
PROJECT MOGUL

STILL A FLIGHT OF FANCY

BY ROBERT J. DURANT

Karl T. Pflock, *Roswell: Inconvenient Facts and the Will to Believe*. Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 2001. \$25.00.

[Note to the readers of *IUR*: What you are about to read was assigned as a standard book review. But as I worked my way through the text, it became obvious that this is no ordinary book amenable to a short “good news/bad news” review. The problem here is twofold. First, this is a very important book on the Roswell controversy. Second, a meaningful evaluation of the book requires detailed explanation of a variety of issues. Unfortunately, it took a great many words to do justice to the potential reader of this book as well as to the author.—RJD]

Opinion polls show that over half of all adult Americans believe UFOs are “real.” Similar support is found for the proposition that the government is lying when it says otherwise, and that in general Washington can’t be trusted to tell the truth about any provocative issue. Journalism fares no better, with a clear majority of the public perceiving it as a corrupt source of misinformation.

It is into this eager, fertile breeding ground that Moore and Berlitz planted *The Roswell Incident* 21 years ago, spawning one of the major conspiracy theories of our generation. Roswell is certainly the most intensely studied and debated UFO case of all time, but it long ago spread far beyond the narrow confines of ufology. No alleged conspiracy other than the JFK assassination is so instantly recognizable or has received more media attention.

The overwhelming sentiment among ufologists is that Roswell is the veritable Holy Grail. And as any mock-innocent inquiry at a cocktail party will reveal, the public at large takes it more or less for granted that yes, a spaceship crashed there, the government covered it up, there are

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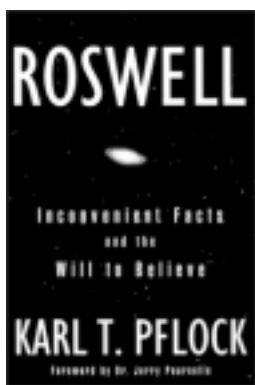
multitudes of witnesses, and most of them were sworn to silence or threatened in brutal fashion.

How much of this is true? Answering that question is the task Karl Pflock set for himself in 1992. The result of his labors is the book under consideration here: *Roswell: Inconvenient Facts and the Will to Believe*.

Pflock has an exceptional resumé: Marine Corps officer, CIA intelligence officer, congressional staffer, “think tank” scholar, Republican political worker, and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense. Lately he has devoted his professional time to free-lance writing. His UFO-related credentials are equally impressive, including membership in the Washington, D.C., NICAP chapter and work on such classics as the Betty and Barney Hill case. Pflock is a UFO “believer,” not a skeptic. Describing his qualifications for investigating Roswell, he cites “my professional training as an intelligence officer and my experience in the political trenches of Washington.” In sum, this would seem the ideal man to unravel Roswell.

Frank Kauffman died recently (see page 31), but not before establishing a long history of proclaiming his part in the crashed-saucer story. What he told investigators and television crews is much too complex to recount fully here. In very abbreviated form, he was part of a top-secret unit assigned to Roswell before the crash. The area was being visited by extraterrestrial probes, and Kauffman and his colleagues were monitoring the activity on radar, and thus were in place when one crashed. Almost to his dying day Kauffman regaled all and sundry with the seemingly endless details—in fact, so many details that any person reasonably disposed to apply common sense could have and should have dismissed him as delusional. But that did not happen. Kauffman became a central feature in the influential Randle and Schmitt books urging the extraterrestrial source of the Roswell incident. He provided exactly what television producers demanded—a man who was there when the military discovered the craft and its pilots, and a man ready to talk for the camera.

The late Jim Ragsdale claimed he and a female friend were in his pickup truck far from the city lights of Roswell, and far from the notice of their spouses, when the crash occurred within plain sight. Ragsdale told his story several



different times, taking care to notarize each version. Unfortunately, the versions conflict in major elements, so we are left wondering which is true. All that can be said for certain is that he impeached himself. Nor did he offer any other evidence, such as the name of his companion on that fateful night. But still he was featured in the pro-spacecraft scenarios as a credible witness to the crash.

Glenn Dennis has a story much less complicated than Kauffman's, but more involved than Ragsdale's. Dennis worked in a Roswell funeral home. In early July 1947, the airfield called to inquire about the availability of small coffins, such as would be used for children. They also inquired about embalming procedures. Dennis had a lady-friend on the Base, a nurse named Naomi Selff. She told him of an autopsy of two small, obviously ET bodies. The nurse was transferred soon thereafter, and lost touch with Dennis. After an extremely diligent search by Roswell investigators, it now seems certain that the nurse never existed. And there are other major problems with Dennis, as if the problem of the missing nurse were not enough.

These three "witnesses" are of great importance to the Roswell story. Their dramatic testimony was necessary for the books that followed *The Roswell Incident* as well as for the television treatments of Roswell that so captured the public imagination. Whether we would have had Randle and Schmitt without Kauffman, Ragsdale, and Dennis is arguable. But television without this trio would have been impossible. This is because Roswell without these superstars consists of fragments told by mainly ordinary people who happened to be caught in the flow of events. None of these minor deponents claims to have the "big picture," most are now dead, and their testimony lacks the on-screen impact required by television.

So the telling of the Roswell story minus this trio requires patience, and the audience must have the ability to approach it as a true mystery, adding and evaluating a great mass of data, much as one would in a court trial. This is far too abstract for what most publishers would accept as commercially viable, and vastly beyond what television producers will contemplate offering the public.

Pflock treats Kauffman, Ragsdale, and Dennis at length and fairly. Which is to say, he demolishes them. In the process, he quite correctly casts doubt on the probity of those who have raised their more than dubious stories to the status of unassailable evidence for a crashed spacecraft at Roswell.

