

REVIEW

UFOs and the National Security State:

AN UNCLASSIFIED HISTORY,
VOLUME ONE: 1941-1973



by Richard M. Dolan. NY: Keyhole Publishing Company, 2000. 534 pp. (plus index), \$27.95

If we're lucky, at least one seminal work on UFOs is written each generation. *UFOs and the National Security State* is the book for this generation, one that comprehensively dissects what has happened in this complex and obfuscated field. In the late 1980s, the only equally UFO-enlightening works at the time were Barry Greenwood and Larry Fawcett's *Clear Intent*, Tim Good's *Above Top Secret*, and David Jacobs' *The UFO Controversy in America*. Still available here and there but little discussed by researchers were Donald Keyhoe's various books, including his (once again, my opinion) most important book, *The Flying Saucer Conspiracy*.

There was, however, no all-inclusive history of the subject. Researchers today don't have a clue as to what transpired within the UFO field during the last 50 years or so. In my frequent speaking engagements, I will ask the audience for a show of hands to indicate if they're aware of certain things as I speak. For example, one of the most important UFO "flaps" in American history involved the Washington, D.C., overflights that began in July of 1952. If anyone in the audience even knows about this incident, they think the flap took place over one or two weekends. They're unaware that in 1952, this flyover was so shocking to the power establishment and media, it forced the Penta-

gon to hold the largest press conference since the end of the Second World War, in an effort to diffuse the story. Actually, these incursions took place over three weekends, and the last one, which, by the way, was the largest, took place at the beginning of August and was almost completely unknown.

In other words, it was "covered up" by the military and intelligence services of this country. It was the American public that was again bamboozled.

UFOs and the National Security State tempers some of the pain of this continuing deception. Historians who take a broad and unbiased look at history cannot dispute how deeply the military and intelligence communities have always been involved with UFOs. Many of us that lived through the 1950s and 1960s grew up watching in "real time" events that today are legendary (the building of the Berlin Wall; the Bay of Pigs invasion in Cuba). Yet, how many have wondered how the UFO subject stacked up against these "real world" problems?

Like others, I had suspected that somewhere in the mix, if UFOs were real—and I had no doubt of that—then something that would impact national security like UFOs *must* have been considered by military/intelligence. No one had ever connected the dots before, and certainly the people sitting in the Pentagon and in Langley, Virginia,

were very glad of that. But no more. The dots have now been connected.

Author Richard M. Dolan was born in 1962 and attended Alfred University, earned a scholarship to Oxford, and then just missed out on a Rhodes Scholarship. He did his graduate work at the University of Rochester, where he focused on German and Soviet studies. He then moved on to American Cold War diplomacy before he decided to leave academia. Dolan then became self-employed as a business writer. Around 1994, he encountered UFOs on the Internet. As he states, "Around 1994, the UFO problem began to interest me. I had always possessed an average level of interest in the subject. I owned exactly one book on it, and caught an occasional documentary on television. In other words, I knew nothing of value whatsoever about the problem of UFOs, very much like most people."

So instead of wondering about it, Dolan went looking for answers himself. Throughout 1995 to 1997, he compiled a huge bibliographic database. The information was

almost overwhelming, but Dolan had an acquaintance to assist him with locating old and out-of-print books. Jumping into the database, Dolan started preparing a detailed chronology of relevant events. At that point, he realized he had gathered much more material than needed for a book on the subject, and went out to write it.

Everyone interested in this vital subject needs to read this book and add it to their library! It has been about 25 years since the publication of *The UFO Controversy In America*, and with the possible exception of *Above Top Secret*, there has not been another work that could even come close to this massive and fascinatingly detailed accounting of UFOs and the military-industrial complex. Dolan has

chaired by Dr. Edward U. Condon. One of the most controversial events in the 50-plus years of the phenomenon, this flawed study stands as a milestone in government duplicity. It was billed in the 1960s as an independent, "honest" study of the UFO question, except that it was paid for with funding from the United States Air Force.

One of the most telling points of the entire Condon study controversy was the "Low memorandum," Robert Low was the committee's project coordinator and seemed to provide most of the project's direction. Condon spent only about half his time engaged with the study. The memorandum was written by Low prior to the project's start, and was addressed to Thurston E. Manning, the universi-

on Robert Low. Quite frankly, I was amazed to read on page 112, as Dolan was outlining what the CIA was up to in 1949:

"Another interesting sidelight to CIA activities of 1949, which indirectly concerns UFOs, featured the country of Albania. That year the CIA took over the ambitious British effort to build a sizable resistance movement there. Wisner [Frank Wisner, later CIA Operations Chief] organized and manned the operation. His first choice was a young man named Robert Low (his second, incidentally, was future New York Yankees president Michael Burke). Low became infamous twenty years later for his manipulation and sabotage of the University of Colorado project to investigate UFOs, known as the Condon Committee."

