

UFO INVESTIGATOR

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UFO RELATED INFORMATION FROM THE FBI FILE

by
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PART I

I have recently received over four hundred of the several thousand¹ pages of documents in the FBI files on "flying discs". I have been informed¹ that these pages represent the "cream of the crop" and that the rest include references to UFOs in other documents, copies of form letters sent out by the FBI, and copies of readily available publications (including at least one book on UFOs). After reviewing the documents I have decided that the opinion of the FBI agent¹ who handled my FOIPA (Freedom of Information) request was correct: these probably are the most important documents in the FBI files.

The pages I have obtained are divided into three categories as follows: roughly 40% are poor reports and documents which do not add anything (in my opinion) to what is already known about certain UFO reports and known hoaxes (e.g., the Maury Island hoax which "resulted" in the death of two Army Air Force Officers, is covered in great detail); roughly 40% are teletype reports and transcripts concerning reasonably to very good UFO reports, some of which are not listed in the Blue Book file at the National Archives, and some of which never have been published before (this statement may not be entirely accurate since I have not been able to check all possible sources of previously published UFO reports); the remaining proportion are papers which consist of internal memoranda of the FBI. This last proportion contains papers which have definitely not been available before now. They show the

internal involvement of the FBI, and, even more interesting, they shed light on the attitude of the Air Force towards UFO investigation. As a result of the FOIPA request to the FBI, I have also obtained several documents from other agencies which had sent "complementary copies" to the FBI. One of these is a radar-visual case from Alaska in 1950 that was filed by the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI). Other documents have come from the Army and the Air Force.

It should be emphasized at the outset that the bulk of these documents were generated between 1947 and 1955, and that the FBI file on UFOs comes to a screeching halt in 1964 with the Zamorra case (Socorro, New Mexico). (There was an FBI agent in the police office at the time Zamorra's call came in, and this agent wrote a report that was sent to FBI headquarters. In the report the agent vouched for Zamorra's credibility.)

There is enough material in the FBI file to form a small book, if all the documents were to be published. However, in order to make the information available to interested researchers in a short time, I have decided to write several papers based on the FBI file, rather than write a book. Due to necessity some information will be left out or merely alluded to in these papers, I will accept requests for information and will respond with a letter saying the information is or is not in the file, and I will send copies of pertinent documents when they are available.

In this first paper I will present an overview of the FBI files and a "preview" of things to come. In subsequent papers I will publish copies of actual FBI documents, summaries of documents, UFO reports, and comments on the documents as I see fit. Readers will thus be able to judge for themselves whether or not the FBI had any major interest in or affect upon the history of UFO research. Perhaps historians of UFO research will get some new insights into the early days of UFOs and those who are interested mainly in the content of UFO reports will find some more "grist for the mill." As for myself, I am more firmly convinced that if we understood what happened during the first several years of the UFO phenomenon.

General FBI Involvement

Perhaps the most important question to be asked in regard to the "FBI Connection" is "Was the FBI ever officially involved?" Secondary questions concern the duration and nature of the involvement. The answer to the first question is a resounding "yes," and the duration of official involvement was July 30 to October 1 in 1947. However, the FBI remained "unofficially" involved up through 1964. During the period of official involvement the FBI agents were instructed by Hoover to investigate UFO witnesses. After October 1947, however,

the FBI was supposed to turn all investigations over to armed forces (specifically, the Army Air Force until 1948, and the Air Force after the spring of 1948). The agents were generally faithful to Hoover's orders after October and stopped carrying out detailed investigations. However, this did not stop them from filing reports on UFO sightings and witnesses, nor did it stop them from checking up on police and FBI records on witnesses at the request of other intelligence agencies. A typical FBI report after October 1947 would end with statements similar to "this matter is being reported to the bureau for information purposes,"² "for your information,"³ "furnishing this info to bureau for whatever action they (sic) deem advisable,"⁴ or "above being furnished for information."⁵ Aside from the collection of UFO reports and the transmittal of such reports to Air Force collection agencies (Army G-2 before 1948, Air Force Office of Special Investigations - OSI - and Project Blue Book after the Spring of 1948), the FBI maintained a loose connection with the Air Force investigations of UFOs. Several times FBI agents interviewed Air Force personnel, once at the specific request of Hoover⁶. The FBI was also the recipient of unrequested copies of AF, ONI and Army intelligence documents and UFO reports. However, the number of documents filed per year on the subject of UFOs dropped precipitously after 1952, and by 1959 had reached zero. From then on only one or two "complaints" per year were noted at annual reviews of the FBI guidelines for handling UFO reports, at least until 1963 when the annual reviews were ended. The last report in the file¹, as mentioned before, was the Zamorra report. Presumably it wouldn't have been filed if it hadn't been for the fact that there was an FBI agent present shortly after the sighting who knew Zamorra very well. The decrease in the number of reports filed probably resulted from a combination of factors, the most important being the intent of the FBI to get out of the UFO business. As previously stated, the FBI agents were directed to avoid carrying out investigations after Oct. 1947, and, furthermore, they were directed to forward any information to the Air Force. Thus the Air Force carried out the detailed investigations (what little they did) while the FBI faded into the background. From the