Now we turn to what I will call Roswell without Kauffman, Ragsdale, and Dennis: the great mass of first- and second-hand testimony and documentation that fills the pro-spacecraft literature. Pflock has decided that, beyond reasonable doubt, the whole affair was caused by the descent on the Foster Ranch of a New York University Project Mogul balloon array.

In compressed form, here is the Mogul thesis. Mogul was so exotic in construction that Marcel and Blanchard concluded its debris was extraterrestrial. Blanchard, in a

paroxysm typical of his "loose cannon" personality, ordered a press release claiming his staff found an extraterrestrial device. Within hours, it was discovered that the debris was only the remains of a Mogul balloon. Because Mogul's security status was so sensitive, Ramey showed the press only several balloons and damaged radar targets, a portion of the recovered Mogul materials but said by Ramey to be a weather balloon. Then photos of simple non-Mogul multiple balloons with multiple targets were published to further hide the true source of the debris. The rest of the "spaceship" Roswell story consists of deliberate lies or badly jumbled memories exploited by unethical or incompetent writers and TV producers.

At least to this reviewer, the logical way to write a book about Roswell would be to address these elements in detail, beginning with a very careful comparison of the materials comprising the Mogul arrays with the testimony of witnesses who handled the "flying disk" materials. All Project Mogul records have been freely available for many years. These include exact engineering specifications, drawings and photographs sufficient to literally reconstruct every item in the array. Unfortunately, Pflock does not take this clear path. The path he does take can't be summarized without losing the flavor of his fundamental approach to Roswell testimony in general, or particularly to the critical issue of testimony about the debris. The following passage is long, but must be considered in its entirety if we are to grasp the essence of Pflock's analysis.

Those who saw and handled the debris discovered by Mack Brazel and have come forward publicly have provided generally consistent descriptions of a variety of materials. Others who have reported what they remember being told by first-hand witnesses offer similar memories. These include: dull-silver, foil-like material, something like aluminum or tinfoil (although some of these persons have claimed it would not tear and could not be permanently creased or wrinkled); small, brownish balsa-wood-like struts or beams, which, allegedly, a match or cigarette lighter flame would not burn, were flexible but too strong to break, and resisted being cut or grooved by pocket knives and fingernails; tough, brownish parchment-like paper; silk-like threads or fibers; strands of material resembling heavy-gauge monofilament fishing line; and peculiar designs done in pink and purple pastels and embossed on the beams or struts and/or imprinted on whitish tape.

Certain individuals have described items or characteristics not mentioned by others. Jesse Marcel remembers "a brittle, brownish-black plastic-like material, like Bakelite," and—alone among all who claim to have examined any of the debris—he recalls at least one of the struts he saw on his family's kitchen floor as having a cross section like an I-beam. Lewis Rickett is reported to have talked of handling a piece of very thin, very light sheet metal which "looked like metal," was about two

feet square and slightly curved, and which he could not bend, even with great effort. Sallye Tadolini described a piece of “fabric” Bill Brazel showed her, which was “about the thickness of very fine kidskin leather and a dull metallic grayish silver” in color. Jesse Marcel Sr. is reported to have said he thought CIC Captain Cavitt found “a black, metallic-looking box several inches square” on the debris field, and in his December 1979 interview with Bob Pratt, he cryptically mentioned “some material that’s hard to describe. I’d never seen anything like that and I still don’t know what it was.” In the same interview and another audiotaped in 1981, Marcel referred to some “porous material you could blow through,” that he and Cavitt found on the site. In other interviews, Marcel talked of one of his men doing something very unlikely. According to Marcel, this unnamed fellow—a military intelligence man—struck a large piece of the recovered material with a sledgehammer but could inflict no permanent damage.

At this point in the narrative Pflock goes on to describe at great length testimony of Walter Whitmore Jr. who claimed he visited the Foster ranch and found “many, many bits of “white, linen-like cloth with reflective tinfoil attached to one side,” some glued to balsa-wood sticks.

Clearly, Whitmore was describing materials of an earthly origin which very well could have been part of an NYU-Mogul flight array. With the exception of the large, strong piece or pieces of “metal” described by Rickett and Marcel Sr., and perhaps the “fabric” remembered by Tadolini, the same is true of the materials described by others.

Admittedly, *this requires discounting some of what the witnesses say they recall about certain properties of the debris*, something I was loath to do a few years ago. [Emphasis added.] Back then, while I had no doubt one of the NYU group’s flights was responsible for the great majority of what had been found on the Foster Ranch, I kept the door open to another possibility. Speculating that there might have been a midair collision or near miss of earthly and unearthly craft, I thought it possible, if unlikely, that the debris with remarkable properties could have been from a downed or damaged flying saucer.

Now, however, armed with much additional countervailing information and my will to believe in check, *I am certain it is entirely reasonable to disregard testimony about anomalous properties*. [Emphasis added.] We now know volumes about the activities of the NYU balloon-project team in New Mexico and the types of equipment and materials they used in their flights arrays, key elements of it absolutely unique. We also know that time, unconscious adoption of things heard from or suggested by others, and the subtle and not so subtle influences of celebrity can introduce

sometimes startling distortions into even relatively recent memories, especially on the part of those prone to exaggerate, innocently and otherwise.

The simple truth is that, as we shall see, the overwhelming majority of the evidence and testimony—even that of those witnesses who attribute “unearthly” qualities to the debris—points unequivocally to “all that junk all over out there” on the Foster Ranch as being something from an NYU-Mogul-service flight train. The tantalizing claims about super-strength and other unusual properties seem significant only when lifted out of the context of much more mundane memories, dazzling us with amazing possibilities.