Okay, but is this the same Robert Low? According to Condon Committee member David Saunders, Low had been a combat intelligence officer during WW II, was honorably discharged in 1946, and earned a masters degree from Columbia University in 1948. All indicators point to this being the very same Robert Low. By the way, the CIA's Albanian operation failed "miserably" according to author Dolan and the official records. One huge factor responsible for the failure was the involvement of British double agent Kim Philby, himself a legend in intelligence lore.

From the beginning, there has always been a thick strain of schizophrenia evident in the behavior of the military/intelligence community when UFOs are discussed. All official pronouncements on the subject proclaim there is nothing to the reports of flying saucers, or anything that would affect national security. But look how Major Donald Keyoe (or Frank Edwards or Admiral Roscoe Hillenkoetter) was treated when attempting to jump-start congressional hearings on the enigma back in 1959-60.

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performed a monumental service to the field with its publication.

What makes this book so vitally important is the way the author interweaves the formation of our national security state with the often-illegal activities that the intelligence and military services were conducting. Equally fascinating is that while these activities were ongoing, the UFO phenomenon was constructing its own web of deception. The narrative is a straight chronological recounting of events and individuals from 1941 to 1973.

Over the years, *UFO Magazine* has run numerous pieces on historical events that have dotted the UFO landscape. A little over a year ago, we took a look at the University of Colorado UFO study

ty's Vice President and Dean of Faculties, and Dr. E. James Archer, Dean of the Graduate School.

In the memorandum, Low wrote, "the trick would be to describe the project so that, to the public, it would appear a totally objective study, but to the scientific community would present the image of a group of nonbelievers trying their best to be objective but having an almost zero expectation of finding a saucer." The plan also included not going after the "best cases," but zeroing in on the people making the reports. There's nothing new in this sordid bit of UFO history; this information has been known for years. What is new, however, is the amount of research author Dolan conducted

Deceit, deception, and the high-level "black" nature of the phenomenon was apparent in government attempts to "set up" both Keyhoe and NICAP in order to embarrass him and the organization. Does anyone seriously believe that this type of activity would have been launched if Keyhoe were *not* viewed as dangerous? Regarding a report from 1961, Dolan writes:

"More information slipped out from unmanageable sources. In November 1961, Wilbert Smith was speaking at length in an interview with two Ohio UFO researchers, C. W. Fitch and George Popovitch. He reiterated that he had handled 'quite a bit' of UFO hardware and some 'very strange metal,' which had been recovered around July 1, 1960. Smith said, 'We are speculating that what we have is a portion of a very large device which came into this solar system . . . we don't know when . . . but it had been in space a long time before it came to Earth; we can tell by the micrometeorites embedded in the surface. But we don't know whether it was a few years ago—or a few hundred years ago.' Smith also said that he had shown his friend and fellow NICAP board member Admiral H. B. Knowles a piece that had been shot off of a small flying saucer near Washington during the July 1952 flap, and which had been loaned to him briefly by the U.S. Air Force. Smith emphasized that it was not the American Air Force, but a

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small group very high up in the government who determined UFO policy."

Who in their right mind would believe that any government—but especially the American government, with Pearl Harbor fresh in their minds—would ignore or fail to consider unknown objects flying around in the sky with impunity, to be of the very highest national security concern? How do we even know these events took place? Military and intelligence documents released under the Freedom of Information Act are filled with reports like this. Reports were cleared just for Keyhoe back in the very early 1950s, and over the years many former servicemen have come forward and talked. Oh, yes—the events, the phenomenon is real.

But now I'm going to share a secret with you, one that took me many years to fully understand and one that, unfortunately, many others will have to learn for themselves. For anyone out there who believes that all it will take for mainstream science to finally sit up and take notice is just the right UFO case or just the right photo,

years older than our entire solar system, a fact not often discussed.

It is rather strange that after the Apollo program was shelved, the United States waited 25 years before finally sending another photographic mission to the Moon. The Naval Research Laboratory, an arm of the Department of Defense, directed the Clementine mission, in which the lunar surface was completely re-photographed and mapped. Reportedly about two million photos were taken at very high resolution. Amazingly, very few of those photographs were ever released. Was DoD looking for something, perhaps like the sort of changes that have been seen on the Moon over nearly two centuries of recent history?

document or testimony—well, get ready.

The secret has always been . . . POLITICS!

UFOs are not scientific, they are political. This is exactly where other distinguished researchers got it wrong, and Keyhoe and NICAP got it right! With the implications that UFOs bring to the table, it was pre-ordained that they would only land behind the black door of the military/intelligence/industrial complex, and never at the door of science. If the government early on recognized that they were confronted with technology hundreds or even thousands of years beyond what we had available, then this could never be admitted to the American public or world at large. The implications of being "discovered" by advanced beings were just too great.

