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PROJECT MOON DUST

(In our last issue, we alluded to one of those many project code names which turn up from time to time in released government documents. Few of these are ever identified in more than brief detail. However, Project Moon Dust, as named in recently-released DIA files is an exception. We have several documents which do seem to link UFOs with this colorfully named project. Our thanks to Robert Todd for providing us with the background information on his several-years-old research into Moon Dust.)

We have heard of stories, or more accurately -- rumors, of crashed UFOs and alien bodies recovered. Dozens of them are presently on file. Often in these accounts, military personnel respond quickly to a developing situation, enact a carefully-planned set of procedures (like photography, mapping, interviews, etc.); then, usually, the evidence is carted away to an unknown location for further study. That's what the rumors tell us.

You must have thought at times, while digesting these rumors, that such step-by-step action must have been scripted; that there must have been guidelines to follow for everything to have been done so thoroughly and properly that not a stick of residue was left. You know how the military does everything by the book, as they tell us! If all this is so, then these procedures must be available for consultation when needed.

It's possible that we now have been pointed in the right direction to verify whether or not these procedures are on the record.

Salted through out some recent document releases, mainly from the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) and State Department, are references to "Project Moon Dust." The context of this codename to the rest of the published data was unclear, but the fact that it repeatedly turned up in documents dealing with UFOs told us that it was worth checking. A feeler was put into the March 1986 issue of Just Cause, requesting that anyone who had knowledge of Project Moon Dust to please contact us.

Not long afterwards, Robert Todd, a well-known CAUS researcher, informed us that he had researched Moon Dust in the late 1970's. What he had found was quite revealing.

As a result of inquiries by Todd about Moon Dust, and other matters, the Air Force released a letter on August 20, 1979. It was identified as "AFCIN-1E- O", dated 3 November 1961. The letter was partly deleted, but enough was left to open the door on Moon Dust: (emphasis added where necessary--ed.)

Extract, page 1: "c. In addition to their staff duty assignments,

intelligence team personnel have peacetime duty functions in support of such Air Force projects as Moondust, Bluefly, and UFO, and other AFCIN directed quick reaction projects which require intelligence team operational capabilities (see Definitions)."[--pagebreak--]

Extract, page 2: "f. Blue Fly: Operation Blue Fly has been established

to facilitate expeditious delivery to FTD of Moon Dust or other items of great technical intelligence interest. ACIN SOP for Blue Fly operations, February 1960 provides for 1127th participation."

"g. Moon Dust: As a specialized aspect of its over-all material exploitation program, Headquarters USAF has established Project Moon Dust to locate, recover and deliver descended foreign space vehicles. ICGL #4, 25 April, 1961, delineates collection responsibilities."

Extract, page 3: "c. Peacetime employment of AFCIN intelligence team

capability is provided for in UFO investigation (AFR 200-2) and in support of Air Force Systems Command (AFCS) Foreign Technology Division (FTD) Projects Moon Dust and Blue Fly. These three peacetime projects all involve a potential for employment of qualified field intelligence personnel on a quick reaction basis to recover or perform field exploitation of unidentified flying objects, or known Soviet/Bloc aerospace vehicles, weapons systems, and/or residual components of such equipment. The intelligence team capability to gain rapid access, regardless of location, to recover or perform field exploitation, to communicate and provide intelligence reports is the only such collection capability available to AFCIN, and it is vitally necessary in view of current intelligence gaps concerning Soviet/Bloc technological capabilities."

Let's pause a moment to absorb this.

The letter immediately indicates that Moon Dust, "Blue Fly", and "UFO" are among A.F. Intelligence's quick reaction projects. It is probable here that "UFO" refers to Blue Book.

We have pointed out in CLEAR INTENT (pg. 9) that often the prefix word "Blue" has been used in connection with high-altitude vehicles, and it appears in several fact, and rumor, UFO projects. Here we see it again in "Blue Fly," which provided for transportation of Moon Dust material. And what did Moon Dust material include? Among other things, it included things acquired from the recovery and/or field exploitation of UFOs! Note how UFOs are set apart from Soviet/Bloc aerospace vehicles. Since the Soviets were the only other real space power in the world at the time, besides the U.S., what could have been meant by setting off UFOs as a separate subject of investigation? If they were British, or another nation's space vehicle, why not say this, as it was said for the Soviets?

Note that Moon Dust and "other items of great technical intelligence interest" were sent to the Foreign Technology Division at Wright-Patterson AFB in Ohio, under Project Blue Fly. FTD was the parent group for Project Blue Book. Coincidence?[--pagebreak--]

Originally, Blue Book's investigative functions were partly aided by personnel of the 4602nd Air Intelligence Service Squadron (AISS). Part of its mission during WW2, and later in peacetime, was to "exploit downed people, paper and hardware" for intelligence information. The 4602nd's operations were transferred to AFCIN in July 1957, which then assigned the 1006th AISS most of the 4602nd's operations. The 1006th was re-designated the 1127th Field Activities Group in 1960. These units all performed UFO investigations for Blue Book, but were trained for and capable of additional activities in the event that one of these UFOs had crashed somewhere.