It is obvious that, with the help of New Mexico’s seemingly inexhaustible winds, the NYU balloon, instrument, and radar-target Mogul service arrays were large enough to create a debris field of the size(s) described. These huge flight trains included hundreds of square feet of polyethylene and/or neoprene balloon envelopes, many square feet of radar-reflective material, several parchment parachutes, much hardened balsa strutting, and so on.

This is followed by a lengthy, convoluted essay about Pflock’s choice for the exact Mogul flight that was found by Brazel and led to all the madness. This is Flight 4, for which there is no record in the otherwise carefully kept project diaries. This minor difficulty doesn’t bother him, and in any event is irrelevant. For our purposes, any Mogul will do. Seen one Mogul, you’ve seen ’em all, whether airborne or scattered over the expanse of a sheep ranch.

Now Pflock details the components of the Mogul array:

When airborne, Flight 4 towered 657 feet from the lower ends of its ballast tubes to the top of its uppermost balloon, soaring 102 feet taller than the Washington Monument. Twenty-one standard-size (three feet in diameter before inflation) neoprene [rubber] meteorological sounding balloons were attached at 20-foot intervals along the flying line, and two, each about three times larger than the others, topped off the array. Spaced along the length of the flight train were the payload, a sonobuoy microphone; explosive cut-off squibs used to regulate the flight’s altitude; pressure switches; batteries; aluminum launching and assembly rings fabricated from tube stock by Moore’s team; four red or orange reinforced-parchment (on later flights silk) parachutes; and, grouped together one above the other roughly one-third of the way up the array, three oddly shaped corner-reflector targets not in general use in the continental United States.

After comparing most of these parts with fragments of the witness testimony, and concluding that a match exists, Pflock comes to the heart of the matter, the radar targets:

Most important, what of the struts or beams, the strange marking, and the foil-like debris that were the central focus of attention, the items and features most vividly remembered by those who actually saw and handled the debris from the Foster Ranch and gave rise to notions of a crashed flying saucer from another planet? The ML-307B/AP, “gable type” radar corner-reflectors used by the NYU research and development team were designed late in World War II for the U.S. Army Signal Corps. The radar-reflective material most generally used was aluminum foil laminated onto a sturdy white or brown paper, but on some batches of targets, a tough, aluminum coated paper was employed. Formed into right-angle triangles about three feet high, this material was glued onto balsa struts heavily coated with “something like Elmer’s Glue” to strengthen them. These assemblies were arranged in a pattern which gave the appearance of abutting roof gables and was designed to present a radar-reflecting geometry from any angle. . . the manufacturer began using adhesive tape to reinforce the structure of the targets, lapping it over the struts and securing it to both sides of the reflector sheeting. This was clear or milky and semi-opaque, about two inches wide. *It had pink and purple flower-like figures on it.* [Emphasis in original.]

“This requires discounting some of what the witnesses say they recall about certain properties of the debris.” And then, in case we missed it the first time, “I am certain it is entirely reasonable to disregard testimony about anomalous properties.”

A fair summary of Pflock’s method is as follows. (1) Some people claim Roswell is anomalous. I’m going to study those claims. (2) But in my analysis, I will ignore all anomalous properties described by witnesses. (3) When Filter 2 is applied, all testimony supports the Mogul theory.

This is really quite exceptional. But I must tip my hat to Pflock, who is honest about his operating theory of analysis, an honesty that his forebears in debunking, such as Kal Korff and Philip Klass, never were able to muster in their anti-Roswell fulminations.

This book is about one of the major historical and scientific anomalies of our time, but the author has chosen “to disregard testimony about anomalous properties.” What authentic branch of learning has not included the study of anomalies? What scholar in any field systematically disregards anomalies? Einstein’s theory of relativity arose from contemplation of anomalies in the observed qualities of light. And the anomalous “prime numbers” have absorbed the attention of mathematicians from Euclid onward.

Pflock is a willing throwback to another age when scientific method was in its infancy. He reminds me of the great chemist Lavoisier who was sent, much to his annoyance, by the French Academy to investigate persistent claims that hot stones had fallen from the sky. Lavoisier interviewed many witnesses to these alleged falls of alleg-

edly hot stones. But he knew perfectly well that there are no stones in the sky, and therefore the reported anomaly could not exist. Chemical analysis of the stones, to the extent he could accomplish it with his primitive tools, yielded some anomalies, but these Lavoisier disregarded.

The Frenchman’s report to the Academy, which satisfied all readers, concluded that “unlettered rustics” had seen lightning strike the ground, had gone to the spot, had felt the heated rocks, and in their muddled minds somehow confused the falling lightning with falling stones. In the words used by Pflock to describe the simple Roswell farmers and ranchers who reported anomalous properties of the debris, their French peasant antecedents suffered from “sometimes startling distortions into even relatively recent memories, especially on the part of those prone to exaggerate, innocently and otherwise.” Lavoisier and his Academy colleagues would have nodded sober assent to Pflock’s language. But within a generation, science accepted meteorites as an established fact.

In a word, Pflock’s intellectual method is “pathological science,” a pejorative routinely shot from the hip by the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal, the publisher of his book and of the Klass and Korff books.

The refusal to consider anomalous characteristics in the debris explains why throughout the book the witness testimony is compressed and paraphrased to the point of distortion. It also explains the terrific leaps of logic one finds throughout its pages.

Central to the Mogul theory is the concept that the arrays were top secret, and when Marcel and Blanchard discovered the true source of their “flying disk,” it became necessary to concoct an elaborate cover story to protect Mogul from enemy eyes. So sensitive and potentially dangerous was the situation that the cover-up had to be done by General Ramey.

