DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON DC 20330-1000

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

JUL 27 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE

FROM: SAF/AAZ
1720 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1720

SUBJECT: Report of Air Force Research Regarding the "Roswell Incident"

Attached is a report prepared in support of a General Accounting Office (GAO) audit that is seeking to identify information concerning the "Roswell Incident." The report documents the considerable effort expended by numerous Air Force offices and personnel in this matter.

The Air Force efforts did not identify any indication that the "Roswell Incident" was any type of extraterrestrial event or that the Air Force has engaged in a 47 year conspiracy or "cover-up" of information relating to it. Therefore, it is assumed that pro-UFO groups will strongly object to the attached report and denounce it as either shortsighted or a continuation of the "cover-up" conspiracy. Nevertheless, the attached report is a good faith effort and the first time any agency of the government has positively responded officially to the ever-escalating claims surrounding the Roswell matter.

VR,

Richard L. Weaver

RICHARD L. WEAVER, Col, USAF
Director, Security and Special
Program Oversight

Attachment:
Report of Research Regarding
the "Roswell Incident", 27 Jul 94

# REPORT OF AIR FORCE RESEARCH REGARDING THE "ROSWELL INCIDENT"

**JULY 1994**

# REPORT OF AIR FORCE RESEARCH REGARDING THE "ROSWELL INCIDENT"

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The "Roswell Incident" refers to an event that supposedly happened in July, 1947, wherein the Army Air Forces (AAF) allegedly recovered remains of a crashed "flying disc" near Roswell, New Mexico. In February, 1994, the General Accounting Office (GAO), acting on the request of a New Mexico Congressman, initiated an audit to attempt to locate records of such an incident and to determine if records regarding it were properly handled. Although the GAO effort was to look at a number of government agencies, the apparent focus was on the United States Air Force (USAF). SAF/AAZ, as the Central Point of Contact for the GAO in this matter, initiated a systematic search of current Air Force offices as well as numerous archives and records centers that might help explain this matter. Research revealed that the "Roswell Incident" was not even considered a UFO event until the 1978–1980 time frame. Prior to that, the incident was dismissed because the AAF originally identified the debris recovered as being that of a weather balloon. Subsequently, various authors wrote a number of books claiming that not only was debris from an alien spacecraft recovered, but also the bodies of the craft's alien occupants. These claims continue to evolve today and the Air Force is now routinely accused of engaging in a "cover-up" of this supposed event.

The research located no records at existing Air Force offices that indicated any "cover-up" by the USAF or any indication of such a recovery. Consequently, efforts were intensified by Air Force researchers at numerous locations where records for the period in question were stored. The records reviewed did not reveal any increase in operations, security, or any other activity in July, 1947, that indicated any such unusual event may have occurred. Records were located and thoroughly explored concerning a then–Top Secret balloon project, designed to attempt to monitor Soviet nuclear tests, known as Project MOGUL. Additionally, several surviving project personnel were located and interviewed, as was the only surviving person who recovered debris from the original Roswell site in 1947 and the former officer who initially identified the wreckage as a balloon. Comparison of all information developed or obtained indicated that the material recovered near Roswell was consistent with a balloon device and most likely from one of the MOGUL balloons that had not been previously recovered. Air Force research efforts did not disclose any records of the recovery of any "alien" bodies or extraterrestrial materials.

## INTRODUCTION

Air Force involvement in the alleged UFO-related incident popularly known as the "Roswell Incident" began as the result of a January 14, 1994, *Washington Post* article (Atch 1) which announced Congressman Steven Schiff's intent to initiate a GAO effort to resolve this controversial matter. Having previously been involved in numerous Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Congressional requests on "unusual aircraft," to include Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs), The Director, Security and Special Program Oversight, Office of the Secretary of the Air Force (SAF/AAZ), believed the Air Force would become involved in any GAO effort involving this subject.

Thus, in late January, 1994, SAF/AAZ directed its research/declassification team, SAF/AAZD, to attempt to locate any official records relative to this matter. These initial research efforts focused on records at the Air Force Historical Research Agency (AFHRA), Maxwell Air Force Base (AFB), AL, the Air Force Safety Agency (AFSA) at Kirtland AFB, NM, and the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA).

On February 15, 1994, the GAO officially notified Secretary of Defense William J. Perry that it was initiating an audit of the Department of Defense (DoD) policies and procedures for acquiring, classifying, retaining, and disposing of official government documents dealing with weather balloon, aircraft, and similar crash incidents (Atch 2). This notification was subsequently passed to the Department of Defense Inspector General who in turn officially notified the Secretaries of the Services and other affected parties of the audit in a February 23, 1994, memo (Atch 3). This memorandum indicated that the "GAO is anxious to respond to Representative Schiff's request and to dispel any concerns that the DoD is being unresponsive." These were the first official US Government documents that indicated that the purpose of the GAO was to review "crash incidents involving weather balloons and unknown aircraft, such as UFOs and foreign aircraft, and (2) the facts involving the reported crash of an UFO in 1949 [sic, 1947] at Roswell, New Mexico . . . [and an] alleged DoD cover-up."

An entrance meeting of potentially concerned parties was held in the offices of the DoD Inspector General on February 28, 1994. During this meeting it was learned that, while the audit officially would be reviewing the records of a number of DoD (and possibly other Executive Branch entities), the bulk of the effort would be focused on Air Force records and systems. The audit was officially given the GAO code 701034 and entitled "Records Management Procedures Dealing With Weather Balloon, Unknown Aircraft, and Similar Crash Incidents." Although this official title appeared rather broad, there was no misunderstanding that the real purpose was to attempt to locate records and/or information on the "Roswell Incident." This incident, explained later in more detail, generally dealt with the claim that in July of 1947, the US Army Air Forces (USAAF) recovered a flying saucer and /or its alien occupants which supposedly crashed near Roswell, New Mexico. When the USAAF ultimately became the

USAF in September, 1947, the USAF inherited equipment, personnel, records, policies, and procedures from the AAF. In this particular case, the Air Force also inherited the allegation that it had "covered up" the "Roswell Incident" and has continued to do so for the next 47 years.

Within the Air Force, the Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force (SAF/AA) is responsible both for information management procedures (SAF/AAI) and security policy and oversight (SAF/AAZ). Because of this organization, SAF/AA was the logical entity to assist the GAO in its audit, and SAF/AAZ was officially named as the Central Point of Contact for this endeavor (Atch 4). Subsequently, the then–Administrative Assistant, Mr. Robert J. McCormick, issued a tasking memorandum dated March 1, 1994 (Atch 5), to a number of current Air Staff and Secretariat offices that might possibly have records related to such an incident if, indeed, something had actually occurred. This search for records was purposely limited to Air Force records and systems since:

(a) The Air Force had no authority to compel other agencies to review their records;
(b) The Air Force would have no way to monitor the completeness of their efforts if they did; and
(c) the overall effort was the task and responsibility of the GAO—not the Air Force.

During the in-briefing process with GAO, it was learned that this audit was, indeed, generated at the specific request of Congressman Steven Schiff of New Mexico. Earlier, Congressman Schiff had written to the Department of Defense Legislative Liaison Office for information on the "Roswell Incident" and had been advised that it was part of the former UFO "Project Bluebook" that had previously been turned over to NARA by the Air Force. Congressman Schiff subsequently learned from NARA that, although they did, indeed, have the "Bluebook" materials, the "Roswell Incident" was not part of that report. Congressman Schiff, apparently perceiving that he had been "stonewalled" by the DoD, then generated the request for the aforementioned audit.

It is within this context that the following research and assistance efforts were conducted in support of the GAO. This report is intended to stand as the final official Air Force response regarding this matter.

## THE "ROSWELL INCIDENT"—WHAT WAS ORIGINALLY REPORTED IN 1947

The modern preoccupation with what ultimately came to be called Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) actually began in June, 1947. Although some pro-UFO researchers argue that sightings of UFOs go back to Biblical times, most researchers will not dispute that anything in UFO history can compare with the phenomenon that began in 1947. What was later characterized as "the UFO Wave of 1947" began with 16 alleged sightings that occurred between May 17 and July 12, 1947

(although some researchers claim there were as many as 800 sightings during that period). Interestingly, the "Roswell Incident" was not considered one of these 1947 events until the 1978–1980 time frame. There is no dispute, however, that something happened near Roswell in July, 1947, since it was reported in a number of contemporary newspaper articles, the most famous of which were the July 8 and July 9 editions of the *Roswell Daily Record*. The July 8 edition reported "RAAF Captures Flying Saucer On Ranch In Roswell Region," while the next day's edition reported, "Ramey Empties Roswell Saucer" and "Harassed Rancher Who Located 'Saucer' Sorry He Told About It."