point of view of the FBI this was desirable since the FBI was mainly interested in internal subversion and not in military craft (or hoaxes, or misidentifications, etc.). In fact, it was the possibility of internal subversion which brought the FBI into the picture initially. To see how the FBI became involved it is necessary to go back to the summer of 1947 when "flying saucers" were "born",

The FBI vs the "Flying Discs"

During the first weeks of July, FBI offices around the country began to receive requests from newsmen for information on flying saucers. The central office in Washington also received teletype messages about various "discs" that had been found (all obvious hoaxes). However, the first document of real importance was filed 7/10/47. Since it gives an in-depth view of the early official interest in "flying disks," I am printing it in its entirety, along with comments made by J. E. Hoover.⁷

"Subject: FLYING DISCS

"At request of Brigadier General George F. Schulgen, Chief of the Requirements Intelligence Branch of Army Air Corps Intelligence, Special Agent..... (name crossed off; call him "SA") discussed the above captioned matter (i.e., flying disks) with him on July 9, 1947. General Schulgen indicated to SA that the Air Corps has taken the attitude that every effort must be undertaken in order to run down and ascertain whether or not the flying disks are a fact and, if so, to learn all about them. According to General Schulgen, the Air Corps Intelligence are utilizing all of their scientists in order to ascertain whether or not such a phenomenon could in fact occur. He stated that this research is being conducted with the thought that the flying objects *might be a celestial* phenomenon and with the view that they might *be a foreign body* mechanically devised and controlled (italics by this author)."

"General Schulgen also indicated to SA that all Air Corps installations have been alerted to run out each reported sighting to obtain all possible data to assist in this research project. In passing, General Schulgen stated that an *Air Corps*

pilot who believed that he saw one of these objects was thoroughly interrogated by *General Schulgen* and scientists, as well as a psychologist, and the pilot was adamant in his claim that he saw a flying disk (italics by this author)."

"General Schulgen advised SA that the possibility exists that the first reported sightings of the so-called flying disks were fallacious and prompted by individuals seeking personal publicity, or were reported for political reasons. He stated that if this was so, subsequent sightings might be the result of mass hysteria. He pointed out that the thought exists that the first reported sightings might have been by individuals of Communist sympathies with the view to causing hysteria and fear of a secret Russian weapon."

"General Schulgen indicated to SA that he is desirous of having all the angles covered in this matter. He stated that reports of his scientists and findings of various Air Corps installations will be available in his office. He advised that to complete the picture he desired the assistance of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in locating and questioning the individuals who first sighted the so-called flying disks in order to ascertain whether or not they are sincere in their statements that they saw these disks, or whether their statements were prompted by personal desire for publicity or political reasons. General Schulgen assured SA that there are no War Department or Navy Department research projects presently being conducted which could in any way be tied up with the flying disks. General Schulgen indicated to SA that if the Bureau would cooperate with him in this matter, he would offer all the facilities of his office as to results obtained in the effort to identify and run down this matter."

"SA advised General Schulgen that his request would be made known to the Bureau and an answer made available to him as soon as possible."

"SA also discussed this matter with Col. L. R. Forney of MID. Col. Forney indicated that it was his attitude that inasmuch as it has been established that the flying disks are not the result of any Army or Navy experiments, the matter is

of interest to the FBI. He stated that he was of the opinion that the Bureau, if at all possible, should accede to General Schulgen's request."