There are cogent reasons why the Mogul explanation fails. First, the Mogul staff had no concern for the physical materials beyond engineering considerations. The balloons and appurtenances either worked, or they did not. Where they floated off to was *not* a matter of interest to the Mogul personnel. Pflock quotes project engineer C. B. Moore to that effect. And Pflock tells us, “Flight 8 was aloft about three hours before touching down approximately 20 miles west-northwest of the base, and project personnel last saw it from the air, dragging north across the desert. Nothing from this flight was recovered.” Only 20 miles away, but nobody cared enough to pick it up. The July 7 flight landed a mere 15 miles west of the Roswell Army Air Field, and was not recovered by the Mogul staff.

And if Moore’s testimony is not enough, one need only review the “Summary of Constant-Level Balloon Flights” produced by the Mogul staff and reproduced in the 1994 Air Force Roswell report and as an appendix in this book. The table lists the percentage of each “top secret” Mogul that was recovered. Out of 15 launches, *seven* show zero recov-

ery, and one resulted in 1% of the array recovered!

Even though these statistics are in his text and tabulated in an appendix, Pflock evades drawing the obvious conclusion, instead providing the reader with a dramatic story of one array that landed nearby, tracked by the project's airplane. Locals had come upon the debris, and the plane "buzzed" them, warning them off so that the Mogul staff could recover it. We are left with the impression that this was typical diligence in the protection of the super-sensitive arrays. (One might wonder why, if one is to credit Pflock's main thesis, the astounded locals did not rush out to the sheriff or the RAAF to announce the landing of a spaceship.)

The project's B-17 had very limited range, was used as a platform for a radio receiver to hear signals from the array's transmitter, and only tracked balloons when and as far as they could. The record plainly shows this tracking was neither often nor far.

Finally, several of the original Mogul staff are still alive and have been very free in sharing what they know with Pflock. For example, Professor C. B. Moore is quoted throughout the book. If the Mogul staff had anything beyond an economic concern for the arrays, Mogul staffers would not be shy about saying so for the record. But no such testimony appears. On the contrary, Moore told researcher Kevin Randle that the Mogul project issued routine "notices to airmen" to warn civilian and military pilots about the presence of the huge arrays.

So where did all those missing Moguls go? Was the top-secret Mogul project compromised? The arrays must have landed somewhere, and sooner or later produced "crashed spaceship" claims not only from the unlettered rustics like Brazel who stumbled across the remains, but also from the technically sophisticated civilian equivalents of Blanchard, Rickett, and Marcel. But the 100% loss of these Mogul arrays is simply listed, ho-hum, without hint of the panic that would have reigned, or the elaborate recovery procedures that would have been in place before launching the first Mogul, were Pflock's interpretation even marginally credible.

One must distinguish between the mission of Mogul, which *was* top secret, and the physical materials that comprised the Mogul arrays. These parts were entirely mundane, the bulk of them literally off-the-shelf items such as the balloons, twine, parachutes, and radar reflectors. The rest consisted of simple devices made from ordinary materials, such as the Bakelite sand and transparent plastic kerosene ballast containers, the altitude-sensing device, the microphone (black metal cylinder 2 feet 11 inches high, diameter 3 inches), a tiny transmitter (housed in a 3 × 5 × 8-inch sheet-metal box) and its battery. What's left? And what, in this entire conglomeration, would alarm and disorient observers who were professionally involved with military aviation technology?

The answer is that upon mature consideration, not a single element of the arrays would have had such an effect,

and in the form of a nearly intact Mogul, any sensible person would conclude that it was a collection of balloons, unexceptional but for its great length. Why this was launched, and by whom, would be only the topic of speculation. Inferring the project's true purpose from the assembled parts, much less the ripped, deflated, and battered fragments, would be an impossible task. And this of course is why Mogul staffers were indifferent to the final resting place of their arrays.

The best we get from Pflock about the Mogul materials is this: "We now know volumes about the activities of the NYU balloon-project team in New Mexico and the types of equipment and materials they used in their flight arrays, key elements of it absolutely unique." The reader will search in vain for an elaboration of his critically important claim of "absolutely unique" physical properties. Please, Mr. Pflock! Not only unique, but *absolutely* unique, then not a word of explanation, when all those volumes are in the open literature, thanks to the Air Force and the Government Printing Office.

Inexplicably, if the debris came from a downed Mogul array, there is no witness testimony about the *balloons*, which comprised at least 95% of the Mogul arrays if seen deflated, and visually overwhelmed the remaining parts when inflated.

So we are down to those radar reflectors or targets. We need to revisit what Pflock tells us about the targets. "One set of these other-than-ordinary radar targets was to play a central role in the Roswell mystery." Further, that the targets are "rare," and "other than ordinary," and "large" as he raises and then skips the topic, tantalizing the reader in chapters leading up to the most complete description he feels sufficient. This text was presented earlier, but needs to be repeated.

The ML-307B/AP, "gable type" radar corner-reflectors used by the NYU research and development team were designed late in World War II for the U.S. Army Signal Corps. The radar-reflective material most generally used was aluminum foil laminated onto a sturdy white or brown paper, but on some batches of targets, a tough, aluminum coated paper was employed. Formed into right-angle triangles about three feet high, this material was glued onto balsa struts heavily coated with "something like Elmer's Glue" to strengthen them. These assemblies were arranged in a pattern which gave the appearance of abutting roof gables and was designed to present a radar-reflecting geometry from any angle. . . the manufacturer began using adhesive tape to reinforce the structure of the targets, lapping it over the struts and securing it to both sides of the reflector sheeting. This was clear or milky and semi-opaque, about two inches wide. *It had pink and purple flower-like figures on it.* [Emphasis in original]

The targets may have been "rare" in most parts of the

world, but not in southern New Mexico, where they were regularly launched beginning 72 hours prior to every V-2 test. For example, the June 30, 1947, V-2 test required target launchings on June 27, 28, 29, and 30. One day after the Ramey press conference, multiple targets were flown as a demonstration for reporters at Alamogordo. Two days after the conference multiple targets were shown to the press at Fort Worth Army Air Field, Ramey's headquarters.