The first story reported that the Intelligence Officer of the 509th Bomb Group, stationed at Roswell Army Air Field, Major Jesse A. Marcel, had recovered a "flying disc" from the range lands of an unidentified rancher in the vicinity of Roswell and that the disc had been "flown to higher headquarters." That same story also reported that a Roswell couple claimed to have seen a large unidentified object fly by their home on July 2, 1947.

The July 9 edition of the paper noted that Brigadier General Roger Ramey, Commander of the Eighth Air Force at Forth Worth, Texas, stated that upon examination the debris recovered by Marcel was determined to be a weather balloon. The wreckage was described as a ". . . bundle of tinfoil, broken wood beams, and rubber remnants of a balloon. . . ." The additional story of the "harassed rancher" identified him as W.W. Brazel of Lincoln County, New Mexico. He claimed that he and his son, Vernon, found the material on June 14, 1947, when they "came upon a large area of bright wreckage made up of rubber strips, tinfoil, a rather tough paper, and sticks." He picked up some of the debris on July 4 and ". . . the next day he first heard about the flying discs and wondered if what he had found might have been the remnants of one of these." Brazel subsequently went to Roswell on July 7 and contacted the Sheriff, who apparently notified Major Marcel. Major Marcel and "a man in plain clothes" then accompanied Brazel home to pick up the rest of the pieces. The article further related that Brazel thought that the material:

> . . . might have been as large as a table top. The balloon which held it up, if that is how it worked, must have been about 12 feet long, he felt, measuring the distance by the size of the room in which he sat. The rubber was smoky gray in color and scattered over an area about 200 yards in diameter. When the debris was gathered up the tinfoil, paper, tape, and sticks made a bundle about three feet long and 7 or 8 inches thick, while the rubber made a bundle about 18 or 20 inches long and about 8 inches thick. In all, he estimated, the entire lot would have weighed maybe five pounds. There was no sign of any metal in the area which might have been used for an engine and no sign of any propellers of any kind. Although at least one paper fin had been glued onto some of the tinfoil. There were no words to be found anywhere on the instrument although there were letters on some of the parts. Considerable scotch tape and

some tape with flowers printed upon it had been used in the construction. No string or wire were to be found but there were some eyelets in the paper to indicate that some sort of attachment may have been used. Brazel said that he had previously found two weather balloons on the ranch, but that what he found this time did not in any way resemble either of these.

## EVOLUTION OF THE EVENT FROM 1947 TO THE PRESENT

General Ramey's press conference and rancher Brazel's statement effectively ended this as a UFO-related matter until 1978, although some UFO researchers argue that there were several obtuse references to it in 1950's-era literature. Roswell, for example, is not referred to in the official USAF investigation of UFOs reported in Project Bluebook or its predecessors, Project Sign and Project Grudge, which ran from 1948–1969 (which Congressman Schiff subsequently learned when he made his original inquiry).

In 1978, an article appeared in a tabloid newspaper, the *National Enquirer,* which reported the former intelligence officer, Marcel, claimed that he had recovered UFO debris near Roswell in 1947. Also in 1978, a UFO researcher, Stanton Friedman, met with Marcel and began investigating the claims that the material Marcel handled was from a crashed UFO. Similarly, two authors, William L. Moore and Charles Berlitz, also engaged in research which led them to publish a book, *The Roswell Incident,* in 1980. In this book they reported they interviewed a number of persons who claimed to have been present at Roswell in 1947 and professed to be either firsthand or secondhand witnesses to strange events that supposedly occurred. Since 1978–1980, other UFO researchers, most notably Donald Schmitt and Kevin Randle, claim to have located and interviewed even more persons with supposed knowledge of unusual happenings at Roswell. These included both civilian and former military persons.

Additionally, the Robert Stack–hosted television show "Unsolved Mysteries" devoted a large portion of one show to a "re-creation" of the supposed Roswell events. Numerous other television shows have done likewise, particularly during the last several years, and a made-for-TV movie on the subject is due to be released this summer. The overall thrust of these articles, books, and shows is that the "Roswell Incident" was actually the crash of a craft from another world, the US Government recovered it, and has been "covering up" this fact from the American public since 1947, using a combination of disinformation, ridicule, and threats of bodily harm, to do so. Generally, the USAF bears the brunt of these accusations.

From the rather benign description of the "event" and the recovery of some material as described in the original newspaper accounts, the "Roswell Incident" has since grown to mythical (if not mystical) proportions in the eyes and minds of some researchers, portions of the media and at least part of the American public. There are also now several major variations of the "Roswell story." For

example, it was originally reported that there was only recovery of debris from one site. This has since grown from a minimal amount of debris recovered from a small area to airplane loads of debris from multiple huge "debris fields." Likewise, the relatively simple description of sticks, paper, tape and tinfoil has since grown to exotic metals with hieroglyphics and fiber optic-like materials. Most versions now claim that there were two crash sites where debris was recovered, and at the second site, alleged bodies of extraterrestrial aliens were supposedly retrieved. The number of these "alien bodies" recovered also varied. These claims are further complicated by the fact that UFO researchers are not in agreement among themselves as to exactly where these recovery sites were located or even the dates of the alleged crash(es). Consistently, however, the AAF was accused of securing these sites, recovering all the material therefrom, keeping locals away, and returning the recovered wreckage (and bodies) to Roswell under extremely tight security for further processing and later exploitation.

Once back at Roswell Army Air Field, it is generally alleged that special measures were taken to notify higher headquarters and arrangements made to have recovered materials shipped to other locations for analysis. These locations include Fort Worth, Texas, the home of the Eighth Air Force Headquarters; possibly Sandia Base (now Kirtland AFB), New Mexico; possibly Andrews Army Air Field, Maryland; and always to Wright Field, now known as Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. The latter location was the home of "T-2" which later became known as the Air Technical Intelligence Center (ATIC) and the Air Materiel Command (AMC), and would, in fact, be a logical location to study unknown materials from whatever origin. Most of the Roswell stories that contain the recovery of alien bodies also show them being shipped to Wright Field. Once the material and bodies were dispersed for further analysis and/or exploitation, the government in general, and the Army Air Forces in particular, engaged in covering up all information relating to the alleged crash and recovery, including the use of security oaths to military persons and the use of coercion (including alleged death threats) to others. This, as theorized by some UFO researchers, has allowed the government to keep the fact that there is intelligent extraterrestrial life from the American public for 47 years. It also supposedly allowed the US Government to exploit recovered extraterrestrial materials by reverse engineering them, ultimately providing such things as fiber optic and stealth technology. The "death threats," oaths, and other forms of coercion alleged to have been meted out by the AAF personnel to keep people from talking have apparently not been very effective, as several hundred people are claimed to have come forward (without harm) with some knowledge of the "Roswell Incident" during interviews with nongovernment researchers and the media.

Adding some measure of credibility to the claims that have arisen since 1978 is the apparent depth of research of some of the authors and the extent of their efforts. Their claims are lessened somewhat, however, by the fact that almost all their information came from verbal reports many years after the alleged incident occurred. Many of the persons interviewed were, in fact, stationed at, or lived near Roswell during the time in question, and a number of them claim military

service. Most, however, related their stories in their older years, well after the fact. In other cases, the information provided is second or thirdhand, having been passed through a friend or relative after the principal had died. What is uniquely lacking in the entire exploration and exploitation of the "Roswell Incident" is official positive documentary or physical evidence of any kind that supports the claims of those who allege that something unusual happened. Conversely, there has never been any previous documentary evidence produced by those who would debunk the incident to show that something did not happen; although logic dictates that bureaucracies do not spend time documenting nonevents.

## SEARCH STRATEGY AND METHODOLOGY

To insure senior Air Force leadership that there were no hidden or overlooked files that might relate to the "Roswell Incident," and to provide the GAO with the best and most complete information available, SAF/AAZ constructed a strategy based on direct tasking from the Office of the Secretary, to elicit information from those functional offices and organizations where such information might logically be contained. This included directing searches at current offices where special or unusual projects might be carried out, as well as historical organizations, archives, and records centers over which the Air Force exerted some degree of control. Researchers did not, however, go to the US Army to review historical records in areas such as missile launches from White Sands, or to the Department of Energy to determine if its forerunner, the Atomic Energy Commission, had any records of nuclear-related incidents that might have occurred at or near Roswell in 1947. To do so would have encroached on GAO's charter in this matter. What Air Force researchers did do, however, was to search for records still under Air Force control pertaining to these subject areas.

