col. Spaulding two questions:

1. Why has Maj. Quintanilla ignored certain parts of the witness' testimony?

2. Is Project Blue Book going to explain, or can it explain, the April 17 sighting? Not the sighting as Major Quintanilla interprets it -- a point of light in the southeastern sky -- but the sighting details reported by the witnesses?

I believe I have received an answer to the first question, from Major Quintanilla himself (see letter copy enclosed). He has shown himself completely unaware of one of the key features of the sighting: Venus was seen in addition to the UFO. The major admits this fact might change his evaluation, but does not know that the witnesses testified to it, in his presence, on May 10 when he visited Portage County. Likewise, I pointed out in my May 17 letter to him, that they had not confused the UFO with Venus; I even included a drawing to illustrate this, but apparently he did not see that part of the letter. Major Quintanilla's "answer", so to speak, to my first question above, seems to be that he believes strongly that no airborne object was seen; thus, data to the contrary is invisible to him.

My second question still stands, Colonel Freeman. Since I cannot seem to communicate with Major Quintanilla, I hope you can supply the answer for me. I have enclosed a list of the points I originally conveyed to Major Quintanilla, taken from testimony to him, taped in his presence on May 10. The "satellite-Venus" conclusion does not explain these points.

Will Project Blue Book consider these points? Can it explain them?

Sincerely yours,

William B. Weitzel

William B. Weitzel

Enclosures

PHOTOCOPY FROM GERALD FORD LIBRARY

6294 - 29th St. N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20015

July 30, 1966

Colonel DeGoes
Project Blue Book
Wright-Patterson AFB
Dayton, Ohio 45433

Dear Colonel:

Dr. James McDonald informed me recently that the enclosed report, a documentation of the April 17, 1966 Ohio - Pennsylvania UFO "chase", is not in the files of Project Blue Book. As the enclosed copy of a letter from Congressman Stanton indicates, this report was submitted to the Air Force about three weeks ago (I sent it to him on July 2nd). The other copy may still be in the office of the Community Relations Branch at the Pentagon; Colonel Freeman mentioned recently that it was. In case its transmittal to Blue Book is delayed further, I would appreciate your making this copy part of the case file for the April 17 sighting.

As the investigator responsible for this report, I have been dismayed at Major Quintanilla's attitude and methods regarding the sighting. He claims to have conducted his investigation in a thorough and objective manner, yet from the very start, has refused to account for over a dozen details of the sighting which his "satellite - Venus" explanation does not encompass. His latest letter to me (rather, his only letter, but his latest response to my questions) indicates Major Quintanilla is unaware of one of the most fundamental features of the sighting -- the observers' having distinguished Venus from the airborne object they pursued. This was part of their testimony to him, and I have waited patiently for some sign that this, and other relevant data, have been absorbed in the major's evaluation. I am now convinced that his evaluation is not of the UFO sighting, but of his own limited interpretation of it.

Whether that is a correct explanation for Major Quintanilla's not having explained the sighting, or not, he is clearly unwilling to review the data in an objective manner; for this reason, I have chosen to bring these facts to official attention. The enclosed copy of a recent letter to the Commanding General of the Foreign Technology Division details my concern over this matter.

I hope you will find this material informative.

Sincerely yours,

William B. Weitzel

Enclosures

PHOTOCOPY FROM GERALD FORD LIBRARY

6294 - 29th St. N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20015

July 27, 1966

General Bruikshank, Commander
Foreign Technology Division
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
Dayton, Ohio 45443

Dear General:

By way of introduction, I am the chairman of the Pittsburgh Investigative Subcommittee of the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP). I was the NICAP investigator for the April 17, 1966 UFO "chase" which began in Portage County, Ohio, and ended in Conway, Pennsylvania. I have corresponded with Major Quintanilla about this sighting, and his explanation of it as due to an artificial satellite and Venus, which does not accommodate the facts of the sighting.

A copy of my 120-page report to NICAP is, I understand, in Project Three Book's files. It contains my first letter to Major Quintanilla, in which I pointed out to him the unexplained sighting details. I have just recently received a reply from the major, which I consider so unworthy of the requirements of the situation, that I felt it should be brought to your attention.

My May 17 letter to the major pointed out fourteen details of the April 17 sighting which his "explanation" does not explain. Rather than answering these explicit questions, Major Quintanilla offered his opinion that had a certain condition been fulfilled, the case would have had new light shed on it. This condition was fulfilled, and the major so informed, in testimony to him of May 10, and in my letter to him of May 17. He has apparently not considered the testimony, or read my letter.

His chief emphasis, in this recent letter (July 15, copy enclosed) is on the supposed fact that Venus was the only bright object in the sky during the time of the UFO sighting; therefore, the UFO must have been Venus. Indeed, the officers who pursued and watched the UFO, saw the UFO and Venus. Major Quintanilla was told this on May 10, and in my letter.

