

UFO INVESTIGATOR



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UFO RELATED INFORMATION FROM THE FBI FILE

(Part III)

by

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Thus far I have presented information which shows that a) many UFO reports were non-trivial, b) the AAF took the flying disc reports seriously, and c) the AAF was certain that no US government project resulted in flying disc reports. This information by itself was sufficient to suggest that the discs were real objects and were therefore a *military* intelligence problem, non a *domestic* intelligence problem. Thus from this information alone the FBI could have concluded that its investigations were not necessary. That such a conclusion had already been reached in early August by at least one agent is illustrated by the following memorandum to Mr. Ladd from Mr. Coyne:^{2,2}

"It is felt that the situation regarding these flying saucers and flying discs is very similar to the situation which was previously encountered by the Bureau during the past war in handling complaints arising out of the sighting of Japanese balloons (sic). You will recall that at the inception of these complaints the Bureau conducted considerable investigation and located numerous balloons as a cooperative measure for the Army and that after considerable work had been done, the Army then informed that these were military weapons and that they would take over handling of these completely. This they did and in an extremely short time issued a big press release as to the splendid work of the Army in locating these Japanese balloons. From the information available thus far, it does not appear that these discs should be treated

as other than as a military weapon. Certainly the Bureau has no way to determine what experiments the Army and Navy are conducting and whether such might be arising out of experiments being conducted by them nor do we have any way of determining how far the Russians have progressed in certain experiments and whether such might be the results of experiments by the Russian Army. It (sic) short, it would certainly appear that this is a military situation and should be handled strictly by military authorities."

"In this connection it might be pointed out that our present Portland case arose out of the fact that two Army Intelligence officers were returning from an interview of two individuals who reportedly had seen flying discs." (This refers to the FBI investigation of the circumstances surrounding the plane crash after two Army officers investigated the Maury Island report - note by present author.) If the Army Intelligence officers are handling some of these interviews, it is believed that they should be handling all of these interviews, and it is not believed that the Bureau should be expending its precious manpower on these complaints which have thus far no connection with our Russian espionage program. The military authorities certainly are better equipped to know what they are looking for than we are and have more facilities for handling material which it is necessary to examine as a result of its being reported as a remnant

of a flying disc. It is believed that the Bureau is merely playing bird-dog for the Army by using our manpower to run out these complaints on flying discs."

Despite the eminently reasonable argument put forth by Mr. Coyne, the bureau continued its investigation through August and into September. Then the Bureau received the following letter from its Special Agent in Charge in San Francisco:^{2,4}

"I am transmitting herewith copies of a "restricted" letter dated September 3, 1947, which was furnished to me by ... (name not given) which letter is designated to certain Commanding Generals on the Army Air Forces from Col. R.H. Smith, Assistant Chief of Staff—Intelligence, Headquarters Air Defense Command, Mitchel Field, New York, concerning "Cooperation of FBI with AAF on Investigations of 'Flying Disc' Incidents."

"It is my understanding from recent Bureau instructions that we are to assist the Air Force Intelligence personnel in the investigation of flying disc incidents. However, it will be noted from the attached letter that it is Army interpretation that it was their intent that the Bureau would investigate those incidents of the so-called 'discs' being found on the ground and apparently not those which are observed only in flight. Further, the attention of the Bureau is respectfully called to paragraph two of this letter and

to the last sentence therein which states, "The services of the FBI were enlisted in order to relieve the numbered Air Forces of the task of tracking down all the many instances which turned out to be ash can covers, toilet seats and whatnot."

"In the first place, the instructions issued by the Army Air Forces in this letter appear to limit the type of investigations which the Bureau will be asked to handle and secondly it appears to me the wording of the last sentence in the second paragraph mentioned above is cloaked in entirely uncalled for language tending to indicate the Bureau will be asked to conduct investigations only in those cases which are not important and which are almost, in fact, ridiculous."

"The thought has occurred to me the Bureau might desire to discuss this matter further with the Army Air Forces both as to the types of investigations which we will conduct and also to object to the scurrilous wordage which, to say the least, is insulting to the Bureau in the last sentence of paragraph two."

The above letter was sent to Ass't. Director D.M. Ladd, who, about a week later, provided a sort of summary of the situation regarding "flying discs" to the director, H. Hoover. The Ladd memorandum to Hoover was as follows:^{2,5}

"The Bureau was requested by the Air Forces Intelligence to assist in attempting to arrive at an explanation of the (flying discs). The Air Forces indicated that the alleged sightings of flying discs might have been made by individuals of Communist sympathies for the purpose of causing mass hysteria in the United States over the fear of a secret Russian weapon. The Bureau agreed to assist in the investigation of the reported sightings, and the Field was advised in Bureau Bulletin No. 42, Series 1947, dated July 30, 1947, that they should investigate each instance which was brought to their attention of the sighting of a flying disc in order to ascertain whether or not it was a bona fide sighting, an imaginary one, or a prank. The results of the investigation conducted by the Bureau Field Offices in this matter have failed to reveal any indications of subversive individuals being involved in any of the reported sightings. (Italics by present author.)"