D. M. Ladd, the FBI official to whom the above memorandum was addressed, wrote the following addendum to the memorandum:

ADDENDUM

"I would recommend that we advise the Army that the Bureau does not believe it should go into these investigations, it being noted that a great bulk of those alleged discs reported found have been pranks. It is not believed that the Bureau would accomplish anything by going into these investigations."

However, Mr. Tolson scribbled, "I think we should do it" on July 15, and shortly thereafter Hoover added the following comments:

"I would do it but before agreeing to it we must insist upon full access to discs recovered. For instance in the La. case the Army grabbed it and would not let us have it for cursory examination."

About a week later another memorandum was filed that indicated the General Schulgen had been informed of the FBI (i.e., Hoover's) decision. The first paragraph of this memorandum reiterates the previous information. It then continues as follows:⁸

"This is to advise that SA has recontacted General Schulgen and advised him in connection with the Director's notation (i.e., Hoover's comment above). General Schulgen indicated to SA that he desired to assure Mr. Hoover of complete cooperation in this matter and stated that he would issue instructions to the field directing that all cooperation be furnished to the FBI and that *all discs recovered* be made available for examination by the FBI agents (underlining by this author). General Schulgen pointed out to SA that he will from time to time make the results of the studies of his scientists available to the Bureau for the assistance of the FBI field offices.

General Schulgen indicated to SA that there has been a decrease in the reported sightings of discs which might be because of the fact that it has lost much of its publicity value. He indicated, however, that he believed it necessary to follow this matter through to determine as near as possible if discs were in fact seen and to determine their origin."

In the next paragraph the communication channel between General Schulgen's office and the FBI was specified ("regular established channels") and the final paragraph is as follows:

"General Schulgen indicated to SA that he believed that there was a possibility that this entire matter might have been started by subversive individuals for the purpose of creating mass hysteria. He suggested that the Bureau keep this in mind in any interviews conducted regarding reported sightings. General Schulgen stated to SA that he would make available to the Bureau all information in the possession of the Air Corps regarding sightings which were first reported so that the Bureau could conduct some investigation regarding these individuals to ascertain their motives for reporting that they observed flying discs. When General Schulgen makes the information available regarding these individuals, it will be brought to your (i.e., to Mr. Ladd's) attention."

About a week later, in Bureau Bulletin No. 42 of 1947, the official order and explanation for the order was published. Since the explanation is itself unique, I will present it here in its entirety, along with the official order⁹:

"FLYING DISCS—The Bureau, at the request of the Army Air Forces Intelligence, has agreed to cooperate in the investigation of flying discs. The Air Forces have confidentially advised that it is possible to release three or more discs in odd numbers, attached together by a wire, from an airplane in high altitudes and that these discs would obtain tremendous speed in their descent and would descend to the earth in an arc. The

Army Air Forces Intelligence has also indicated some concern that the reported sightings might have been made by subversive individuals for the purpose of creating mass hysteria.

(This is the specific directive:)

"You should investigate each instance which is brought to your attention of a sighting of a flying disc in order to ascertain whether or not it is a bona fide sighting, an imaginary one, or a prank. You should also bear in mind that individuals might report seeing flying disc for various reasons. It is conceivable that an individual might be desirous of seeking personal publicity, causing hysteria, or playing a prank."

"The Bureau should be notified immediately by teletype of all reported sightings and the results of your inquiries. In instances where the report appears to have merit, the teletype should be followed by a letter to the Bureau containing in detail the results of your inquiries. The Army Air Forces have assured the Bureau complete cooperation in these matters and in any instances where they fail to make information available to you or make the recovered discs available for your examination, it should promptly be brought to the attention of the Bureau."

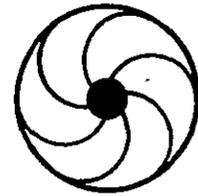
"Any information you develop in connection with these discs should be promptly brought to the attention of the Army through your usual liaison channels."