In order to determine parameters for the most productive search of records, a review was first conducted of the major works regarding the "Roswell Incident" available in the popular literature. These works included: *The Roswell Incident* (1980) by William Moore and Charles Berlitz; "Crashed Saucers: Evidence in Search of Proof" (1985) by Moore; *The UFO Crash at Roswell* (1991) by Kevin Randle and Donald Schmitt; *The Truth About the UFO Crash at Roswell* (1994), also by Randle and Schmitt; *The Roswell Report: A Historical Perspective* (1991), George M. Eberhart, editor; "The Roswell Events" (1993) compiled by Fred Whiting; *Crash at Corona* (1992) by Stanton T. Friedman and Don Berliner; and numerous other articles written by a combination of the above and other researchers. Collectively, the above represent the "pro" UFO writers who allege that the government is engaged in a conspiracy. There are no specific books written entirely on the theme that nothing happened at Roswell. However, Curtis Peebles in *Watch the Skies!* (1994) discussed the development of the UFO story and growth of subsequent claims as a phenomenon. There has also been serious research as well as a number of detailed articles written by so-called "debunkers" of Roswell and other incidents, most notably Philip J. Klass, who writes *The Skeptic's UFO Newsletter*, and Robert Todd, a private researcher. The concerns and claims of all the above authors and others were considered in conducting the USAF records search.

It was also decided, particularly after a review of the above popular literature, that no specific attempt would be made to try to refute, point by point, the numerous claims made in the various publications. Many of these claims appear to be hearsay, undocumented, taken out of context, self-serving, or otherwise dubious. Additionally, many of the above authors are not even in agreement over various claims. Most notable of the confusing and now ever-changing claims is the controversy over the date(s) of the alleged incident, the exact location(s) of the purported debris, and the extent of the wreckage. Such discrepancies in claims made the search much more difficult by greatly expanding the volume of records that had to be searched.

An example of trying to deal with questionable claims is illustrated by the following example: One of the popular books mentioned that was reviewed claimed that the writers had submitted the names and serial numbers of "over two dozen" personnel stationed at Roswell in July, 1947, to the Veterans Administration and the Defense Department to confirm their military service. They then listed eleven of these persons by name and asked the question: "Why does neither the Defense Department nor the Veteran's Administration have records of any of these men when we can document that each served at Roswell Army Air Field." That claim sounded serious so SAF/AAZD was tasked to check these eleven names in the Personnel Records Center in St. Louis. Using only the names (since the authors did not list the serial numbers) the researcher quickly found records readily identifiable with eight of these persons. The other three had such common names that there could have been multiple possibilities. Interestingly, one of the listed "missing" persons had a casualty report in his records reflecting that he died in 1951, while the writers claimed to have interviewed him (or a person of the exact same name) in 1990.

While the historical document search was in progress, it was decided to attempt to locate and interview several persons identified as still living who could possibly answer questions generated by the research. This had never been officially done before, although most of the persons contacted reported that they had also been contacted in the past by some of the listed authors or other private researchers. In order to counter possible future arguments that the persons interviewed were still "covering up" material because of prior security oaths, the interviewees were provided with authorization from either the Secretary of the Air Force or the Senior Security Official of the Air Force that would officially allow discussion of classified information, if applicable, or free them from any prior restriction in discussing the matter, if such existed. Again, the focus was on interviewing persons that could address specific issues raised by research and no consideration was given to try and locate every alleged witness claimed to have been contacted by the various authors. For example, one of the interviewees thought vital to obtain an official signed, sworn statement from was Sheridan Cavitt, Lt Col, USAF (Retired), who is the last living member of the three persons universally acknowledged to have recovered material from the Foster Ranch. Others were also interviewed as information developed (discussed in detail later). Additionally, in some cases survivors of deceased persons were also contacted in

an attempt to locate various records thought to have been in the custody of the deceased.

Even though Air Force research originally started in January, 1994, the first official Air Force–wide tasking was directed by the March 1, 1994, memorandum from SAF/AA (Atch 5) and was addressed to those current Air Staff elements that would be the likely repository for any records, particularly if there was anything of an extraordinary nature involved. This meant that the search was not limited to unclassified materials, but also would include records of the highest classification and compartmentation.

The specific Air Staff/Secretariat offices queried included the following:

(a) SAF/AAI, Directorate of Information Management
(b) SAF/AQL, Directorate of Electronics and Special Programs
(c) AF/SE, Air Force Safety
(d) AF/HO, Air Force Historian
(e) AF/IN, Air Force Intelligence [including the Air Force Intelligence Agency (AFIA) and the National Air Intelligence Center (NAIC)]
(f) AF/XOW, Directorate of Weather
(g) [added later] The Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI)

In addition to the above Air Staff and Secretariat offices, SAF/AAZ also reviewed appropriate classified records for any tie-in to this matter. With regards to highly classified records, it should be noted that any programs that employ enhanced security measures or controls are known as a Special Access Programs (SAPs). The authority for such programs comes from Executive Order 12356 and flows from the Department of Defense to the Services via DoD Directive 5205.7. These programs are implemented in the Air Force by Policy Directive 16–7 and Air Force Instruction 16–701. These directives contain detailed requirements for controlling and reporting, in a very strict manner, all SAPs. This includes a report from the Secretary of the Air Force to the Secretary of Defense (and ultimately to Congress) on all SAPs submitted for approval, and a certification that there are no "SAP-like" programs being operated. These reporting requirements are stipulated in public law.

It followed that if the Air Force had recovered some type of extraterrestrial spacecraft and/or bodies and was exploiting this for scientific and technology purposes, then such a program would be operated as a Special Access Program (SAP). SAF/AAZ, the Central Office for all Air Force SAPs, has knowledge of, and security oversight over, all SAPs. SAF/AAZ categorically stated that no such SAP or SAPs exist that pertain to extraterrestrial spacecraft/aliens.

Likewise, the Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff, who head the Special Program Oversight Committee which oversees all sensitive programs in the Air Force, had no knowledge of the existence of any such program involving, or relating to, the events at Roswell or the alleged technology that supposedly

resulted therefrom. Besides the obvious irregularity and illegality of keeping such information from the most senior Air Force officials, it would also be illogical, since these officials are responsible for obtaining funding for operations, research, development, and security. Without funding, such a program, operation, or organization could not exist. Even to keep such a fact "covered-up" in some sort of passive "caretaker status" would involve money. More importantly, it would involve people and create paperwork.

The aforementioned March 1, 1994, SAF/AA tasking generated negative responses (Atchs 6–12) from all recipients; i.e., all offices reported that they had no information that would explain the incident. Consequently, these negative responses led to an increase in the already ongoing historical research at records centers and archives.

The extensive archival and records center search was systematically carried out by the SAF/AAZD Declassification Review Team. This team is composed entirely of Air Force Reserve personnel who have extensive training and experience in large scale review of records. (Previous efforts include the Southeast Asia Declassification Review, declassification of POW/MIA records, and the review of the Gulf War Air Power Survey records.) The team members all had the requisite security clearances for classified information and had the authority of the Secretary of the Air Force to declassify any classified record they found that might be related to Roswell. SAF/AAZD conducted reviews at a number of locations, including the National Archives in Washington, DC; the National Personnel Records Center, St. Louis, MO; the National Archives, Suitland MD; the National Records Center, Suitland, MD; Naval Research Laboratory, Washington, DC; Federal Records Center, Ft Worth, TX; the INSCOM Archives, Fort Meade, MD; National Air and Space Museum, Washington, DC; Air Force Historical Research Agency, Maxwell AFB, AL; Center for Air Force History, Bolling AFB, DC; Phillips Laboratory, Hanscom AFB, MA and Kirtland AFB, NM; Rome Laboratory, Griffiss AFB, NY; and the Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

A listing of the specific record areas searched is appended as Atch 13. The areas included all those subject areas logically believed to possibly contain any reference to activities at Roswell Army Air Field during the period of time in question. It is anticipated that detractors from this effort will complain that "they did not search record group *x*, box *y*, or reel *z*, etc.; that's where the real records are!" Such complaints are unavoidable and there is no possible way that the millions of records under Air Force control could be searched page by page. The team endeavored to make logical searches in those places where records would likely be found. They were assisted in this task by archivists, historians, and records management specialists, including experienced persons who have continually worked in Army and Air Force records systems since 1943. The team also searched some record areas that were recommended by serious private researchers such as Robert Todd, who had independently obtained almost encyclopedic knowledge of the complexities of Air Force records systems, particularly those related to this subject area.