The Ladd memorandum then describes the "restricted" army letter obtained by

the agent in San Francisco, and points out that "This letter states in substance that it was the original intent of the AC/AS-2, Headquarters, Army Air Forces that whereas the ADC would interview (underlining in Ladd's letter) responsible observers," the FBI would investigate incidents of discs on the ground. The memorandum to Hoover concluded with the following recommendation:

"It is recommended that the Bureau protest vigorously to the Assistant Chief of Air Staff-2. It is also recommended that the Bureau discontinue all activity in this field and that the Bureau Field Offices be advised to discontinue all investigations and to refer all complaints received to the Air Forces."

Apparently the fact that no subversion had been found, when coupled with the fact that the AAF was carrying out their own interviews and restricting the FBI to useless cases, created a rather emotional response on the part of the FBI, for only two days later Hoover wrote to Major General George C. McDonald, Ass't. Chief Air Staff - 2 at the Pentagon the following letter:^{2,6}

"The Federal Bureau of Investigation has been requested by your office to assist in the investigation of reported sightings of flying discs."

"My attention has been called to instructions disseminated by the Air Forces relative to this matter. I have been advised that these instructions indicate that the Air Forces would interview responsible observers while the FBI would investigate incidents of discs found on the ground, thereby relieving the Air Forces of running down incidents which in many cases turned out to be 'ash can covers, toilet seats and whatnot'."

"In view of the apparent understanding by the Air Forces of the position of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in this matter, I cannot permit the personnel and time of this organization to be dissipated in this manner."

"I am advising the Field Divisions of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to discontinue all investigative activity regarding the reported sightings of flying discs, and am instructing them to refer all

complaints received to the appropriate Air Force representative in their area." (signed) John Edgar Hoover, Director.

On October 1, 1947, in Bulletin #57 of that year, the FBI published the single sentence directive, "All future reports connected with flying discs should be referred to the Air Forces and no investigative action should be taken by Bureau agents."^{2,7}

The explicit reference by Hoover to the wording in the restricted Army letter shows that Hoover wanted the Army to know his agent had "penetrated" its secrecy. This, then was the intelligence "scandal" referred to in Part I; November 1977, *UFO Investigator*; the "last straw" that caused the abrupt end of the official FBI investigations into UFO reports. However, this did not end the FBI involvement with "discs." As I have mentioned previously, agents continued to file brief reports and to interview Air Force officers and to collect UFO related information for about 16 years after this directive. Moreover, the information collected by the FBI in the following years is at least as important, if not more important, to the understanding of the governmental involvement with UFO reports as is the information collected during the period up to Oct. 1, 1947. Information collected during the period up to Oct. 1, 1947 will be presented in subsequent papers. However, before ending this part, I would like to present some of the interesting information contained in the FBI file that was obtained before Oct. 1947 and also a listing of the cases filed during that period.

On July 18, 1947 the special agent in New Haven, Conn. wrote the following letter to the Director of the FBI:^{2,8}

"For the information of the Bureau this is to advise that on July 7, 1947 Mr., Stamford, Conn. appeared at the Stamford Resident Agent's office and furnished the following information: Mr. prefaced his remarks by stating that he is a scientist by occupation and is currently employed at the American Cyanamid Research Laboratories on West Main Street in Stamford, Conn., in the Physics Division. Mr. further indicated that during the war he was employed at MIT, Cambridge, Mass., in the Radiation Laboratory which is the Laboratory connected with the Manhattan Project. Mr.

..... advised that he is thirty years of age and is a graduate of the University of Arizona."

Mr. ... stated that the topic of "flying saucers" had caused considerable comment and concern to the present day scientists and indicated that he himself had a personal theory concerning the "flying saucers." Prior to advancing his own theory, Mr. ... remarked that immediately after the conclusion of World War II, a friend of his, Mr. ..., allegedly observed the "flying saucers" from an observatory in Milan and Bologna, Italy. He stated that apparently at the time the "flying saucers" had caused a little comment in Italy but that after some little publicity they immediately died out as public interest. Mr. ... stated that it is quite possible that acutally the "flying saucers" could be radio controlled germ bombs or atom bombs which are circling the orbit of the earth and which could be

controlled by radio and directed to land on any desired target at the specific desire of the agency or country operating the bombs. He stated that one of the items of interest which he personally had observed is the fact that the saucers have been observed in Mexico City, New Orleans, Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Halifax, Newfoundland, Paris, Milan, Bologna, and Yugoslavia as well as Albania. By placing a string around the globe of the earth it would be noticed that all of the above mentioned cities form a direct orbit or circle around the earth and would be more or less in line of any path in which the saucers could be circling."

Mr. ... further stated that he had recently talked with one of the owners of (...) company in Glenbrook, Conn., and had been informed by ... that his company is making a large powerful telescope to be used in searching the stratosphere for atom bombs."