Remember what has happened in our own Earthly history every time an advanced culture has "discovered" a more primitive one—the "primitives" have been absorbed and destroyed. (Even a 1961 document prepared by the Brookings Institute for the then-new NASA points this out.) What would happen to our earthly culture and civilization if we learned that alien beings were not only here but also "unfriendly," and there was no power on Earth that could fight them? That had to have been, and probably still is, a very frightening thought.

Exhaustively footnoted, thoroughly indexed, this is the seminal work for this research generation. If there ever had been a "must read, must have" book on the subject, UFOs and the National Security State is it. I promise you that once you've read it, you'll never view the subject of UFOs or the American military/intelligence establishment in the same light again.

—Don Ecker

More information on Richard Dolan's book can be found at www.keyholepublishing.com

MAY, 1960—Deceptive photo furnished to the press, of the U-2 bearing fictitious NASA markings to support CIA cover story for Francis Gary Powers, the U-2 pilot shot down over the Soviet Union.

NASA DRYDEN FLIGHT RESEARCH CENTER

In the version we were allowed to read, Haines made two basic points. The first was that, although the CIA was concerned about UFOs until the early 1950s, it has since "paid only limited and peripheral attention to the phenomena." Second, Haines stated that from the mid-1950s until the end of the 1960s, "more than half" of alleged UFO sightings in the United States were actually of classified and/or experimental aircraft such as the U-2 or SR-71 spy planes. People saw such unfamiliar aircraft and assumed that they were even more unfamiliar. The CIA was interested in all this, since citizens were seeing their aircraft. The Air Force's Project Blue Book knew all about this, too, and attempted to hide it with explanations that discerning people could tell were absurd. While Blue Book's motives were understandable and

even laudable, the result was a loss of public credibility in its ability and integrity.

These were important statements. They appeared to set the record straight by making a certain admission—that the CIA and Air Force had misled the public about UFOs. The conspiracy theorists seemed to be right—at least a little bit. But the actual explanation to the UFO mystery, wrote Haines, was much more mundane than the fantasy of alien visitation. That is, UFOs did exist—they were simply classified, and often experimental, aircraft.

It is sad but true that the great masses of this world are led around by a ring in their collective nose. Perhaps there is solace knowing that it has always been

example, covered Haines' story without critical commentary, as did most mainstream publications. The effect was quite profound. By the end of the summer of 1997, Haines' explanation of the UFO phenomenon had essentially become the standard one. So let us review in more detail what he actually said.

Considering the gravity of Haines' argument and the success of its message, it is startling to see so many glaring mistakes. Indeed, errors and sloppy statements litter his article like debris from a crashed object. Moreover, Haines' selection (and omission) of certain facts demonstrate that this was not a work of history, *per se*, but a propaganda piece with the intention to persuade by deception and obfuscation.

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this way, perhaps not. Haines' article received immediate, wide-spread, and uncritical media coverage. One can assume there was more than just luck in his ability to get immediate nationwide attention at just the right time regarding a matter of topical public interest. Certainly there were many worthies out there toiling away in obscurity who would have loved to get that kind of publicity. But then again, they don't have teams of experts working the media. The Associated Press and Reuters, for

Even when Haines was right, he was wrong. Twenty seconds into his article, we read that the "first report of a 'flying saucer' over the United States came on 24 June 1947." Only the semantics here are true: this was the first UFO sighting in which the phrase "flying saucer" was used. This is not mere nitpicking. Haines used this lawyerly wordplay to imply that official interest in unexplained aerial objects did not begin until mid-1947—which is untrue. He generously hinted as much in a foot-

note, but glossed over this fact entirely in the text of the article. That is, within the United States, over European skies, and over the world's oceans, military personnel and civilians had already observed such extraordinary objects. During the Second World War, they were called "foo fighters." In 1946, over Europe, they were called "ghost rockets." America had experienced well-documented UFO sightings throughout the first half of 1947, as well as sporadic events in 1946 and earlier.

Moreover, these events appeared to elicit interest within the American national security establishment. The U.S. Eighth Army studied the foo fighters during the war, and its commander (General James Doolittle) personally traveled to Europe in 1946 to discuss the ghost rockets with Swedish military authorities. The Office of Strategic Services also conducted studies on the foo fighters. The OSS, of course, was the predecessor of Haines' employer, the CIA. Not a word of any of this from Mr. Haines.

Haines performed nothing less than a hatchet job on the Air Force's Project Sign, which studied UFOs through the first half of 1948. He wrote that Air Force General Nathan Twining established the project in 1948 (wrong—Twining's famous letter was in 1947) and that it was "initially named Project Saucer" (wrong again—"Sign" was the classified name for the project, "Saucer" the public name).

But the serious problem was Haines' treatment of Sign itself. "At first fearful," he wrote, "that the objects might be Soviet secret weapons, the Air Force soon concluded that UFOs were real but easily explained and not extraordinary." What is extraordinary here is that Haines possessed the moxie to make such a statement. Astronomer and Air Force consultant J. Allen Hynek, who was associated with Project Sign, made statements that directly contradict