Let me add a few simple facts about these radar targets. I must do so because Pflock, who is probably the best writer of clear expository prose in the field of ufology, can't bring himself to set on paper a relevant description of the targets.

Photographs of the target have been published in nearly every book or article about Roswell, and several appear in the appendix to the Pflock book. Most photos are shown with a human holding one or working nearby, so that the relative size is immediately obvious. The (probably deliberately) vague "large" is in fact about three feet high, wide and deep.

The targets are essentially box kites, with quarter-inch cross-section balsa-wood structural members. Glued to the balsa sticks is the paper-foil laminate, foil on one side and very easily distinguishable paper on the other. A laminate is required because the foil is so thin and easily torn. The paper backing is also fairly thin, because keeping the target's weight at a minimum is a key design factor. Some targets used cellophane adhesive tape to reinforce the interface between the sticks and the paper-foil laminate. The sticks were dipped in a type of Elmer's glue for waterproofing. The total weight of the target is only three and one-half ounces! The shape is difficult to describe, so a photograph should be consulted. The geometry is the same as that in an automobile brake-light reflector, presenting a pyramidal "face" to the incoming radar waves rather than the less efficient simple flat surface.

The total surface area of the target is 27 square feet. The three targets Pflock says caused all the confusion would present a maximum of 81 square feet, or a square nine feet by nine feet, in case you want to lay this out on your kitchen floor. But in practice, that total amount of surface can't be exposed from a damaged target. Even if it were to be deliberately crushed flat, the basic design is such that considerable overlapping would occur.

For an example of two or possibly three targets that have deliberately been flattened, see the Bond Johnson photographs taken in General Ramey's office. Those are the photographs that illustrate so much of the Roswell literature. Three of these photographs are in the appendix to Pflock's book.

Far more than any written discussion, these photographs give the lie to the Mogul theory. For example, Irving Newton, the staff meteorologist brought in by Ramey to identify the debris for reporters, claims Major Marcel tried to convince him that markings on the balsa sticks were alien writing. The pictures were taken with Johnson's Speed Graphic, a camera still admired for its exceptional depth of

field and clear focus. He focused on the debris, and the resulting prints can be magnified with so little distortion that the grain on the balsa is easily seen. But there are no such markings on the sticks in the photos. They exist only in Newton's imagination.

Nor do we find the cellophane tape with "pink and purple flower-like figures on it" that Pflock so confidently concludes is proof that the debris was from a Mogul array. Indeed, there is no tape of any sort to be seen on these targets. Incredibly, Pflock maintains that this is the debris found by Brazel, brought to Blanchard, and then flown to Ramey, where in short order it was photographed by Bond Johnson. (And he fails to mention the affidavit of Brig. Gen. Thomas DuBose, Ramey's Chief of Staff. DuBose states: "The material shown in the photographs taken in Major General Ramey's office was a weather balloon. The weather balloon explanation for the material was a cover story to divert the attention of the press.")

Stated simply, these photographs allow us to bypass the great mass of confusing verbiage and convoluted logic that characterizes the Pflock thesis. Just look at the photos of those radar targets. Even in their unnaturally crushed-flat condition, how can any rational observer conclude that they are extraterrestrial artifacts? Especially in their prior condition, perhaps torn a bit and with several sticks broken, the targets would seem to all but the truly clinically delusional to be box kites made of standard balsa sticks framing paper backed with cigarette-package foil.

And look at the paper-foil laminate. Note how clearly demarcated the two sides appear, one obviously metallic and the other obviously white paper. And note how wrinkled the laminate is, and how it is ripped, and how many large pieces there are, still glued to the balsa structural members. And see how the material needs to be propped up, and then falls in folds, not quite as flexibly as a similarly shaped piece of cloth would, but nearly so. Look, look, look, Mr. Pflock!

That the material reported by the witnesses is no more than the remains of these radar targets is a "testable hypothesis." The logical and, yes, "scientific" way to settle this is to compare the witness testimony with what we know with such precision about the targets. There is nothing that can be done to move Pflock toward logic or science, because he remains adamant that all "anomalous" testimony is to be disregarded a priori. But for the sake of making this discussion complete, a few examples of this testimony are in order.

Pflock on Rickett: "Rickett said he remembered seeing only some of the foil-like debris and asserted that it possessed unusual lightness and strength." That is all the reader learns about M/Sgt. Lewis Rickett's description of what he saw and handled with great care and interest, and of Rickett's pertinent qualifications to comment on what he saw. Another important point obscured in the text is that Rickett was taken to a debris field by Capt. Sheridan Cavitt, the commanding officer of the Counter Intelligence Corps detach-

ment at Roswell. Rickett was the senior noncommissioned officer in the unit. Armed guards ringed the debris field. Here is what Rickett told Mark Rodeghier, per the transcript cited by Pflock but selectively summarized to the point of obscuring the testimony:

“I said, for God’s sake! I said, the best that I could recall, I said, what in the hell is that stuff made out of, I says, it can’t be plastic. I said, don’t feel like plastic. But I said, it just flat feels like metal, but I said, I never saw a piece of metal that thin, that you can’t bend!”