Not surprisingly, the research team found the usual number of problems in many of the records centers (particularly St. Louis) with misfiling, lost or misplaced documents, mismarking of documents, or the breaking up of record groups over the years and refiling in different systems. This included, for example, a small amount of missing "decimal files" from the 509th Bomb Group at Roswell that covered the years 1945–1949, that were marked on the index as "destroyed." The researchers noted that there was no pattern to any anomalies found and that most discrepancies were minor and consistent with what they had found in the past on similar projects.

## WHAT THE ROSWELL INCIDENT WAS NOT

Before discussing specific positive results that these efforts revealed, it is first appropriate to discuss those things, as indicated by information available to the Air Force, that the "Roswell Incident" *was not:*

*An Airplane Crash*

Of all the things that are documented and tracked within the Air Force, among the most detailed and scrupulous are airplane crashes. In fact, records of air crashes go back to the first years of military flight. Safety records and reports are available for all crashes that involved serious damage, injury, death, or a combination of these factors. These records also include incidents involving experimental or classified aircraft. USAF records showed that between June 24, 1947, and July 28, 1947, there were five crashes in New Mexico alone, involving A–26C, P–51N, C–82A, P–80A, and PQ–14B aircraft; however, none of these occurred on the date(s) in question nor in the area(s) in question.

One of the additional areas specifically set forth by GAO in its efforts was to deal with how the Air Force (and others) specifically documented ". . . weather balloon . . . and other crash incidents." In this area, the search efforts revealed that there are no *air* safety records pertaining to weather balloon crashes (all weather balloons "crash" sooner or later); however, there are provisions for generating reports of "crashes" as ground safety incidents in the unlikely chance that a balloon injures someone or causes damage. Such records are only maintained for five years.

*A Missile Crash*

A crashed or errant missile, usually described as a captured German V–2 or one of its variants, is sometimes set forth as a possible explanation for the debris recovered near Roswell. Since much of this testing done at nearby White Sands was secret at the time, it would be logical to assume that the government would handle any missile mishap under tight security, particularly if the mishap occurred on private land. From the records reviewed by the Air Force, however, there was nothing located to suggest that this was the case. Although the bulk of remaining testing records are under the control of the US Army, the subject has also been very well documented over the years within Air Force records. There would be no reason to keep such information classified today. The USAF found

no indicators or even hints that a missile was involved in this matter.

*A Nuclear Accident*

One of the areas considered was that whatever happened near Roswell may have involved nuclear weapons. This was a logical area of concern since the 509th Bomb Group was the only military unit in the world at the time that had access to nuclear weapons. Again, reviews of available records gave no indication that this was the case. A number of records still classified Top Secret and Secret—Restricted Data having to do with nuclear weapons were located in the Federal Records Center in St. Louis, MO. These records, which pertained to the 509th, had nothing to do with any activities that could have been misinterpreted as the "Roswell Incident." Also, any records of a nuclear-related incident would have been inherited by the Department of Energy (DOE), and, had one occurred, it is likely DOE would have publicly reported it as part of its recent declassification and public release efforts. There were no ancillary records in Air Force files to indicate the potential existence of such records within DOE channels, however.

*An Extraterrestrial Craft*

The Air Force research found absolutely no indication that what happened near Roswell in 1947, involved any type of extraterrestrial spacecraft. This, of course, is the crux of this entire matter. "Pro-UFO" persons who obtain a copy of this report, at this point, most probably begin the "cover-up is still on" claims. Nevertheless, the research indicated absolutely no evidence *of any kind* that a spaceship crashed near Roswell or that any alien occupants were recovered therefrom, in some secret military operation or otherwise. This does not mean, however, that the early Air Force was not concerned about UFOs. However, in the early days, "UFO" meant Unidentified Flying Object, which literally translated as some object in the air that was not readily identifiable. It did not mean, as the term has evolved in today's language, to equate to alien spaceships. Records from the period reviewed by Air Force researchers, as well as those cited by the authors mentioned before, do indicate that the USAF *was* seriously concerned about the inability to adequately identify unknown flying objects reported in American airspace. All the records, however, indicated that the focus of concern was not on aliens, hostile or otherwise, but on the Soviet Union. Many documents from that period speak to the possibility of developmental secret Soviet aircraft overflying US airspace. This, of course, was of major concern to the fledgling USAF, whose job it was to protect these same skies.

The research revealed only one official AAF document that indicated that there was any activity of any type that pertained to UFOs and Roswell in July, 1947. This was a small section of the July Historical Report for the 509th Bomb Group and Roswell Army Air Field that stated: "The Office of Public Information was quite busy during the month answering inquiries on the 'flying disc,' which was reported to be in possession of the 509th Bomb Group. The object turned out to be a radar tracking balloon" (included with Atch 11). Additionally, this history showed that the 509th Commander, Colonel Blanchard, went on leave on July 8, 1947, which would be a somewhat unusual maneuver for a person involved in

the supposed first ever recovery of extraterrestrial materials. (Detractors claim Blanchard did this as a ploy to elude the press and go to the scene to direct the recovery operations.) The history and the morning reports also showed that the subsequent activities at Roswell during the month were mostly mundane and not indicative of any unusual high-level activity, expenditure of manpower, resources or security.

Likewise, the researchers found no indication of heightened activity anywhere else in the military hierarchy in the July, 1947, message traffic or orders (to include classified traffic). There were no indications and warnings, notice of alerts, or a higher tempo of operational activity reported that would be logically generated if an alien craft, whose intentions were unknown, entered US territory. To believe that such operational and high-level security activity could be conducted solely by relying on unsecured telecommunications or personal contact without creating any records of such activity certainly stretches the imagination of those who have served in the military who know that paperwork of some kind is necessary to accomplish even emergency, highly classified, or sensitive tasks.

An example of activity sometimes cited by pro-UFO writers to illustrate the point that something unusual was going on was the travel of Lt Gen Nathan Twining, Commander of the Air Materiel Command, to New Mexico in July, 1947. Actually, records were located indicating that Twining went to the Bomb Commanders' Course on July 8, along with a number of other general officers, and requested orders to do so a month before, on June 5, 1947 (Atch 14).

Similarly, it has also been alleged that General Hoyt Vandenberg, Deputy Chief of Staff at the time, had been involved directing activity regarding events at Roswell. Activity reports (Atch 15), located in General Vandenberg's personal papers stored in the Library of Congress, did indicate that on July 7, he was busy with a "flying disc" incident; however this particular incident involved Ellington Field, Texas and the Spokane (Washington) Depot. After much discussion and information gathering on this incident, it was learned to be a hoax. There is no similar mention of his personal interest or involvement in Roswell events except in the newspapers.

The above are but two small examples that indicate that if some event happened that was one of the "watershed happenings" in human history, the US military certainly reacted in an unconcerned and cavalier manner. In an actual case, the military would have had to order thousands of soldiers and airman, not only at Roswell but throughout the US, to act nonchalantly, pretend to conduct and report business as usual, and generate absolutely no paperwork of a suspicious nature, while simultaneously anticipating that twenty years or more into the future people would have available a comprehensive Freedom of Information Act that would give them great leeway to review and explore government documents. The records indicate that none of this happened (or if it did, it was controlled by a security system so efficient and tight that no one, US or otherwise, has been able to duplicate it since. If such a system had been in effect at the time, it would

have also been used to protect our atomic secrets from the Soviets, which history has showed obviously was not the case). The records reviewed confirmed that no such sophisticated and efficient security system existed.

## WHAT THE "ROSWELL INCIDENT" WAS

As previously discussed, what was originally reported to have been recovered was a balloon of some sort, usually described as a "weather balloon," although the majority of the wreckage that was ultimately displayed by General Ramey and Major Marcel in the famous photos (Atch 16) in Fort Worth was that of a radar target normally suspended from balloons. This radar target, discussed in more detail later, was certainly consistent with the description of July 9 newspaper article which discussed "tinfoil, paper, tape, and sticks." Additionally, the description of the "flying disc" was consistent with a document routinely used by most pro-UFO writers to indicate a conspiracy in progress—the telegram from the Dallas FBI office of July 8, 1947. This document quoted in part states: ". . . The disc is hexagonal in shape and was suspended from a balloon by a cable, which balloon was approximately twenty feet in diameter. . . . the object found resembles a high altitude weather balloon with a radar reflector. . . . disc and balloon being transported . . . ."

