

Grandpa's alcoholism or Uncle Ray's penchant for little boys. One absolutely did not mention Battelle in connection with UFOs. And since I had no need to know, the fact of this involvement (in spite of my Secret clearance) was kept from me for over a year.

In the spring of 1987 I found myself at a dinner party seated next to a Battelle executive—an old timer who I knew had worked on 14 as a member of Project Stork. I asked him if after 34 years he had anything he wanted to say about it.

My question made him uneasy. "We were concerned," he said. He was referring to the data and to the Battelle scientists' interpretation of those data. He was referring to the thoughts of his fellow scientists on the question of "What are UFOs?" "We were concerned," he said, and he would say no more.

## Project Henry

During the first month (January 1953) I worked for him, Hynek went to Washington to attend the meeting of the Robertson Panel. He was an associate member, a second stringer, which was odd because he had been working directly with the data for about five years. I remember his return on a cold, wintry day. I expected him to announce there would be a major scientific undertaking on the subject. Instead, he told me, "They're not going to have a scientific investigation. For some strange reason they voted it down. They didn't even take a decent look at the data, and they decided to discredit them."

Perhaps he needed some levity that day when he looked up from his coffee and crackers and suggested that we should have a name for his consultancy project, "something that captures the idea that these things flit around the sky." An old-time popular insecticide was called Flit, and its trademark showed a hand-pumped sprayer and, I believe, a harried woman who had just been scared by a bug. "Quick, Henry, the Flit!" she is shouting. Hynek latched on to the word Flit, and thus Project Henry was named (Flit being too obvious and Project Insecticide somewhat cumbersome). Readers familiar with Hynek's sense of humor know I couldn't possibly have made this up.

This is the way Henry worked:

About once a week a courier from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base (I assumed he was from Wright-Patterson) would arrive at Hynek's office at Ohio State University with a manila envelope stuffed with TWXs—teletype UFO-sighting reports received from military facilities around the world.

Were they all of the reports Blue Book received—the total number it took in? Surely not. (Hynek often said he knew the best cases were withheld.) I usually looked them over before Hynek did. I had a Secret clearance by then (mid-1953), but only a few were ever classified beyond Restricted, and the sensitive material usually had to do with the installation or facility of report origin, not

with the contents of the report per se. If Venus was in western elongation, there would be a whole slew of reports of a bright white light in the predawn east, and Hynek would chuckle and mutter about how darned uneducated the public was. When we would get a report of high strangeness, he would scratch his chin—beardless until the fall of 1953—and say this might bear looking into. We would outline the information we wanted to have, and we would pass that on to Blue Book. But it hardly ever followed up for us. If we really wanted some information, we would have to go out and try to get it ourselves.

Hynek was paid to investigate only reports allocated to him by Blue Book. That meant that if we heard of a case in some other way—if someone called the observatory, say, or there was a newspaper story—we could not count it as an official case, and any expenses incurred by Hynek or me were not reimbursable. Many times we asked people to send a report in to Wright-Patterson so that a case we were already working on (privately) and had spent money investigating could become "official." Sometimes it worked; sometimes it didn't.

Hynek went to Wright-Patterson two or three times a month, and about once a month I went along. The Blue Book facility—building 263, not Hangar 18—consisted of three cramped, crummy little offices. The paint was peeling, and the file cabinets were warped. There were a United States map with pins stuck in it, a sergeant gofer, a gum-cracking, beehive-haired secretary (a civilian), and a dried-out coffee pot on the window sill. This was before computers, of course, so the cases were filed chronologically. If you knew the date, fine. If you knew only the location, try the card index, and lotsa luck. No wonder I never saw Capt. Ed Ruppelt, the Blue Book head, smile. (I remember him as a by-the-book sober-sides. I don't recall a human side of him, even when we were having an informal lunch. But I seem to remember intense blue-gray eyes.)

In the early days of my association with Hynek, my title was research assistant, OSU department of physics and astronomy. I worked a few hours a day, spending about half my time on UFO matters and the rest as teaching assistant for Hynek's undergraduate astronomy course and general Girl Friday for OSU's McMillin Observatory. (I was also carrying 15 hours in my second-to-last undergrad quarter.) As the year progressed I graduated, my Secret clearance came through, I worked full time, and my UFO work increased proportionately.

The 1954 flap was underway, and one day I asked Hynek how it was that OSU was willing to keep me on as research assistant when most of my work was for ATIC.

"You're not working for ATIC," Hynek said. "You're working for a contractor."

I had no idea what he meant. "A contractor," he repeated. "A contractor who doesn't want to be known. But don't worry about it. I've already told you too much."