Compare this with Pflock’s version, and wonder why Pflock failed to add that Rickett was an aircraft mechanic bearing the highest military qualifications, including inspection of work done by all other aircraft specialists. He was held in such high esteem as an expert in military aircraft that, immediately after the end of the war in Europe, Army Intelligence sent him to Germany as part of the team tasked with studying German aviation technology.

In July 1947, Jesse Marcel Jr. and his mother were awakened by his father, Maj. Jesse Marcel, who had just returned from the Foster ranch. The Major was excited, and proceeded to show his wife and son a collection of the material he had gathered at the ranch. Marcel had a cardboard box filled with material which he placed on the kitchen floor. Mrs. Marcel joined the inspection of the material, with the trio trying to fit pieces of it together as one would fit pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, but with no success. In the process, Jesse Junior got a good look at the material and handled representative pieces of the three types that were present. After about 20 minutes, Marcel replaced the pieces in the box, and with Jesse Junior following him out the door, went back to his car and drove away. Junior went back to bed, and gave the incident little thought until many years later.

Over the years, Jesse Marcel Jr. has spoken in many forums about what he saw on that fateful night, and his account has remained remarkably stable. His affidavit executed in May 1991 is included as an appendix in this book. But like his other written descriptions, it is highly compressed and leaves many questions unanswered.

In January 1997, Kent Jeffrey arranged an interrogation of Marcel by Neil Hibler, a specialist in memory enhancement who was recommended by the FBI. Hibler’s credentials are impressive, and include extensive work for law enforcement and federal intelligence agencies. Because of the extremely sensitive nature of much of his work, he holds a top-secret security clearance.

The interrogation focused on the events that took place in the Marcel kitchen. Various means of memory retrieval were used, including hypnosis. An artist was present to record in visual form what Marcel recalled. The memory enhancement comprised three sessions, each lasting a little more than two hours, and each session was videotaped. Then the sessions were transcribed. The goal was to obtain the most detailed account of the debris that could possibly be evoked.

Pflock could have and should have used this definitive source of Marcel’s testimony about the nature of the material he handled on the kitchen floor that night. Instead, he selects and paraphrases few words from the already compressed 1991 affidavit. Suffice it to say that the information about the kitchen floor debris revealed by Hibler’s assiduous interrogation contradicts all attempts to square it with Mogul elements.

But ignoring the detailed testimony allows Pflock to triumphantly conclude, “The brittle, brownish-black Bakelite-like material remembered by Dr. Marcel from his boyhood likely was just that, Bakelite, pieces of the sand-ballast tubes that dangled at the bottom of Flight 4.” In the detailed interrogation, Marcel gives sufficient data to persuade one that it is very unlikely that the brown-black material was Bakelite, or that it was part of a sand-ballast tube. The sand tubes were called tubes because their shape is tubular. Even if shattered, such a shape will not produce the flat pieces the witness likened to “a shattered 78 RPM phonograph record.” There were no curved pieces. Moreover, Marcel had worked with Bakelite, sawing and drilling it while building shortwave radio equipment under his father’s tutelage, and recalls the feel and smell of it. He has repeatedly stated that, although the debris looked like Bakelite (meaning that was the closest comparison he could evoke), it was *not* Bakelite.

Rickett and Marcel Jr. are first-hand witnesses. Both examined debris with care and under good conditions. There are many second-hand witnesses who testify to strange characteristics of material relayed to them in conversation by first-hand witnesses. The highest ranking first-hand witness was Col. William Blanchard, commanding officer of the Roswell base and bomber unit. He spoke very rarely about Roswell, and then with extreme care.

Colonel Blanchard. In July 1947 the 509th bomb Group was the world’s only atomic-bomb delivery unit. This was the unit that had dropped the bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. War with the Soviet Union was a distinct possibility, and the 509th was America’s primary weapon.

Consequently, the aircrews and senior officer staffing were handpicked. The commanding officer of this unit was Col. William Blanchard, upon whose competence as a leader and decision maker rested the ability to effectively use the 509th in what would almost certainly be an “all or nothing” strike, whether preemptive or defensive.

All parties to the Roswell controversy agree that Blanchard ordered the press release announcing that a “flying disk” had been recovered by Major Marcel. Why did he do something so foolhardy? The story went on the press wires and was printed throughout the country, and elicited calls from newsrooms in major cities around the world.

Those who believe the “disk” was extraterrestrial speculate that the press release was pre-planned to set up a straw man to be torn apart by Ramey. In other words, the Ramey “Sorry, boys, it was only a weather balloon” made no sense

without the previous Blanchard announcement. And the entire two-step cover-up was necessary because the military feared that a multitude of civilians had knowledge of the ET crash. If they had only fragmentary knowledge of the true nature of the debris, and the local press could be diverted, the cover-up had a fair chance of success. As it turned out, it was spectacularly successful.

The Mogulists urge an entirely different interpretation. To them, two marginal personalities combined their ineptitude and idiosyncratic psychologies to produce the press release. Namely, Maj. Marcel, a man given to habitual exaggeration and so ignorant of technical matters that he immediately concluded the Mogul debris was extraterrestrial. Blanchard was equally ignorant of technical matters, and when he heard the wildly exaggerated story about the nature and extent of the debris from Marcel, he blindly accepted it along with the Major's guess about the origin of the material.

So he rushed to trumpet the triumph of the men under his command. The elusive flying disk had been found—by Col. Blanchard's men. The newspapers would feature Blanchard, and spell his name correctly. The self-aggrandizing, publicity-seeking part of his strange personality kicked in, and the press release was issued. Blanchard had another personality trait routinely invoked by the Mogulists. They persist in calling him “a loose cannon,” meaning a person characteristically impulsive, making decisions or taking actions without forethought or concern for the consequences. The demonizing of Blanchard is necessary in order to support the Mogul theory.