It is clear that the major is unaware of the sighting's features, and that he has chosen to disregard their being emphasized to him. Otherwise, he would have found the answer to his question about Venus, in my letter to him of May 17; indeed, he would have found it in his personal confrontation with the witnesses, and would never have raised the question in the first place. His statement that Venus was not near any reference points on the morning of April 17 indicates that he has not even a minimal knowledge of the observational conditions of that date; Venus was about 9° to the right of the moon.

Major Quintanilla's ill-considered explanation has caused much embarrassment and police officers involved in this sighting. Among the citizens of Portage

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Weitzel -- General Cruikshank

July 27, 1966

page two

County, Ohio, who are familiar with the sighting's details, this explanation has hurt the Air Force: no one can understand how these details were overlooked, or why.

The reason seems to be, that Major Quintanilla is psychologically unable to consider the facts. Perhaps he thinks they would, if taken seriously, point to a "conspiracy" conclusion. No one suggested to him that such an explanation is desirable, but he made a strange reference to this possibility in his recent letter. The April 17 witnesses saw an unusual, airborne object; the major could easily have categorized this as an "unidentified flying object," along guidelines established in AFR 200-2.

In any event, whether Major Quintanilla has a mental block or not, he has clearly mishandled this case. The facts indicate that the April 17 UFO sighting has not yet been explained. The major is resolute in his original belief that it has been. He cannot see the evidence, or refuses to.

I am deeply concerned about this, General Cruikshank, and hope you share my concern. Not only have the reputations of several police officers been hurt, and the Air Force's image been tarnished, but Major Quintanilla is in charge of a vital project, and its imminent expansion.

Is anything at all to be done to redeem the situation? I earnestly hope you can give me an optimistic reply.

Sincerely yours,

William B. Weitzel

William B. Weitzel

Enclosure: Letter from Maj. Quintanilla to
William Weitzel, dated 15 July 1966

Reference: "File P-15 2400", HUSAF report on
April 17, 1966, UFO sighting; in Project Blue
Box Folder

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PTD (TJSTR)

Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio 45433

15 July 1966

William B. Weitzel
5709 Woodmont Street
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15217

Dear Mr. Weitzel,

Please excuse the delay, but I have been extremely busy for the past three months. I have been away from the office at least half the time, attending briefings, giving briefings, and trying to finalize the plans for our future scientific teams. Hopefully the teams should be complete by September, at least I hope so. I have also had numerous visitors in my office and this also pushes the correspondence back whenever this happens. My personal correspondence has been extremely heavy and I find myself way behind and unable to catch up. Please excuse the delay.

I am aware that we are both quite anxious to reach a definite objective conclusion in the Ravenna sighting. Achieving a scientific and objective explanation of all UFO reports is of great importance to me. In the case in question I have given much thought to the available data and feel that I have honestly weighed each factor to an appropriate degree in reaching my conclusion. I also believe that pertinent information was available to make such an evaluation.

I regret your feelings that certain factors of the report were disregarded. There was no attempt on my part to do so. Considering the lacking conclusive information to place a tangible object in the area, I find it quite difficult to reach a conclusion to substantiate the presence of an UFO.

I know of no jet aircraft that were involved with the alleged UFO whether scrambled or otherwise. We received no reports from any pilot in the area confirming observance of an UFO. This is a puzzling point that should be given due consideration. If Spaur observed jet aircraft in the vicinity of the UFO, doesn't it appear that such would have been reported at least to someone, if not our office.

It is still my belief that the witnesses observed the passage of a satellite over northeastern, Ohio. Considering there are over thirty satellites and satellite components visible to the naked eye, it is possible that one of these was in the area at the time of the sighting. As the satellite approached the southeast portion of the sky, the satellite

disappeared and then the observers focused on the planet Venus. I ask you, why didn't any of the witnesses observe Venus which was definitely rising in the southeast? Had such an observance been made, new light would have been shed on the case. Venus, with a stellar magnitude of -3.9 would have been brighter than any of the stars and should have definitely been visible. Police Chief Buchert stated that there were no other stars, etc., in the area of the object. I ask you why wasn't Venus observed when the planet was definitely there? Without a reference point, Venus would have appeared to perform erratic maneuvers. As the witnesses were traveling toward the southeast how could they have any balancing point of reference to judge the movement of the planet.

You must agree the major discrepancy is that in no way can the scene be recreated. This factor alone leaves much to be desired. I leave this with you whether accepted or not, on no account did any information in the Ravenna sighting prove to me that an extraterrestrial vehicle was observed. I would need to have concrete evidence that actual spaceships are maneuvering about our planet at will and against all laws of space flight mechanics, to believe their existence.

