What the U.S. Government Knows About Unidentified Flying Objects

by PETER GERSTEN

At last! New evidence for the existence of unconventional aerial objects relies no longer on the credibility of civilian reports but on the records of scientists, military personnel, intelligence analysts, law enforcement officers and other reliable and responsible people. Their testimony can be found in three thousand pages of previously classified documents on UFOs released (mostly through Freedom of Information Act suits) over the past few years by the Departments of State/Army/Navy/Air Force/Defense, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the National Security Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency and the Central Intelligence Agency.

This overwhelming evidence indicates that Unidentified Flying Objects do exist, and that some of them are unconventional craft that [1] pose a threat to national security and [2] perform beyond the range of present-day technological development.

Furthermore, there is evidence that our government has continually misinformed the public concerning the true significance of the “UFO problem.”

National Security and UFOs

“IT IS MY VIEW THAT THIS SITUATION HAS POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR NATIONAL SECURITY.”

—CIA Director Walter B. Smith’s signature, 1952

In late 1952, a memorandum was drafted for the CIA Director Walter B. Smith’s signature, to be sent to the Executive Secretary of the National Security Council. The memo’s subject: “Unidentified Flying Objects.” The document shows that the CIA had “reviewed the current situation concerning unidentified flying objects which have caused extensive speculation in the press and has been the subject of concern to government organizations.”

It was the Director’s opinion, based has possible implications for our national security which transcend the interests of a single service.

“I therefore recommend that this Agency and the agencies of the Department of Defense be directed to formulate and carry out a program of intelligence and research activities required to solve the problem of instant positive identification of unidentified flying objects.”

A draft of a proposed National Security Council directive was attached to the memorandum.

Unfortunately, it appears that the NSC directive fell by the wayside.

Now, twenty-nine years later, the “current situation,” contrary to official denials, still poses serious implications for our national security.

UFOs as a Threat

The Government’s position:

“No UFO reported, investigated and evaluated by the Air Force has ever given any indication of a threat to our national security.”

—Air Force, 1980

The evidence:

USAF Security intercepted a Cuban pilot’s report of the encounter between his MIG-21 and a UFO. The Air Force now says that it never found evidence to support the Air Force’s claim that no UFO reported, investigated and evaluated by the Air Force has ever given any indication of a threat to our national security.

New York attorney PETER A. GERSTEN has been pressing the legal effort on behalf of UFO groups—such as CAUS (Citizens Against UFO Secrecy) —for nearly three years. Gersten currently awaits a U.S. Appeals Court decision on release of over two hundred additional CIA documents relating to
Where are the startling 1952 cases the led the CIA to the brink of a major scientific study?

UFO wave, "On 6 November 1957 a directed collection request for UFO information was levied on Contact Division by the Office of Scientific Intelligence... Responses to the requirement were forwarded to Collection Staff, OSI on 14 November 1957." (April 1, 1958 memo for Assistant Director, Scientific Intelligence, from Acting Assistant Director for Operations)

Also, coinciding with a flurry of sightings around the Washington, D.C. area in late 1964 and early 1965, another "collection request" was ordered by the Director of CIA. The present writer was among those interviewed by the Domestic Contact Division. The agent borrowed a number of specific UFO case investigation reports.

A series of memos from April through late summer of 1976 shows renewed interest in UFO data, probably as a result of the 1975 and 1976 UFO sightings at Strategic Air Com-


Date discrepancy notwithstanding, the memos go on to discuss "the UFO study." One, while stating that there was at the time no formal UFO program, read: "At the present time, there are offices and personnel within the Agency who are monitoring the UFO phenomena... not currently on an official basis. Dr. [censored] feels that the best approach would be to keep in touch with and in fact develop reporting channels in this area to keep the Agency/community informed of any new developments."

Memos ranging from 1958 to 1967 mention analyses of UFO photos by the CIA National Photographic Interpretation Center under Arthur L. Lundahl, partially confirming information from private sources. Indeed, Lundahl was involved in arranging a "window" on the Colorado Project and in secret meetings with Dr. Edward Condon and members of the Colorado Project staff.

Glaringly absent from the release documents are the photo analyses, including one case provided to a scientific firm by the present writer that found its way to the CIA, and the hundreds and hundreds of intelligence reports on individual UFO cases the must have been, collected—and some cases are known to have been collected. Also absent are the dozen of radar-visual cases which must have been studied by the Physics and Electronics Division, as well as other materials that made up the case file repeatedly alluded to in these documents. Where are the startling 1952 cases that led the CIA to the brink of a major scientific study of UFOs?

The 892 pages contain large amounts of trivial correspondence, administrative papers, duplication and irrelevant (non-UFO) documents. Obviously, they do not contain the CIA UFO case files, other than a random sprinkling of mostly known cases. Only the FOLAC lawsuits have been able to pry loose a few highly significant cases, such as the 1976 Iranian jet case.

FOOTNOTES

1. NORAD Classified Message; to Secretary of Air Force, et al; from NORAD Director of Operations; subject: Suspicious Unknown Air Activity; November 11, 1975. (Still classified CONFIDENTIAL; leaked to UFO research group in late 1976.)


3. This and the previous statements are found in the following documents:
   • Memorandum for Record; for the Joint Staff; signed by J.B. Morin, Rear Admiral, USN & Deputy Director for Operations, NMCC; January 21, 1976.
   • Memorandum for Record; for the Joint Staff; from Fred A. Treyz, Brigadier General, USAF & Deputy Director for Operations, NMCC; subject: Unidentified Flying Object Sighting; January 31, 1976.
   • Memorandum for Record; for the Joint Staff; from L. L. LeBlanc, Brigadier General, USMC & Deputy Director for Operations, NMCC; subject: Reports of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs); July 30, 1976.
   • Memorandum for Record; for the Joint Staff; from L. J. LeBlanc, Brigadier General, USMC & Deputy Director for Operations, NMCC; subject: Reports of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs); July 30, 1976.


6. Memorandum for Director of Central Intelligence; subject: Flying Saucers; by E. Marshall Chadwell, Assistant Director, Scientific Intelligence; September 24, 1952.

7. Memo; to E. James Archer and Thurston E. Hanning; from Robert J. Low; subject: "Some Thoughts on the UFO Project"; August 9, 1966.