Similarly, while conducting the popular literature review, one of the documents reviewed was a paper entitled "The Roswell Events" edited by Fred Whiting and sponsored by the Fund for UFO Research (FUFOR). Although it was not the original intention to comment on what commercial authors interpreted or claimed that other persons supposedly said, this particular document was different because it contained actual copies of apparently authentic sworn affidavits received from a number of persons who claimed to have some knowledge of the Roswell event. Although many of the persons who provided these affidavits to the FUFOR researchers also expressed opinions that they thought there was something extraterrestrial about this incident, a number of them actually described materials that sounded suspiciously like wreckage from balloons. These included the following:

Jesse A. Marcel, MD (son of the late Major Jesse Marcel; 11 years old at the time of the incident). Affidavit dated May 6, 1991. ". . . There were three categories of debris: a thick, foil like metallic gray substance; a brittle, brownish-black plastic-like material, like Bakelite; and there were fragments of what appeared to be I-beams. On the inner surface of the I-beam, there appeared to be a type of writing. This writing was a purple-violet hue, and it had an embossed appearance. The figures were composed of curved, geometric shapes. It had no resemblance to Russian, Japanese or any other foreign language. It resembled hieroglyphics, but it had no animal-like characters. . . ."

Loretta Proctor (former neighbor of rancher W.W. Brazel). Affidavit dated May 5, 1991. ". . . Brazel came to my ranch and showed my husband and me a piece of material he said came from a large pile of debris on the property he managed.

The piece he brought was brown in color, similar to plastic . . . . 'Mac' said the other material on the property looked like aluminum foil. It was very flexible and wouldn't crush or burn. There was also something he described as tape which had printing on it. The color of the printing was a kind of purple . . . ."

Bessie Brazel Schreiber (daughter of W.W. Brazel; 14 years old at the time of the incident). Affidavit dated September 22, 1993. ". . . The debris looked like pieces of a large balloon which had burst. The pieces were small, the largest I remember measuring about the same as the diameter of a basketball. Most of it was a kind of double-sided material, foil-like on one side and rubber-like on the other. Both sides were grayish silver in color, the foil more silvery than the rubber. Sticks, like kite sticks, were attached to some of the pieces with a whitish tape. The tape was about two or three inches wide and had flower-like designs on it. The 'flowers' were faint, a variety of pastel colors, and reminded me of Japanese paintings in which the flowers are not all connected. I do not recall any other types of material or markings, nor do I remember seeing gouges in the ground or any other signs that anything may have hit the ground hard. The foil-rubber material could not be torn like ordinary aluminum foil can be torn..."

Sally Strickland Tadolini (neighbor of W.W. Brazel; nine years old in 1947). Affidavit dated September 27, 1993. ". . . What Bill showed us was a piece of what I still think as fabric. It was something like aluminum foil, something like satin, something like well-tanned leather in its toughness, yet was not precisely like any one of those materials. ...It was about the thickness of very fine kidskin glove leather and a dull metallic grayish silver, one side slightly darker than the other. I do not remember it having any design or embossing on it . . . ."

Robert R. Porter (B–29 flight Engineer stationed at Roswell in 1947). Affidavit dated June 7, 1991. ". . . On this occasion, I was a member of the crew which flew parts of what we were told was a flying saucer to Fort Worth. The people on board included...and Maj Jesse Marcel. Capt. William E. Anderson said it was from a flying saucer. After we arrived, the material was transferred to a B–25. I was told they were going to Wright Field in Dayton, Ohio. I was involved in loading the B–29 with the material, which was wrapped in packages with wrapping paper. One of the pieces was triangle-shaped, about 2 1/2 feet across the bottom. The rest were in small packages, about the size of a shoe box. The brown paper was held with tape. The material was extremely lightweight. When I picked it up, it was just like picking up an empty package. We loaded the triangle shaped package and three shoe box-sized packages into the plane. All of the packages could have fit into the trunk of a car. . . . When we came back from lunch, they told us they had transferred the material to a B-25. They told us the material was a weather balloon, but I'm certain it wasn't a weather balloon. . . ."

In addition to those persons above still living who claim to have seen or examined the original material found on the Brazel Ranch, there is one additional person who was universally acknowledged to have been involved in its recovery, Sheridan Cavitt, Lt Col, USAF (Ret). Cavitt is credited in all claims of having

accompanied Major Marcel to the ranch to recover the debris, sometimes along with his Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) subordinate, Lewis Rickett, who, like Marcel, is deceased. Although there does not appear to be much dispute that Cavitt was involved in the material recovery, other claims about him prevail in the popular literature. He is sometimes portrayed as a closed-mouth (or sometimes even sinister) conspirator who was one of the early individuals who kept the "secret of Roswell" from getting out. Other things about him have been alleged, including the claim that he wrote a report of the incident at the time that has never surfaced.

Since Lt Col Cavitt, who had firsthand knowledge, was still alive, a decision was made to interview him and get a signed sworn statement from him about his version of the events. Prior to the interview, the Secretary of the Air Force provided him with a written authorization and waiver to discuss classified information with the interviewer and release him from any security oath he may have taken. Subsequently, Cavitt was interviewed on May 24, 1994, at his home. Cavitt provided a signed, sworn statement (Atch 17) of his recollections in this matter. He also consented to having the interview tape-recorded. A transcript of that recording is at Atch 18. In this interview, Cavitt related that he had been contacted on numerous occasions by UFO researchers and had willingly talked with many of them; however, he felt that he had oftentimes been misrepresented or had his comments taken out of context so that their true meaning was changed. He stated unequivocally, however, that the material he recovered consisted of a reflective sort of material like aluminum foil, and some thin, bamboo-like sticks. He thought at the time, and continued to do so today, that what he found was a weather balloon and has told other private researchers that. He also remembered finding a small "black box" type of instrument, which he thought at the time was probably a radiosonde. Lt Col Cavitt also reviewed the famous Ramey/Marcel photographs (Atch 16) of the wreckage taken to Fort Worth (often claimed by UFO researchers to have been switched and the remnants of a balloon substituted for it), and he identified the materials depicted in those photos as consistent with the materials that he recovered from the ranch. Lt Col Cavitt also stated that he had never taken any oath or signed any agreement not to talk about this incident and had never been threatened by anyone in the government because of it. He did not even know the "incident" was claimed to be anything unusual until he was interviewed in the early 1980's.

Similarly, Irving Newton, Major, USAF (Ret), was located and interviewed. Newton was a weather officer assigned to Fort Worth, who was on duty when the Roswell debris was sent there in July, 1947. He was told that he was to report to General Ramey's office to view the material. In a signed, sworn statement (Atch 30) Newton related that ". . . I walked into the General's office where this supposed flying saucer was lying all over the floor. As soon as I saw it, I giggled and asked if that was the flying saucer . . . . I told them that this was a balloon and a RAWIN target. . . ." Newton also stated that ". . . while I was examining the debris, Major Marcel was picking up pieces of the target sticks and trying to convince me that some notations on the sticks were alien writings. There were

figures on the sticks, lavender or pink in color, appeared to be weather faded markings, with no rhyme or reason [sic]. He did not convince me that these were alien writings." Newton concluded his statement by relating that ". . . During the ensuing years I have been interviewed by many authors, I have been quoted and misquoted. The facts remain as indicated above. I was not influenced during the original interview, nor today, to provide anything but what I know to be true, that is, the material I saw in General Ramey's office was the remains of a balloon and a RAWIN target."

*Balloon Research*

The original tasking from GAO noted that the search for information included "weather balloons." Comments about balloons and safety reports have already been made; however the SAF/AAZ research efforts also focused on reviewing historical records involving balloons, since, among other reasons, that was what was officially claimed by the AAF to have been found and recovered in 1947.

As early as February 28, 1994, the AAZD research team found references to balloon tests taking place at Alamogordo Army Air Field (now Holloman AFB) and White Sands during June and July 1947, testing "constant level balloons" and a New York University (NYU)/Watson Labs effort that used ". . . meteorological devices . . . suspected for detecting shock waves generated by Soviet nuclear explosions"—a possible indication of a cover story associated with the NYU balloon project. Subsequently, a 1946 HQ AMC memorandum surfaced, describing the constant altitude balloon project and specified that the scientific data be classified Top Secret Priority 1A. Its name was Project MOGUL (Atch 19).

Project MOGUL was a then-sensitive, classified project, whose purpose was to determine the state of Soviet nuclear weapons research. This was the early Cold War period and there was serious concern within the US government about the Soviets' developing a weaponized atomic device. Because the Soviet Union's borders were closed, the US Government sought to develop a long range nuclear explosion detection capability. Long range, balloon-borne, low frequency acoustic detection was posed to General Spaatz in 1945 by Dr. Maurice Ewing of Columbia University as a potential solution (atmospheric ducting of low frequency pressure waves had been studied as early as 1900).

