

AIR INTELLIGENCE REPORT NO. 100-203-79

By Walt Andrus

The relatively close publication dates between the noteworthy *Estimate of the Situation* produced by Project Sign and *Air Intelligence Report No. 100-203-79* dated 10 December 1948 and declassified on 5 March 1985 from TOP SECRET, makes the latter one of the most important documents recently released under the Freedom of Information ACT (FOIA). We are indebted to Robert Todd for his diligent work in obtaining this valuable document and to Peter A. Gersten for providing a copy to MUFON.

RUPPELT

A brief review of the historical document titled *Estimate of the Situation*, classified TOP SECRET, is in order, especially for those who may be relatively new to ufology. Probably one of the most reliable sources is Edward J. Ruppelt, former head of the Air Force Project Blue Book as related in his book, *The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects* (Doubleday, 1956). Quoting from page 41: "In intelligence, if you have something to say about some vital problem you write a report that is known as an 'Estimate of the Situation.' A few days after the DC-3 was buzzed (Eastern Air Lines pilots Chiles and Whitted, July 24, 1948), the people at ATIC (Air Technical Intelligence Center, Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton Ohio) decided that the time had arrived to make an Estimate of the Situation. The situation was the UFO's the estimate was that they were interplanetary!"

EVOLUTION

After the estimate was completed, typed and approved, it started up through channels to higher level echelons. When the Top Secret Estimate of the Situation reached the higher echelons of the Air Force, it got to the late General Hoyt S. Vandenberg, then Chief of Staff, before it was batted back down. The general wouldn't buy interplanetary vehicles, saying the report lacked proof. The estimate died a quick death. Some months later it was completely declassified and relegated to the incinerator. A few copies were kept as

momentos of the golden days of UFOs. Captain Ruppelt saw one of these copies which he described as a thick document with a black cover and printed on legal-size paper. Stamped across the front were the words TOP SECRET.

GORMAN

In studying Project Sign's *Air Intelligence Report No. 100-203-79*, some of the identical UFO sightings are reported that Ruppelt relates in his book as appearing in the "Estimate." The publishing date for the Estimate of the Situation was late Summer or early Fall, since it preceded Lt. George F. Gorman's dogfight with a lighted object over the airport at Fargo, North Dakota on October 1, 1948 (one of the classic cases of that era). Prior to Mr. Gorman's death, he lived in New Braunfels, Texas, only 14 miles from MUFON headquarters. My wife and I have had the pleasure of sharing his UFO experience over dinner on a few occasions. George was far from being convinced that he had been dueling with a lighted balloon for 27 minutes as the Air Force ultimately decided. His wife said he was "white as a sheet" when he arrived home a few minutes later after his harrowing encounter.

SIGNIFICANCE

The vital significance of Report No. 100-203-79 may be attributed to the evaluation of the UFO phenomenon as known in 1948 and the technical possibility that German scientists in Soviet Russia (U.S.S.R.) had developed and perfected a craft with the flight characteristics of a UFO after World War II. It is not surprising that ATIC personnel proposed that saucers were interplanetary in origin in their Estimate of the Situation.

ACTION

We are extremely fortunate that Report No. 100-203-79 did not suffer the same fate as the Situation by being destroyed. Two documents, declassified on January 29, 1985 and stamped CONFIDENTIAL, disclosed the designated action to be taken

regarding this report.

1. Memo dated 11 August 1950 to CG, Alaskan Air Command from AFOIV-TC; Subject: Downgrading of Air Intelligence Report No. 100-203-79. The response: Subject document, for which your Command requests downgrading action, contains info and speculation on the "flying saucer" situation which have never been released or intimated publicly by the Air Force.
2. Memo dated 25 September 1950 from Dept. of the Air Force Hqs. U.S. Air Force. Subject: Destruction of Air Intelligence Report Number 100-203-79. The instructions were: It is requested that action be taken to destroy all copies of Top Secret Air Intelligence Report Number 100-203-79, subject "Analysis of Flying Object Incidents in the U.S.," dated 10 Dec 1948. It was filed under: 313.6 Records, Destruction of 17 Oct 50.

If the instructions had been followed explicitly, this report would have been destroyed. Will the FOIA requests being initiated recover a copy of the Estimate of the Situation that Captain Ruppelt saw in the Air Force file?

EDITING

The original copy of the report from the Directorate of Intelligence Headquarters United States Air Force and the Office of Naval Intelligence Navy Department contains 26 pages plus a cover and index. The copies of the photographs were of such poor quality that they have not been reproduced in this issue of the Journal. After extracting the majority of the UFO photographs, and flying wing-type aircraft, the 26 pages were edited physically so as to retain the text of the report. Two photographs of flying wing aircraft were substituted for the original rough copies for the benefit of Journal readers (YRB-49A and XF5U-1).

It is unusual for MUFON to devote a monthly issue to one specific article or report. The editors feel that the significance of this report warrants maximum exposure.