Thus by the end of July, 1947, the FBI had a working arrangement with the Army Air Force to investigate UFO reports. As set up, the arrangement seemed quite amicable, and presumably it could have continued for many years. Admittedly the initial fear of subversion faded with time, but still, the FBI could have continued investigations into the fifties if they were really worried about the possibility that the UFO reports somehow resulted from Russian attempts at sabotage. Yet, the FBI ended its official investigatory role only about two months after it began. The explicit reason why the investigations series, along with several interesting early reports. However, the perceptive reader can already see an incipient disagreement as to

what sorts of reports the Air Force wanted the FBI to investigate. In General Schulgen's view, the FBI would investigate mainly (or that the FBI entered the investigation it was already apparent that all such reports were mechanical hoax devices, some ingenious and some very simple, which had been placed as pranks. Thus if Schulgen had his way, the FBI would investigate only "crank" reports. However, it is clear from the official FBI directive that Hoover wanted the agents to be able to investigate *all* reports. As will be seen in the next installment, the attempt by the Air Force to limit the FBI to certain kinds of UFO investigations resulted in a minor intelligence "scandal" which was followed shortly by the decision to end official FBI investigation.

The interview with Gen. Schulgen indicated a considerable interest in UFO reports on the part of the Army Air Force Intelligence. Moreover, it is clear that the Air Force felt that something real was being observed. The AF was even allowing for the possibility that some "flying objects might be a celestial phenomenon", although there was no mention of the thought that extraterrestrial intelligence could be involved. It is especially interesting to learn that Gen. Schulgen himself interviewed an Air Corps pilot (name not given in the FBI file) who claimed, even under intense interrogation, that he had seen a disc. The "behind the scenes" interest by the AF is to be contrasted with the public statements in early July 1947 that there were not enough facts to warrant further investigations, even though the Air Material Command (AMC) intended to investigate the matter more thoroughly¹⁰. The public disparagement of the reports by Kenneth Arnold and by other early UFO reporters is to be contrasted with the apparent acceptance by Gen. Schulgen of the reality of the phenomenon, especially after the report by the Air Corps pilot. Thus it appears that from the outset the AF investigation of UFO reports was done on two levels. Publically the AF tried to downplay the sightings, while privately the AF enlisted the help of the other intelligence agencies in order to determine the nature of the phenomenon.

As becomes apparent from the FBI file, the AF continued its undercover investigations even during the periods of time when it publically stated that it had no interest and was not investigating as, for example, in 1950. Inasmuch as UFO investigation were treated as a security manner and that therefore all internal documents were classified, it is not surprising that civilian investigators in the 1950's concluded that the AF was hiding evidence and began to refer to public AF statements (and later to Project Blue Book) as part of a "cover-up" of UFO information. Although there is no evidence in the FBI file (at least in the portion I have) that the Air Force actually had hard evidence (e.g., as crashed saucer), it is clear that there were reports involving military personnel that were so detailed that one had to choose between attributing the report to a real unknown phenomenon, probably a "machine", or else to the temporary mental breakdown of one or more military personnel while on duty. It seems to me that the reluctance to accept the second explanation of disc sightings was what ultimately kept the AF investigating. Further information on the AF investigation as seen through the "eyes" of the FBI will be presented in forthcoming papers.



Bibliography

1. D. Havekost private communication. (DH was the agent who handled my FOIPA request)
2. FBI Document filed 4/28/53; civilian and military witnesses in Puerto Rico
3. FBI Document filed 9/20/52; report of object over Montana
4. FBI Document filed 5/12/52; employees of the E.I. Dupont Company saw objects pass at low altitudes over the Savannah River Plant (AEC)
5. FBI Document filed 11/8/57; Illinois State Police officers chased an object on the evening of Nov 7 1957
6. FBI Document filed 3/23/50; a Major and a Colonel in the Air Force Intelligence were interviewed
7. FBI Document filed 7/10/47; request by Gen Schulgen for the FBI to interview early UFO witnesses
8. FBI Document filed 7/24/47; FBI agrees to investigate
9. FBI Document filed 7/30/47; official order to investigate UFO reports
10. D Jacobs *The UFO Controversy in America* Indiana University Press (1975) pg 42 and following

Close Encounters of the 3rd Kind

*Review by: Dr. Robert Creegan Ph.D.
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Dr. Robert Creegan attended the premier performance of the new UFO motion picture entitled "Close Encounters of the 3rd Kind." Dr. Creegan gave a telephone interview to NICAP with his comments on the film. He stated that the producer utilized actual UFO reports and they were an integral part of the film. However, there were gross exaggerations used with regard to electro magnetic

effects meteor effects and sound effects.

Dr. Creegan recommends the film for those individuals who are willing to judge the production for its great merits as strictly science fiction. An additional comment that Dr. Creegan made was, "The individuals who have defined 'Close Encounters of the 3rd Kind' as a documentary owe the public an apology."