Here is Pflock on Blanchard: “This tendency to let eagerness overpower prudence created a few detractors among his military colleagues, got him into scrapes and tight spots, some of them potential career stoppers, earned him his nickname, ‘Butch,’ and, according to a general officer who knew him very well, a reputation as a ‘loose cannon.’” This is quite a sweeping denunciation. Like the “absolutely unique” physical properties of the Mogul arrays claimed by Pflock and then never mentioned, much less given the thorough explanation such hyperbole demands, all these really serious character defects are not documented. All the reader gets by way of elaboration is the following footnote: “For example, a retired Air Force general officer who prefers to remain anonymous and who knew Blanchard well, both in 1947 and the years following, still thinks of him as a ‘loose cannon’ and remembers kidding Blanchard about the 1947 incident when both were serving in very senior positions in the Pentagon in the early 1960s.”

All this from a single anonymous source? What would we think of a journalist or historian who tried to palm off something like this?

This will probably suffice for those whose ideas about military officers and promotion policies derive from Hollywood treatments like *Doctor Strangelove*. But in the real world, a man with the character ascribed to Blanchard by

Pflock would be cashiered long before he got within a thousand miles of an outfit like the 509th. In addition to his command of the 509th, Blanchard's career was meteoric. He became Air Force vice chief of staff, meaning he would automatically assume the position of chief of staff and a seat on the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and may ultimately have become the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the top military post in the American defense system. Unfortunately, he dropped dead of a heart attack in his Pentagon office. Blanchard as a loose cannon is an insult to the U.S. Air Force and an affront to common sense.

In the years after the Roswell event, Blanchard talked to at least three people, but apparently in extremely guarded words. Pflock: “Arthur R. McQuiddy and the late Major General Woodrow P. Swancutt, both good friends of Blanchard, told me Blanchard had confided to them he was sure his men had retrieved something very unusual and significant. McQuiddy, editor of the *Roswell Morning Dispatch* in July 1947, said that, three or four months after the event, ‘reluctantly admitting he had authorized the press release,’ Blanchard told him, ‘The stuff I saw, I’ve never seen anyplace else in my life.’ Swancutt, who was assistant Roswell AAF operations officer in July 1947 and flew combat missions with Blanchard in World War II, said Blanchard ‘was convinced he had something very important *at first* (emphasis added).’ Similarly, Blanchard's first wife, Ethel Simms, told Roswell researcher William Moore her husband first ‘thought it might be Russian because of the strange symbols on it. Later on, he realized it wasn't Russian, either.’”

Why did Blanchard not come right out and tell these very close friends that the “disk” turned out to be just a fancy balloon array? “Boy, was I embarrassed!” How simple that would be. Even in the intimacy of his marriage, Blanchard could go no further than to say that at first he thought it was Russian, but then found it wasn't Russian. So what was it? Typically, Pflock fails to ask this question, and in a wild leap concludes that these statements support the Mogul theory.

Major Marcel. Marcel presents a similar problem to the Mogulists, and their response is to demonize him, as well. Unlike Blanchard, Marcel does give skeptics a clear target. In a 1979 interview with journalist Bob Pratt, Marcel made statements about his combat record, flying experience and educational credentials that plainly were gross exaggerations. This quite properly raises questions about his testimony, particularly with respect to the size of the debris field on the Foster Ranch. Is his “three-quarters of a mile long” like his “8,000 hours of flight time” or his “five air medals” when in fact he was awarded three?

But if Marcel was so inept and so given to exaggeration that he misinterpreted the parts of a Mogul array as “something not of this Earth,” triggering a chain of events causing huge embarrassment to the Army Air Force, why was he not relieved of duty at once? Again we have the problem of the extremely sensitive mission of the 509th. Marcel was its

senior intelligence officer. Common sense tells us that if Blanchard didn't toss him out, Ramey or even someone in Washington would have done so. This was a period of demobilization, and many officers who wanted to remain on active duty were forced into civilian life. But Marcel continued in his position at Roswell for another seven months. Then he was transferred to an even more sensitive position in Washington, where he was part of the intelligence group searching for evidence of the first Soviet atomic bomb detonation. Like Blanchard, something is wrong with Marcel's career path, if the Mogul theory is correct.

Pflock ignores the anomaly of Marcel's post-"flying disk" career, and moves from the Pratt interview to Marcel's efficiency reports. Rather, he singles out one statement from one efficiency report: "... according to his efficiency report (performance review) for the period July 1, 1947, to April 30, 1948—during which time the Roswell affair unfolded—his 'only known weakness' was noted as 'an inclination to magnify problems he is confronted with.'" This is footnoted with a reference to Korff. Pflock could have used the good services of researcher David Rudiak, who posted Marcel's entire military record, including all of his efficiency reports, on a Web site (www.primenet.com/~bdzeiler/roswell/marcel.htm). A careful review of these evaluations of Marcel before and after the Roswell "fiasco" is instructive, and serves to paint a picture of the Major in direct opposition to what Pflock and Korff seek to convey.

In sum, in the formal evaluations by a series of supervisors Marcel emerges as a "workaholic," extremely competent technically, and highly respected by his colleagues and those he supervises. The fragment quoted out of context by Pflock is obviously a reference to Marcel's intense focus on problems large or small. The only trait on which his supervisors always gave him poor marks is his "assertiveness." That is, they found him too quiet and unassuming for his status as an officer. Little wonder that Pflock does not dwell on the real performance review record of Major Marcel.

