

interested in UFOs. (LaPaz is mentioned prominently in Ruppelt's *The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects* [1956].)

I found LaPaz in his office at the university. I remember the formality of the room, he behind a large wooden desk, I in a straight chair at right angles. In contrast to the easy-going Tombaugh (and his family, who treated me to a Mexican lunch), LaPaz was a formidable presence, and I felt a bit uncomfortable. We discussed UFOs in general terms. He chose his words carefully, suggesting that the U.S. government knew plenty about UFOs. I brought him up to date on Hynek's work and the general skepticism that I felt pervaded Hynek's philosophy (and mine, too).

LaPaz listened to what must have been my naive jabberings. Then he pinned me with a solemn stare. "UFOs are the Fifth Horseman of the Apocalypse," he said, and I was soon dismissed.

Pestilence, War, Famine, Death, and...? As the years have passed, LaPaz's chilling pronouncement has caused me growing concern. His name is not listed on the controversial MJ-12 document. But if such a group, or its equivalent, existed, he would have been a logical candidate for membership.

Back in Ohio the summer of 1953 produced a changing of the guard. For a few months Ruppelt was away, and Lt. Bob Olsson was in charge of Blue Book. At some time in that interval Hynek was going out of town, and he told me to expect a visit from some people from Wright-Patterson. Olsson (whom I already knew) came in, with the sergeant gofer and another man, probably also a lieutenant, to whom I was not even introduced.

It was a hot, stuffy day sans air conditioning. The soldiers took me into Hynek's inner office at the observatory, and the lieutenant arranged the chairs: a straight chair in the center of the room—for me—and three other chairs at 10, two, and six o'clock positions. The anonymous lieutenant and Olsson faced me, and the sergeant sat out of my vision with a clip board and pencil.

They asked me how things were going with the project. What was Hynek's attitude? What was my attitude? How did I like the work? What did I think of this case or that? My utter disingenuousness carried me through this ordeal. In my naivete I was probably even flattered to be the object of so much attention. In retrospect the third man reminds me of that nutty CIA man in the *M.A.S.H.* television series—the ludicrous paranoid who was forever finding devious plots in the most innocent situation.

I liked Bob Olsson. He often included his own evaluations and a friendly note on the reports sent to us, and I felt he was genuinely interested and conscientious in his work. Perhaps that's why he lasted only a few months at Blue Book.

By mid-1956 Hynek had moved to Harvard for his work on the International Geophysical Year, and I had moved to the main Battelle campus (about a mile from

OSU) where my work for Stork also involved the IGY. The subject of UFOs was never mentioned.

Blue Book and beyond

Though I was officially removed from Blue Book business, Hynek and I continued to communicate regularly about UFO matters.

At midnight on March 26, 1966, my husband got me out of a shower for a call from Hillsdale, Michigan. It was Hynek, pleading with me not to get upset when I saw the morning papers. The Air Force had backed him into a corner. *Say something*, he was told. So he had said something. He had said that swamp gas was a possibility as a natural explanation for some lights over a marshy area, and the press jumped on it. The swamp-gas incident distressed him terribly because in effect the Air Force had forced him to compromise his scientific integrity.

Blue Book folded the end of 1969 following the publication of the Condon Report. Within a few months of the start of the Colorado project, Hynek had told me he knew it had been decided that the findings would be negative. For years he had understood that he was being kept out of the inner circle, that even with his high security clearances it was judged that he had no need to know what was really going on. He knew he had been used. He seemed actually relieved, then, when his Blue Book work was over. Now he was free to pursue UFO research from a purely scientific viewpoint without the restrictions imposed by his government contract.

But was Hynek's government UFO work really over?

In October 1973 he called me to pick him up at Wright-Patterson and bring him to Columbus. It was the height of the Yom Kippur war, and Wright-Patterson was on highest security status because supplies for Israel were being flown from there. I took a wrong turn near the Air Force museum entrance and wound up driving out onto the perimeter of the field. I drove half a mile out on a taxi strip before I could turn around. No challenge. No one came after me.

I finally got reoriented and drove up to where I was supposed to pick up Hynek. It was a small one-storey building, and Hynek was standing in the doorway as I drove up. Another man appeared from the building. He was in dress uniform and may have been a major. I got out of the car, and Hynek made it a point to introduce me. Of course Hynek was always polite, but he easily could have just gotten into the car with no introductions. It seemed to me that the introduction was a purposeful act which I assumed had something to do with the fact that I was a UFO associate.

On our way to Columbus I asked Hynek in general terms what was going on. He would not tell me anything about what he was doing at Wright-Patterson. In face of his reluctance to explain, I felt I could not pursue the subject. But he was agitated on that trip and seemed

continued on page 23