As part of the research into this matter, AAZD personnel located and obtained the original study papers and reports of the New York University project. Their efforts also revealed that some of the individuals involved in Project MOGUL were still living. These persons included the NYU constant altitude balloon Director of Research, Dr. Athelstan F. Spilhaus; the Project Engineer, Professor Charles B. Moore; and the military Project Officer, Colonel Albert C. Trakowski .

All of these persons were subsequently interviewed and signed sworn statements about their activities. A copy of theses statements are appended at Atchs 20–22. Additionally, transcripts of the interview with Moore and Trakowski are also included (equipment malfunctioned during the interview of Spilhaus) (Atchs

23–24). These interviews confirmed that Project MOGUL was a compartmented, sensitive effort. The NYU group was responsible for developing constant level balloons and telemetering equipment that would remain at specified altitudes (within the acoustic duct) while a group from Columbia was to develop acoustic sensors. Doctor Spilhaus, Professor Moore, and certain others of the group were aware of the actual purpose of the project, but they did not know of the project nickname at the time. They handled casual inquiries and/or scientific inquiries/papers in terms of "unclassified meteorological or balloon research." Newly hired employees were not made aware that there was anything special or classified about their work; they were told only that their work dealt with meteorological equipment.

An advance ground team, led by Albert P. Crary, preceded the NYU group to Alamogordo Army Air Field, New Mexico, setting up ground sensors and obtaining facilities for the NYU group. Upon their arrival, Professor Moore and his team experimented with various configurations of neoprene balloons; development of balloon "trains" (see illustration, Atch 25); automatic ballast systems; and use of Naval sonobuoys (as the Watson Lab acoustical sensors had not yet arrived). They also launched what they called "service flights." These "service flights" were not logged nor fully accounted for in the published Technical Reports generated as a result of the contract between NYU and Watson Labs. According to Professor Moore, the "service flights" were composed of balloons, radar reflectors, and payloads specifically designed to test acoustic sensors (both early sonobuoys and the later Watson Labs devices). The "payload equipment" was expendable, and some carried no "Reward" or "Return to . . ." tags because there was to be no association between these flights and the logged constant altitude flights which were fully acknowledged. The NYU balloon flights were listed sequentially in their reports (i.e., A, B, or 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 . . .), yet gaps existed for Flights 2–4 and Flight 9. The interview with Professor Moore indicated that these gaps were the unlogged "service flights."

Professor Moore, the on-scene Project Engineer, gave detailed information concerning his team's efforts. He recalled that radar targets were used for tracking balloons because they did not have all the necessary equipment when they first arrived in New Mexico. Some of the early developmental radar targets were manufactured by a toy or novelty company. These targets were made up of aluminum "foil" or foil-backed paper, balsa wood beams that were coated in an "Elmer's-type" glue to enhance their durability, acetate and/or cloth reinforcing tape, single strand and braided nylon twine, brass eyelets and swivels to form a multi-faced reflector somewhat similar in construction to a box kite (see photographs, Atch 26). Some of these targets were also assembled with purplish-pink tape with symbols on it (see drawing by Moore with Atch 21).

According to the log summary (Atch 27) of the NYU group, Flight A through Flight 7 (November 20, 1946–July 2, 1947) were made with neoprene meteorological balloons (as opposed to the later flights made with polyethylene balloons). Professor Moore stated that the neoprene balloons were susceptible to degrada-

tion in the sunlight, turning from a milky white to a dark brown. He described finding remains of balloon trains with reflectors and payloads that had landed in the desert: the ruptured and shredded neoprene would "almost look like dark gray or black flakes or ashes after exposure to the sun for only a few days. The plasticizers and antioxidants in the neoprene would emit a peculiar acrid odor and the balloon material and radar target material would be scattered after returning to earth depending on the surface winds." Upon review of the local newspaper photographs from General Ramey's press conference in 1947 and descriptions in popular books by individuals who supposedly handled the debris recovered on the ranch, Professor Moore opined that the material was most likely the shredded remains of a multi-neoprene balloon train with multiple radar reflectors. The material and a "black box," described by Cavitt, was, in Moore's scientific opinion, most probably from Flight 4, a "service flight" that included a cylindrical metal sonobuoy and portions of a weather instrument housed in a box, which was unlike typical weather radiosondes which were made of cardboard. Additionally, a copy of a professional journal maintained at the time by A.P. Crary, provided to the Air Force by his widow, showed that Flight 4 was launched on June 4, 1947, but was not recovered by the NYU group. It is very probable that this Top Secret project balloon train (Flight 4), made up of unclassified components, came to rest some miles northwest of Roswell, NM, became shredded in the surface winds, and was ultimately found by the rancher, Brazel, ten days later. This possibility was supported by the observations of Lt Col Cavitt (Atchs 17–18), the only living eyewitness to the actual debris field and the material found. Lt Col Cavitt described a small area of debris which appeared, "to resemble bamboo type square sticks one quarter to one half inch square, that were very light, as well as some sort of metallic reflecting material that was also very light . . . . I remember recognizing this material as being consistent with a weather balloon."

Concerning the initial announcement, "RAAF Captures Flying Disc," research failed to locate any documented evidence as to why that statement was made. However, on July 10, 1947, following the Ramey press conference, the *Alamogordo News* published an article with photographs demonstrating multiple balloons and targets at the same location as the NYU group operated from at Alamogordo Army Air Field. Professor Moore expressed surprise at seeing this since his was the only balloon test group in the area. He stated, "It appears that there was some type of umbrella cover story to protect our work with MOGUL." Although the Air Force did not find documented evidence that Gen. Ramey was directed to espouse a weather balloon in his press conference, he may have done so because he was either aware of Project MOGUL and was trying to deflect interest from it, or he readily perceived the material to be a weather balloon based on the identification from his weather officer, Irving Newton. In either case, the materials recovered by the AAF in July, 1947, were not readily recognizable as anything special (only the purpose was special), and the recovered debris itself was unclassified. Additionally, the press dropped its interest in the matter as quickly as they had jumped on it. Hence, there would be no particular reason to further document what quickly became a "non-event."

The interview with Colonel Trakowski (Atchs 23–24) also proved valuable information. Trakowski provided specific details on Project MOGUL and described how the security for the program was set up, as he was formerly the Top Secret Control Officer for the program. He further related that many of the original radar targets that were produced around the end of World War II were fabricated by toy or novelty companies using a purplish-pink tape with flower and heart symbols on it. Trakowski also recounted a conversation that he had with his friend, and superior military officer in his chain of command, Colonel Marcellus Duffy, in July, 1947. Duffy, formerly had Trakowski's position on MOGUL, but had subsequently been transferred to Wright Field. He stated: ". . . Colonel Duffy called me on the telephone from Wright Field and gave me a story about a fellow that had come in from New Mexico, woke him up in the middle of the night or some such thing with a handful of debris, and wanted him, Colonel Duffy, to identify it. . . . He just said 'it sure looks like some of the stuff you've been launching at Alamogordo' and he described it, and I said 'yes, I think it is.' Certainly Colonel Duffy knew enough about radar targets, radiosondes, balloon-borne weather devices. He was intimately familiar with all that apparatus."

Attempts were made to locate Colonel Duffy but it was ascertained that he had died. His widow explained that, although he had amassed a large amount of personal papers relating to his Air Force activities, she had recently disposed of these items. Likewise, it was learned that A.P. Crary was also deceased; however his surviving spouse had a number of his papers from his balloon testing days, including his professional journal from the period in question. She provided the Air Force researchers with this material. It is discussed in more detail within Atch 32. Overall, it helps fill in gaps of the MOGUL story.

During the period the Air Force conducted this research, it was discovered that several others had also discovered the possibility that the "Roswell Incident" may have been generated by the recovery of a Project MOGUL balloon device. These persons included Professor Charles B. Moore, Robert Todd, and coincidentally, Karl Pflock, a researcher who is married to a staffer who works for Congressman Schiff. Some of these persons provided suggestions as to where documentation might be located in various archives, histories and libraries. A review of FOIA requests revealed that Robert Todd, particularly, had become aware of Project MOGUL several years ago and had doggedly obtained from the Air Force, through the FOIA, a large amount of material pertaining to it; long before the AAZD researchers independently seized on the same possibility.