Sincerely,


HECTOR QUINTANILLA, JR., Major, USAF
Chief, Project Blue Book

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J. WILLIAM STANTON
11TH DISTRICT, OHIO

1625 LEONOWORTH BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515
Phone: 222-2222

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

COMMITTEE ON
BANKING AND CURRENCY

DISTRICT OFFICE:
170 NORTH ST. CLARK STREET
FAIRVIEW, OHIO
Phone: 222-6167

July 14, 1966

Mr. William B. Weitzel, Chairman
Pittsburgh NICAP Subcommittee
5709 Woodmont Street
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15217

Dear Mr. Weitzel:

I received the elaborate report prepared by you and your committee on the April 17th sighting and have asked that it be reviewed by the Air Force and made a part of the permanent file.

I am enclosing a copy of a letter I have received from Colonel Covell, which implies that you will be hearing from Major Quintanilla in the near future.

Thanking you for your continued cooperation, I remain

Sincerely yours,


WILLIAM STANTON

WS:smt

Enclosure

PHOTOCOPY FROM GERALD FORD LIBRARY

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

JUL 7 1966

Dear Mr. Stanton:

We refer to your further inquiry in behalf of Mr. William E. Weitzel regarding unidentified flying objects.

Major Quintanilla was contacted regarding the letter he received from Mr. Weitzel. He informed us that he has been unable to answer all his personal mail because of a heavy volume of work and that all letters will be answered as time permits. We trust his reply will be satisfactory to Mr. Weitzel.

Attached for your convenience are two copies of the report of the USAF Scientific Advisory Board Committee.

If you desire additional information please do not hesitate to call on us.

Sincerely,

2 Attachments

Honorable William Stanton

House of Representatives

DAVID W. GOWELL, Colonel, USAF
Special Agent in Charge
Office of Legislative Liaison

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5709 Woodmont St.
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15217

July 13, 1966

Major Hector Quintanilla, Jr., Director
Project Blue Book
Foreign Technology Division
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
Dayton, Ohio

Dear Major Quintanilla:

On May 17, I wrote to you concerning the April 17, 1966 UFO sighting which began in Portage County, Ohio, and ended in Conway, Pennsylvania. The letter contained several items of information and specific questions, one question in particular which you promised to answer on May 10, in the Portage County Court House.

The letter was sent Certified Mail, and I have a receipt bearing your signature, which indicates that the letter came to your attention on May 20.

I have waited eight weeks now for a reply.

Since you have not sent me even a token acknowledgement of the letter, I have no idea why you have not answered it. Perhaps you are still researching one of my questions; or perhaps you felt I did not expect a reply. I am still curious, however, as to your response to the points I raised, and would very much appreciate hearing from you, some indication that you are or are not considering these points.

If you are not considering the points I raised, I would at least like to know that you have read the letter, and would be interested to know your response.

It may be that I will have to wait many more weeks for a reply to the May 17 letter. I am willing to do so. If this is so, please inform me of the fact, so I will at least not have the impression that my query is being ignored.

Sincerely yours,


William S. Whitel

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5709 Woodmont St.
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15217

July 3, 1966

Lt. Col. John Spaulding, Director
Community Relations Division
United States Air Force
Washington, D. C.

Dear Col. Spaulding:

My name is William Weitzel and I am the chairman of the Pittsburgh Subcommittee of the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena. I am writing to you in connection with Major Quintanilla's investigation and explanation of the UFO "chased" from Ohio into Pennsylvania on April 17 of this year.

As you are aware, Major Quintanilla visited Ravenna, Ohio, on May 10 to conduct interviews with the witnesses from that area, concerning the April 17 sighting. At that time, he promised me he would check into a matter related to that sighting, and inform me of the result of his check. I followed this request up on May 17 with a letter to him at Wright-Patterson AFB. The letter was sent by Certified Mail, and Major Quintanilla signed the receipt. I have had no word from him since that time.

During the interview in Ravenna, Major Quintanilla allowed a tape to be recorded in his presence. He requested my absence from the room during the verbal testimony but allowed the recorder to be left on. From that recording, I extracted thirteen points of testimony which his explanation of the sighting does not explain. These points are on a separate list enclosed with this letter. I communicated them to Major Quintanilla on May 17, asking how his explanation, that the deputies first saw an Echo satellite, then drove at high speed across several counties toward Venus, covered these points.

One of these points is that the deputies observed the UFO at first, coming over the road at right angles to it, from south to north, watched it hover and then reverse its direction, coming directly over them. Echo would not have traveled in a south-north direction, then reversed its direction of travel. Furthermore, the direction of the road during the pursuit of the UFO, and their seeing it directly to their left, indicates it being to the north of the car. Later, it was seen due south, to the right of the car traveling east. Major Quintanilla admitted he was not yet informed as to the road directions, but did assume, on the basis of erroneous news reports, that the road was aimed southeast most of the time. These erroneous reports were the result of early confusion between the two routes, wrong and right, of travel, Ohio routes 14A and 14.