The opinion expressed in the above letter is very interesting when contrasted with public statements of scientists and others who apparently thought the discs were imaginary, illusions misidentifications, hoaxes, etc., anything but real objects that should have concerned the scientific community. It also contains an allusion to what might have been a significant pre-Arnold sighting in Italy.

A listing of the good cases in the FBI files up to October 1947 follows. A comparable listing could be made for historical or sociological purposes of the hoax cases. However, I have chosen not to present such a list since it would contain none of the cases that the Air Force considered important for the understanding of "flying discs," although it would contain many of the cases investigated by the FBI.

DATE	PLACE	LOCAL TIME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
1945?	Germany	Evening	armed forces witness saw object that approached, descended with oscillating motion
1/16/47	North Sea, England	2230	RAF (?) Mosquito vectored and chased unidentified aircraft for 50 miles at 22,000 ft.
April, '47	Virginia	---	meteorologists' reports of pre-May sightings of disc through theodolite
5/547	Washington State	1530	three witnesses saw silver object to "nose dive" and disintegrate leaving a pillar of smoke
5/19/47	Colorado	1215	three railroad employees saw silver object traveling fast; was fuzzy even with binoculars
5/17-21/47	Oklahoma City	2030	Byron Savage's report; white dislike object seen for 15-20 seconds
6/2/47	Rehoboth, Delaware	---	Forest Wenyon's report; air observation of a rapidly moving "jay-like" object (also Sept. 1946 sighting referred to)
6/14/47	Bakersfield, Calif.	1200	Richard Rankin's report; many discs sighted flying in groups
6/22/47	Greenfield, Mass.	1130	rapidly moving, round, silvery-white object
6/24/47	-----Kenneth Arnold's Report-----		
6/24/47	Cascade Mountains	Daytime	daytime prospector Johnson's report of object that affected his compass
6/28/47	Nevada	1400	Lt. Armstrong from the air saw object traveling toward him
6/28/47	Alabama	2120	Maxwell AFB sighting by AAF personnel; "cold sober" pilots and air intelligence officers saw object travel in zig-zag course for 5 min.
6/29/47	White Sands	1300	Zohn and Kauke report of object travelling rapidly near V-2 proving grounds

6/30/47	Grand Canyon	0910	Lt. McGinty in aircraft reported two round grey objects travelling straight down
7/3/47	Maine	1430	Astronomer Cole saw many objects cross sky rapidly
7/4/47	Emmet, Idaho	2015	United Airlines Pilot Smith and copilot objects from the air
7/4/47	Oregon	1305	Portland police officers and many others saw three discs flying east and two flying south
7/6/47	Alabama	2045	Staff Sergeant Livingston and many others saw rapidly moving lights; photos obtained
7/6/47	Hollywood, Calif.	---	several objects reported
7/6/47	Kansas City	1345	Major A.B. Browning AC/A3, Pentagon, saw bright, silver, disc-shaped object while flying at 10,000 ft. in a B-52 in CAVU weather.
7/6/47	Fairfield, Calif.	Day	Capt. Burniston(?) of the AAF and wife saw rapidly travelling object oscillating side-to-side
7/7/47	Arlington, VA.	2300	someone in the Office of the Air Inspector saw a rapidly moving object from his home
7/7/47	Phoenix	1700	former Naval Ordnance Laboratory employee photographed object making circles in the sky
7/7/47	Koshkonong, Wisconsin	1145	airplane instructor and student in aircraft saw object descend and fly horizontally at a speed estimated to be 6000 MPH
7/7/47	East Troy, Wisconsin	1430	AAF Captain and passenger in aircraft saw object travel horizontally at a speed estimated to have been 3690 MPH
7/8/47	Hamilton Field, Calif.	---	Staff Sgt. Baker reported he and several others saw three round rolling objects travelling faster than P-80's
7/8/47	Muroc, Calif.	1010	many military personnel sighted two silvery discs followed by a third
7/8/47	Norfolk, Va.	Afternoon	B. Turrentine saw and photographed object rocking and spinning like a football.
7/8/47	Mt. Baldy, Calif.	1550	A.E. Moorman(?), 1st Lt. in fighter squadron with no wings or vertical fin at about 35,000 ft.
7/9/47	Grand Falls, Newfoundland	2330	discs reported by police officials
7/9/47	Boise, Idaho	1215	newsman Johnson after three days of air search saw a "flying disc"
7/10/47	St. John's	2315	Several people reported to the police glowing round objects
7/10/47	Harmon Field, Newfoundland	1700	Airline representatives saw disc like wagon wheel cut through clouds at 10,000 ft; photos of trail taken.

REFERENCES

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| 23. FBI document written 8/8/47 | 26. FBI document written 9/27/47 |
| 24. FBI document written 9/19/47 | 27. FBI document filed 10/1/47 |
| 25. FBI document written 9/25/47 | 28. FBI document written 7/18/47 |

PART IV

Tables and Conclusions
to be continued in the
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