Most interestingly, as this report was being written, Pflock published his own report of this matter under the auspices of FUFOR, entitled *Roswell in Perspective* (1994). Pflock concluded from his research that the Brazel Ranch debris originally reported as a "flying disc" was probably debris from a MOGUL balloon; however, there was a simultaneous incident that occurred not far away, which caused an alien craft to crash and which the AAF subsequently recovered three alien bodies therefrom. Air Force research did not locate any information to corroborate that this incredible coincidence occurred, however.

In order to provide a more detailed discussion of the specifics of Project MOGUL and how it appeared to be directly responsible for the "Roswell Incident," a SAF/AAZD researcher prepared a more detailed discussion on the balloon project which is appended to this report as Atch 32.

*Other Research*

In the attempt to develop additional information that could help explain this matter, a number of other steps were taken. First, assistance was requested from various museums and other archives (Atch 28) to obtain information and/or examples of the actual balloons and radar targets used in connection with Project MOGUL and to correlate them with the various descriptions of wreckage and materials recovered. The blueprints for the "Pilot Balloon Target ML307C/AP Assembly" (generically, the radar target assembly) were located at the Army Signal Corps Museum at Fort Monmouth and were obtained. A copy is appended as Atch 29. This blueprint provides the specification for the foil material, tape, wood, eyelets, and string used and the assembly instructions thereto. An actual device was also obtained for study with the assistance of Professor Moore. (The example actually procured was a 1953-manufactured model "C" as compared to the Model B which was in use in 1947. Professor Moore related the differences were minor.) An examination of this device revealed it to be simply made of aluminum-colored foil-like material over a stronger paper-like material, attached to balsa wood sticks, affixed with tape, glue, and twine. When opened, the device appears as depicted in Atch 31 (contemporary photo) and Atch 25 (1947 photo, in a "balloon train"). When folded, the device is in a series of triangles, the largest being 4 feet by 2 feet 10 inches. The smallest triangle section measures 2 feet by 2 feet 10 inches. (Compare with descriptions provided by Lt Col Cavitt and others, as well as photos of wreckage.)

Additionally, the researchers obtained from the Archives of the University of Texas–Arlington (UTA), a set of original (i.e., first generation) prints of the photographs taken at the time by the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram,* that depicted Ramey and Marcel with the wreckage. A close review of these photos (and a set of first-generation negatives also subsequently obtained from UTA) revealed several interesting observations. First, although in some of the literature cited above, Marcel allegedly stated that he had his photo taken with the "real" UFO wreckage and then it was subsequently removed and the weather balloon wreckage substituted for it, a comparison shows that the same wreckage appeared in the photos of Marcel and Ramey. The photos also depicted that this material was lying on what appeared to be some sort of wrapping paper (consistent with affidavit excerpt of crew chief Porter, above). It was also noted that in the two photos of Ramey he had a piece of paper in his hand. In one, it was folded over so nothing could be seen. In the second, however, there appears to be text printed on the paper. In an attempt to read this text to determine if it could shed any further light on locating documents relating to this matter, the photo was sent to a national-level organization for digitizing and subsequent photo interpretation and analysis. This organization was also asked to scrutinize the digitized photos for any indication of the flowered tape (or "hieroglyphics," depending on the

point of view) that were reputed to be visible to some of the persons who observed the wreckage prior to its getting to Fort Worth. This organization reported on July 20, 1994, that even after digitizing, the photos were of insufficient quality to visualize either of the details sought for analysis. This organization was able to obtain measurements from the "sticks" visible in the debris after it was ascertained by an interview of the original photographer what kind of camera he used. The results of this process are provided in Atch 33, along with a reference diagram and the photo from which the measurements were made. All these measurements are compatible with the wooden materials used in the radar target previously described.

## CONCLUSION

The Air Force research did not locate or develop any information that the "Roswell Incident" was a UFO event. All available official materials, although they do not directly address Roswell *per se*, indicate that the most likely source of the wreckage recovered from the Brazel Ranch was from one of the Project MOGUL balloon trains. Although that project was Top Secret at the time, there was also no specific indication found to indicate an official preplanned cover story was in place to explain an event such as that which ultimately happened. It appears that the identification of the wreckage as being part of a weather balloon device, as reported in the newspapers at the time, was based on the fact that there was no physical difference in the radar targets and the neoprene balloons (other than the numbers and configuration) between MOGUL balloons and normal weather balloons. Additionally, it seems that there was overreaction by Colonel Blanchard and Major Marcel in originally reporting that a "flying disc" had been recovered when, at that time, nobody knew for sure what that term even meant, since it had only been in use for a couple of weeks.

Likewise, there was no indication in official records from the period that there was heightened military operational or security activity which should have been generated if this was, in fact, the first recovery of materials and/or persons from another world. The postwar US military (or today's for that matter) did not have the capability to rapidly identify, recover, coordinate, cover up, and quickly minimize public scrutiny of such an event. The claim that they did so without leaving even a little bit of a suspicious paper trail for 47 years is incredible.

It should also be noted here that there was little mentioned in this report about the recovery of the so-called "alien bodies." This is for several reasons: First, the recovered wreckage was from a Project MOGUL balloon. There were no "alien" passengers therein. Secondly, the pro-UFO groups who espouse the alien bodies theories cannot even agree among themselves as to what, how many, and where such bodies were supposedly recovered. Additionally, some of these claims have been shown to be hoaxes, even by other UFO researchers. Thirdly, when such claims are made, they are often attributed to people using pseudonyms or who otherwise do not want to be publicly identified, presumably so that some sort of retribution cannot be taken against them (notwithstanding that nobody has been

shown to have died, disappeared, or otherwise suffered at the hands of the government during the last 47 years). Fourth, many of the persons making the biggest claims of "alien bodies" make their living from the "Roswell Incident." While having a commercial interest in something does not automatically make it suspect, it does raise interesting questions related to authenticity. Such persons should be encouraged to present their evidence (not speculation) directly to the government and provide all pertinent details and evidence to support their claims if honest fact-finding is what is wanted. Lastly, persons who have come forward and provided their names and made claims may have, in good faith but in the "fog of time," misinterpreted past events. The review of Air Force records did not locate even one piece of evidence to indicate that the Air Force has had any part in an "alien" body recovery operation or continuing cover-up.

During the course of this effort, the Air Force has kept in close touch with the GAO and responded to their various queries and requests for assistance. This report was generated as an official response to the GAO, and to document the considerable effort expended by the Air Force on their behalf. It is anticipated that that the GAO will request a copy of this report to help formulate the formal report of their efforts. It is recommended that this document serve as the final Air Force report related to the Roswell matter, for the GAO, or any other inquiries.

RICHARD L. WEAVER, COL, USAF
DIRECTOR, SECURITY AND SPECIAL
PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

Attachments
1. *Washington Post* Article, "GAO Turns to Alien Turf in New Probe," January 14, 1994
2. GAO Memo, February 15, 1994
3. DoD/IG Memo, February 23, 1994
4. SAF/FM Memo, February 24, 1994, w/Indorsement
5. SAF/AA Memo, March 1, 1994, w/ March 16, 1994 Addendum
6. AF/IN Memo, March 14, 1994
7. AF/SE Memo, March 14, 1994
8. SAF/AQL Memo, March 22, 1994
9. AF/XOWP Memo, March 9, 1994
10. SAF/AAI Memo, March 10, 1994
11. AFHRA/CC Memo, March 8, 1994
12. AFOSI/HO Memo, May 11, 1994

13. List of Locations and Records Searched
14. HQ AAF "Issuance of Orders," June 5, 1947
15. Copy of Vandenberg's Appointment Book and Diary, July 7-9, 1947
16. July 9, 1947 Photos of Balloon Wreckage, *Ft Worth Star Telegram*
17. Signed Sworn Statement of Cavitt, May 24, 1994
18. Transcript of Cavitt Interview, May 24, 1994
19. Letter, July 8, 1946, Project MOGUL
20. Signed Sworn Statement of Spilhaus, June 3, 1994
21. Signed Sworn Statement of Moore, June 8, 1994
22. Signed Sworn Statement of Trakowski, June 29, 1994
23. Transcript of Interview with Moore, June 8, 1994
24. Transcript of Interview with Trakowski, June 29, 1994
25. Illustration of Project MOGUL "Balloon Trains"
26. Two Photos of Project MOGUL "Balloon Trains"
27. Log Summary, NYU Constant Level Balloon Flights
28. List of Museums Contacted
29. Copy of Blueprint for "Pilot Balloon Target, ML-307C/AP Assembly"
30. Signed Sworn Statement of Newton, July 21, 1994
31. Photos of ML-307C/AP Device, With Vintage Neoprene Balloon and Debris
32. Synopsis of Balloon Research Findings by 1st Lt James McAndrew
33. "Mensuration Working Paper," With Drawing and Photo

# INTRODUCTION

Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century the subject of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) has evoked strong opinions and emotions. For some, the belief in or study of UFOs has assumed the dimensions of a religious quest. Others remain nonbelievers or at least skeptical of the existence of alien beings and elusive vehicles which never quite seem to manifest themselves. Regardless of one's conviction, nowhere has the debate about UFOs been more spirited than over the events that unfolded near the small New Mexico city of Roswell in the summer of 1947. Popularly known as the Roswell Incident, this event has become the most celebrated UFO encounter of all time and has stimulated enthusiasts like none other. Numerous witnesses, including former military personnel and respectable members of the local community, have come forward with tales of humanoid beings, alien technologies, and government cover-ups that have caused even the most skeptical observer to pause and take notice. Inevitably these stories coming from the desert have spawned countless articles, books, films, and even museums claiming to have proof that visitors had come from outer space.