There are many other points, spoken to Major Quintanilla during the May 10 meeting, which are inconsistent with the Echo-Venus explanation.

Furthermore, there are additional features of the sighting, of which I have reason to believe the major is unaware, which corroborate the deputies' observations.

I have interviewed several base station radio operators of various police and sheriff's departments, who monitored the radio traffic that morning. There is no doubt about the routes that were followed, or about the deputies' initial reactions to seeing the UFO, and their observations of its appearance and motions. Thus it is incorrect for Major Quintanilla to assume, as he stated in an interview published in the Ravenna Record-Courier, that the deputies had exaggerated their memories.

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Still furthermore, there are additional features of the sighting, of which I know the major is aware, which rule out the Echo-Venus explanation. One of these is that former patrolman Wayne Huston, of the East Palestine, Ohio police, who was in radio contact with the deputies, watched the UFO flying toward him from the northwest, go overhead, then toward the southeast. The deputies were immediately behind it, in pursuit, and patrolman Huston joined them. The three men compared their descriptions of the object as they traveled toward Rochester, Pennsylvania.

I know Major Quintanilla is aware of these additional features, and this one particularly, because I have interviewed the other officers involved in this later part of the sighting by the deputies, and obtained from them the information they communicated to Project Blue Book. It should be pointed out that this information was communicated by way of brief signed statements given to an investigative officer, about the 20th of May, who told one of the men he was not familiar with UFO investigations. None of the men interviewed were interrogated, and none of them filled out the standard Blue Book report form. They did, however, write out and submit information which corroborated the deputies' observations, and which contradicts the Venus explanation.

Thus Major Quintanilla has in his office, as part of the information he has collected or has had collected, a large number of points, corroborated by law enforcement officers other than the deputies alone, which are not explained by the Echo-Venus explanation of the April 17 sighting.

Since these points constitute the essence of the unusual character of this sighting, and since these points constitute the criteria by which the sighting was reported as an unidentified, low-flying object, these points define the nature of the sighting reported to Major Quintanilla, as that of an unidentified flying object.

Thus, by this definition of the sighting, Major Quintanilla has not explained the sighting.

In that Major Quintanilla has not explained this sighting, and claims to have, a number of perplexing points are raised. The chief one is, why has Major Quintanilla ignored those items of testimony which do not fall into his -- his arbitrary, not commensurate with the facts -- definition of the sighting? He is not unaware of most of these points. He claimed to take all testimony into account, in conducting an investigation. He claimed (these claims made to those present May 10) not to disbelieve a witness. He repeated these claims more than once. The testimony was offered more than once, some of it by myself after the hearing.

Why are Major Quintanilla's claims inconsistent with his behavior?

I am writing to you, Col. Spaulding, because I understand it is the responsibility of your office to answer queries about unidentified flying objects. My two chief questions, as detailed in this letter, are the following:

(1) Why has Major Quintanilla ignored those parts of testimony to him, which his explanation does not explain?

(2) Is Project Blue Book going to explain the April 17 sighting, as defined by the facts as being of a low-flying, unconventional-appearing object, or can Project Blue Book explain this sighting?

I have sent NICAP a 126-page report covering the April 17 sighting, and the activity of Project Blue Book on that case. The report does not explain the sighting. Neither does it explain the inability of Major Quintanilla to explain the sighting. These are two serious questions which still need explaining. I have asked Major Quintanilla to explain the sighting. I am asking you, sir, to explain the major's inability to explain the sighting.

Please let me emphasize that, as much as I am concerned to have the deputies' reputations as competent officers, which reputation they enjoyed before Major Quintanilla's explanation, maintained, I am just as anxious to bring about some repair of the Air Force's reputation. Those who are not laughing at the deputies, Col. Spaulding, are laughing at the Air Force, for pretending to offer an explanation of the deputy's sighting. I am laughing at neither, believing that something may yet be done to repair these attitudes.

I believe that you may be able to do something to at least partially repair this erosion, which has resulted from Project Blue Book's ill-considered explanation of the April 17 sighting. I could, but choose not to, offer some suggestions as to what should be done. I do not believe it is my prerogative to offer such suggestions. But certainly, some attempt should be made to rectify the situation.

Sincerely yours,

William B. Weitzel
William B. Weitzel, Chairman
Pittsburgh NICAP Subcommittee

Enclosure: List of points offered to Major Quintanilla in testimony before him on May 10, which are inconsistent with his explanation of the April 17 UFO sighting beginning in Portage County, Ohio

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