We discuss the operations of a possible "quick response unit" in CLEAR INTENT, pg 111. Our point in that discussion was that such a unit would come under the highest security classification. Any admission that a UFO phenomenon was real and unexplainable would not be in the government's best interest to state, considering the still-existent debunking policy. Certainly here we see UFO investigation linked to the highest levels of the U.S. Air Force.

When did Moon Dust begin? We aren't sure but it likely dates from the beginnings of Blue Book at least, i.e. the early 1950s. It's entirely possible that the 1952 crashed disc incident reported in letters by Rear Admiral Herbert Knowles (see Just Cause, March 1986) could have been investigated under Moon Dust, if it were called that then. It certainly fits the criteria for attention, as described in the Air Force's 1961 letter.

Compelling evidence for the Moon Dust/ crash retrieval link and its early origins appears in Donald Keyhoe's 1955 book, THE FLYING SAUCER CONSPIRACY. Note these extracts:

[Pages 214-15]

Two days after this Lou Corbin called me to report another development.

"Do you know anything about a 'crashed-object' program?" he asked me.

"No. Whose project is it?"

"It's an Air Force deal, unless somebody's trying to trick me. You've heard of the 4602nd Air Intelligence Service Squadron, of course?"

"Yes. It's a hush-hush unit. They have investigators in all Air Defense Squadrons."

"Well, I've been contacted by one of them. First I thought it might be some kind of hoax. But I've double-checked, He actually is with the 4602nd."

"Sounds queer, Lou. They're not supposed to talk to anyone outside of intelligence."[--pagebreak--]

"I know. But he may be under special orders. Anyway, he's against the secrecy policy. He told me the 4602nd has a special program called the 'investigation of unidentified crashed objects.'"

"If it's true, that IS big." I said. "It could mean they've actually got their hands on some flying saucers."

"He wouldn't admit that," said Corbin. "But I got the impression they'd recovered some kind of 'objects'--probably something dropped from a saucer."

At 2:00 P.M. on November 30 [1954?] a mysterious bright flash in the sky was reported simultaneously in Atlanta, Newman, and Columbus, Georgia; in Sylacauga and Birmingham, Alabama; and as far away as Greenville, Mississippi. This brilliant light was immediately followed by a series of strange explosions, apparently centered high in the sky above Sylacauga.

Moments later a black object, six inches in diameter, crashed into the home of Mrs. Hewlett Hodges.

Smashing a three-foot-wide hole in the roof, the shining black object tore through the living-room ceiling. Striking the radio, it bounced off and gashed Mrs. Hodges' arm.

Meanwhile, the mysterious explosions had caused a hurried Air Defense alert. A three-state search for fallen objects was immediately begun by squadrons of Air Force planes.

When word of the "Sylacauga object" reached the Air Force, Intelligence officers flew to the scene from

Maxwell Air Force Base at Montgomery. Explaining that "the Air Force is required to examine such strange objects," they whisked it away to Maxwell Field, from which it was flown immediately to ATIC.

An hour or two later the object was labeled a meteorite.

As soon as this appeared in the papers, I received a call from Lou Corbin. "It's plain that this is part of the Air Force 'unidentified crashed-objects' investigation. They must believe the thing is linked with the saucers."

"It doesn't look like a coincidence," I said, "that this object fell just after those explosions. If it had been a meteor exploding, it wouldn't have made such a bright flash in the daytime." "In the first news story," Corbin told me, "it was called an unidentified flying object. At least that's the way the Maxwell Field

officers explained why they had started the search."

"This reminds me of that East New Haven signboard case," I commented. "On that occasion the object wasn't recovered. Judging from the size of the hole it made, however, it was probably about the same size."

Later FOIA requests have indicated that the DIA is currently the responsible agency for Moon Dust documentation. However, access is not being allowed because such access would reveal intelligence methods and are thus exempt from FOIA.

NASA has been involved as well, as this extract from a Jan. 13, 1969, memo indicates:

"The undersigned {Richard M. Schulherr} visited the Foreign Technology Division of the Air Force Systems Command, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, 9 Jan. 1969. The purpose of this trip was to identify specific items of space debris which had been forwarded to NASA and to re-establish personal liaison with newly-assigned FTD Moondust personnel." The Air Force's Moon Dust activity, as well as Blue Fly, is, in their words "no longer active." Perhaps the projects no longer go by these names but surely the procedures have not become obsolete. There is still a need to react to unknown vehicles landing on our soil. At the very least, national defense is served by such reaction.

One last thought. Could an MJ12-type committee have begun Moon Dust as a reaction to early UFO events like Roswell? It would be of interest to see exactly when Moon Dust began its operations.

The Editor

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