In February 1994, the Air Force was informed that the General Accounting Office (GAO), an investigative agency of Congress, planned a formal audit to ascertain "the facts regarding the reported crash of an UFO in 1949 [1947] at Roswell, New Mexico."[1] This task was delegated to numerous agencies, but the focus was on the U.S. Air Force, the agency most often accused of hiding information and records on Roswell. The Presidential Science Advisor had also expressed an interest in the investigation. Thereupon, the Secretary of the Air Force directed that a complete records search identify, locate, and examine any and all information available on this subject. From the outset there was no predisposition to refute or overlook any information. Moreover, if any of the information discovered was under security classification, it was to be declassified, and if active or former Air Force officials had been sworn to a secrecy oath, they were to be freed from it. In short, the objective was to tell the Congress, and the American people, *everything* the Air Force knew about the Roswell claims.

Subsequently, researchers conducted an extensive search of Air Force archives, record centers, and scientific facilities. Seeking information that might help to explain peculiar tales of odd wreckage and alien bodies, the researchers reviewed a monumental number

1. Memo, Marcia J. Van Note, DOD/IG, for Distribution, subj: General Accounting Office (GAO) Letter Dated February 9, 1944 . . ., Feb 23, 1994.

of documents concerning a variety of events, including aircraft crashes, errant missile tests, and nuclear mishaps.

The researchers reported to the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force (SAF/AA), the office responsible for both Air Force records and security policy oversight. Within SAF/AA, the tasking fell to the Director of Security and Special Program Oversight and its specialized subunit, the Declassification and Review Team. This team, comprised entirely of Reservists, was well versed in the Air Force's records system and its complex declassification procedures. Previously, Declassification and Review Team members demonstrated their expertise and effectiveness by declassifying millions of pages of Southeast Asian War and Prisoner of War–Missing in Action records.

As this study makes abundantly clear, the Declassification and Review Team found no evidence of any extraterrestrial craft or alien flight crew. In fact, what they did find had been declassified for more than twenty years—a shadowy, formerly Top Secret project, code-named MOGUL.

Project MOGUL resulted from two important post–World War II priorities set by the Commanding General of the Army Air Forces, Henry H. "Hap" Arnold. These were to continue the cooperative wartime relationship between civilian research institutions and the military, and to maintain America's technological superiority, especially with respect to guarding against a bolt from the blue—in other words, a devastating surprise attack. MOGUL addressed both of these concerns. Developed partly under contract with leading scientific institutions—such as New York University (NYU), Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Columbia University, and the University of California at Los Angeles—MOGUL's objective was to develop a long-range system capable of detecting Soviet nuclear detonations and ballistic missile launches.

Army Air Forces officials assembled an expert group of military and civilian scientists to carry out the project. The group included Dr. W. Maurice Ewing of Columbia University, a preeminent geophysicist and oceanographer; Dr. Athelstan F. Spilhaus, the Director of Research at NYU who later advised five presidents on scientific and cultural matters; Dr. James Peoples, the Air Force's civilian project scientist and later editor of the *Journal of Geophysical Research*; Albert P. Crary, also a civilian Air Force scientist, known for significant contributions to Antarctic research; and Charles B. Moore, Project Engineer at NYU and an atmospheric physicist who pioneered the use of giant plastic research balloons still widely used today. Col. Marcellus Duffy, a respected Air Force pilot and scientific administrator, led the project. Capt. Albert C. Trakowski, a young Massachusetts Institute of Technology graduate, followed Duffy in the leadership role.

Determining whether the Soviets were testing nuclear devices was of the highest national priority; it demanded the utmost secrecy if the information gained was to be useful. When the Soviets exploded their first atomic device in August 1949, the experimental Project MOGUL was not in operation. However, the explosion was detected by a specially equipped Air Force B–29 aircraft. Accordingly, MOGUL was conducted under stringent security—secluded laboratories, code words, maximum security clearances, and strictest enforcement of need-to-know rules. Nevertheless, while the nature of the project remained

shrouded in secrecy, some of its operations obviously could not. The deployment of giant trains of balloons—over thirty research balloons and experimental sensors strung together and stretching more than 600 feet—could be neither disguised nor hidden from the public. Moreover, operational necessity required that these balloons be launched during daylight hours. It was therefore not surprising that these balloons were often mistaken for UFOs. In fact, MOGUL recovery crews often listened to broadcasts of UFO reports to assist them in their tracking operations. Additionally, the balloons were unsteerable, leading to such amusing events as the one reported by the *New York Times* in which a secret MOGUL balloon "floated blithely over the rooftops of Flatbush . . . causing general public excitement . . . before it came to rest on top of a [Brooklyn] tavern."[2] In another episode, MOGUL balloon recovery technicians directed a B–17 bomber, which was tracking one of the tests, to buzz and scare off a curious oil rig crew that was about to "capture" a balloon train that had fallen near Roswell. The ruse worked. However, too much activity was going on for the project to remain completely hidden. A MOGUL project officer later noted, "It was like having an elephant in your backyard . . . and hoping no one would notice."[3] These occurrences were typical, leading the recovery crews to describe themselves as *Balloonatics,* due to the predicaments in which the wandering balloons sometimes placed them, but the information the balloons were attempting to obtain was vital.

To attempt to limit unauthorized disclosure, the Air Force employed a security mechanism known as compartmentation. Compartmentation controlled access to classified information by dispersing portions of the research among several facilities and institutions. Each participating entity received only enough information necessary to accomplish its assigned tasks. In the case of MOGUL, only a small circle of Air Force officers received the intimate details that linked together these unrelated research projects. The use of compartmentation along with strict enforcement of the need to know enabled MOGUL to remain a secret—despite its obvious security difficulties—and to remain unevaluated for many years as the cause of the Roswell Incident.

The issue of compartmentation was significant because some UFO researchers assert that the persons who recovered the MOGUL equipment, members of the 509th Bombardment Group stationed at Roswell Army Airfield, should have been able to recognize the debris collected at the crash site as that of a research balloon. Although members of the 509th possessed high-level clearances, they were not privy to the existence of MOGUL; their job was to deliver nuclear weapons, not to detect them. The unusual combination of experimental equipment did not encourage easy identification that undoubtedly left some members of the 509th with unanswered questions. Some UFO enthusiasts have manipulated these unanswered questions to support their flying-saucer recovery scenario, while eagerly supplying unfounded explanations of extraterrestrial visitation and cosmic conspiracy. Additionally, many claims of a flying saucer crash at Roswell rest on the description of debris collected at the Foster ranch site. UFO researchers, including those

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2. *New York Times,* "Balloon Staggers Down to Brooklyn Tavern, Hooks Itself to Roof and Upsets Decorum," Oct 1, 1948.

3. *New York Times,* "Wreckage of a 'Spaceship': Of This Earth (and U.S.)," Sep 18, 1994.

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who are said to have known *all about* MOGUL, apparently did not compare the descriptions of the suspect debris with that of the components of a Project MOGUL balloon train. MOGUL reports and documents that contain descriptions, illustrations, and photographs have been publicly available for at least twenty years. Had the researchers completed even a cursory comparison, they would have found that the materials were suspiciously similar; detailed examination would have shown them to be one and the same. In the final analysis, it appears these individuals have pursued the convenient red herring provided by Roswell Army Airfield, while the real explanation lay just over the Sacramento Mountains at the MOGUL launch site in Alamogordo.

This report explains the events that transpired in and near Roswell, New Mexico, in the summer of 1947. It is based on written documentation and first-hand accounts of participants, all of which are provided here in their entirety. While these answers are not as titillating as tales of unearthly craft and creatures, it is a fascinating story nonetheless.

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