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TAB B

I BRIEF HISTORY OF PROJECT BLUEBOOK

A. GENERAL

1. In the fall of 1947 the United States Air Force took official notice of reports of so-called "flying saucers" because the reports from the public indicated that the problem might be related to the Air Force responsibility for the air defense of the United States.

2. On December 30, 1947 the Air Force directed its Air Materiel Command at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, to establish a project to collect and evaluate all available facts concerning "flying saucer" sightings.

3. On December 27, 1949, after 375 reported sightings had been investigated, the Air Force, with the concurrence of the Army and the Navy, announced the findings of the "flying saucer" project.

4. The evidence at that time indicated that the majority of the reports of unidentified flying objects could be accounted for as misinterpretations of various conventional objects, a mild form of hysteria, meteorological phenomena, light aberrations, or hoaxes.

5. There remained, however, a number of unexplained sightings, and the Air Force has continued its investigations inasmuch as it is an Air Force responsibility to identify and analyze aerial phenomena that could possibly be a menace to the United States.

6. To date, the Air Force has undertaken to investigate and analyze about 5,000 reports dealing with these phenomena. As before, most of the reports were identified and disposed of as friendly aircraft erroneously reported, known electronic and meteorological phenomena, light aberrations, hoaxes, and other known natural occurrences or man-made objects.

7. The unexplained reports, however, which are in the order of approximately 10 percent of the total, cannot be definitely associated with these familiar things.

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Difficulty in Evaluating Reports

8. The difficulty in disposing of these unexplained reports is based largely upon the lack of accurate basic data such as size, shape, composition and flight characteristics (speed, acceleration, altitude, exact maneuver pattern, etc.) of the objects.

9. Although some instruments which are useful in obtaining more accurate data of this type have been available, the reports based on sightings with these instruments have been very infrequent and comprise an extremely small percentage of the total. Moreover, even these reports have not included much of the information required.

10. Because of the inadequacy of this basic data, the Air Force has in the past devoted its efforts primarily to determining whether these unexplained sightings indicated the existence of a menace to the United States. Initially it was believed that some pattern might evolve from the study of a large volume of reports. To date, no pattern has materialized to reveal anything whatsoever which can be interpreted as indicative of purpose or consistency or which can be construed as a menace to the United States. Nonetheless, since these unexplained sightings persist, the Air Force will continue its investigations, giving the problem adequate but not frantic attention.

11. Reports of similar phenomena go back to Biblical times. There have been flurries of them in various centuries. The current series of sightings began generally in 1946.

12. There are many reasons why the volume of these reports has increased materially during the past few years. Aerial activity originated by man has increased, and people today have a greater curiosity about the activity than before. Also, our present efficient communication facilities and news media provide an incentive for reporting unusual observations, for publicizing them and for recording them. However, the ability to measure these phenomena does not seem to have advanced in step with opportunities for observing them. The Air Force believes that most of these phenomena will gradually be understood as more is known about occurrences in the upper atmosphere.

B. RADAR SIGHTINGS

1. The Air Force has received many reports of unusual images on radar scopes. It is fairly well established that some of these images are ground objects reflected from a layer of warm air above the earth (a temperature inversion).

2. Temperature inversion reflections can give a return on a radar scope that is as sharp as that received from an aircraft. Speed ranges of these returns are reportedly from zero to fantastic speeds. The "objects" also appear to move in all directions.

3. Such radar sightings have resulted in hundreds of fruitless intercept efforts.

4. One scientific theory holds that light can be similarly reflected from a layer of warm air above the earth and, if proved to be correct, this could account for some visual sightings.

5. Bearing out the theory of temperature inversion reflection is an incident which occurred in January 1951 near Oakridge, Tennessee. Two Air Force aircraft attempted to intercept an unidentified "object" and actually established a radar "lock" on the object. Their altitude at the time was 7,000 feet. The unidentified object, according to their radar, appeared to be at an elevation of ten to twenty-five degrees. Three passes were made in an attempt to close on the object. In each instance the pilots reported that their radar led them first upward and then down toward a specific point on the ground.

6. Ionized clouds are believed to be the cause of some unidentified radar returns. Thunderstorm activity is identifiable by radar, and radar is used for the purpose of avoiding thunderstorms. In addition, radar has picked up many objects first reported as "Unidentified Phenomena" which were later identified as aircraft, birds, balloons, ice formations in the air, or other known aerial objects or manifestations.

C. CONCLUSIONS

1. The Air Force has stated in the past, and reaffirms at the present time, that these unidentified aerial phenomena are not a secret weapon, missile or aircraft, developed by the United States. None of the three military departments nor any other agency in the government is conducting experiments, classified or otherwise, with flying objects which could be a basis for the reported phenomena. As far as is known there is nothing in them that is associated with material or vehicles that are directed against the United States, from ^{another} country or from other planets.