Among the papers in Marcel's jacket is a letter from General Ramey to headquarters occasioned by the orders transferring Marcel from Roswell to Washington. This is a bitter complaint, asking that the transfer be cancelled because Marcel is such a fine intelligence officer that he "can't be replaced." Now, if the Mogul theory is correct, Ramey would have broken out the champagne on hearing the happy news that this dope who was at the heart of the terrible embarrassment suffered by the Air Force was at last on his way out of the Eighth Air Force command. Again, something is deadly wrong with the Mogul interpretation. Those who supervised Marcel, up to and including Gen. Ramey, held him in very high esteem.

Counter Intelligence Corps. The Counter Intelligence Corps prominently figures in the Roswell story, and Pflock made great efforts to contact CIC personnel to find if they had anything to add. He quotes a letter to him from retired

CIC member Charles Shaw recounting what he was told in 1950 by his commander, Maj. Ernest Powell, who had been stationed at Roswell in July 1947. Powell told Shaw that alien bodies had been recovered. Moreover, Powell's tenure at the Air Force Office of Special Investigations where Shaw served was remarkably short, and the district commander said, "Powell was involved in a sensitive matter at his previous duty assignment which necessitated his reassignment out of OSI." Shaw goes on to speculate that Powell was kicked out of OSI because of his "loose talk" about Roswell.

Here is Pflock's conclusion on the importance of this extremely provocative story: "Obviously, Shaw's recollections are fragmentary and subject to a variety of interpretations, only one of which and the least likely being some connection with the alleged Roswell cover-up."

This is maddening, but typical. Shaw's credibility is unquestioned. He was in the right place at the right time to meet Powell and to hear Powell's remarks. He wrote a coherent letter outlining the facts. How does this become "fragmentary" and "subject to a variety of interpretations"? And concatenating these wild leaps, what possible basis exists for the conclusion that the least likely interpretation is precisely what Powell told Shaw? Apparently this is another instance where Pflock's Rule applies: Shaw's testimony contradicts the Mogul theory and has a strong odor of the "anomalous," thus it is not just permitted but actually required that we ignore the testimony and replace it with whatever "variety of interpretations" suit us. The only restriction on our flight of fancy being that the "interpretation" be Mogul-friendly.

Clair Miller was a friend of Roswell CIC operative Lewis Rickett, who said Miller was stationed at CIC headquarters in Washington in July 1947, and had knowledge of the Roswell affair. Rickett further states that he met Miller again in 1980 and asked him what became of the material recovered at Roswell. According to Rickett, Miller replied, "Let's just say you didn't ask me. . . . I'll forget you asked me about that."

Pflock telephoned Miller, asking him about Rickett's recollection of their stunted conversation. (Rickett was now deceased.) Pflock reports that when this came up, Miller "merely chuckled and changed the topic." On the Roswell event Miller was evasive, claiming loss of memory of events so long ago. But in a follow-up letter Miller said a word or two more: "I have no recollection relating to the 1947 Roswell/Corona case. I was stationed in Washington, D.C., at the time. I may have approved investigative expenditures relating to that case; but, that is 46 years of water under the bridge and my mind is a blank. Sorry!!!!!"

What "investigative expenditures" would CIC headquarters have incurred for the cleanup of the remains of a Mogul array? Miller, like others still alive today who know the answer to that question, will go to his grave with the secret.

And here is Pflock's conclusion about the Rickett-

Miller testimony: “At the time, I was inclined to interpret Miller’s words and unwillingness to discuss his alleged conversation with Rickett as polite attempts to avoid spilling the beans. In retrospect, it seems much more reasonable that the latter actually was a matter of avoiding speaking ill of a recently deceased former colleague, and that the former mean what they say and nothing more.”

Sheridan Cavitt commanded the CIC unit at Roswell, accompanied Marcel to the Foster ranch, and then took his subordinate Rickett to this or possibly another debris field. Consequently, he is a central figure in the Roswell story. Researchers easily found him in retirement, but Cavitt lied, saying he knew nothing about Roswell and had never been stationed at Roswell.

During the 1994 Air Force investigation of the Roswell Incident, Col. Richard Weaver visited Cavitt and took his deposition. Weaver was armed with a letter addressed to Cavitt by the Secretary of the Air Force. It relieved Cavitt of any security restrictions concerning Roswell, and allowed him to speak freely to Weaver (but to no other person). The resulting affidavit appears in the Air Force report, but is not in the Pflock appendix. In the text of this book Cavitt appears only in passing, with no word about what he said he found at Roswell when he visited the site with Marcel. By now this reviewer has seen enough of Pflock’s method to say with some degree of assurance that the glaring omission of Cavitt’s testimony can be explained by the simple fact that it is so damning to the Mogul theory.

This is because, even under these august circumstances, Cavitt told a preposterous “go to hell” story. He said that in the company of Marcel and Brazel he had found a single weather balloon and a single radar target, the whole taking up an area of perhaps 20 feet in diameter. This account is so at odds with all other testimony and, of the greatest importance to Pflock, so dissonant with the Mogul theory, that he chose not just to gloss it, but to remove it from the eyes of his innocent readers.

A plausible interpretation of Cavitt’s bizarre behavior is that he knew there was a crashed spacecraft and bodies, and thus that anyone, regardless of rank or ambassadorship from high office, who asked such irrelevant questions did not deserve to be told the truth. Whoever reigns as steward of the debris and bodies can release these to the public, and it won’t be on Sheridan Cavitt’s conscience if the story leaks out prematurely. Moreover, as a career CIC man, Cavitt would have understood that the seemingly innocent inquiry was part of a public-relations cover and deception, just another chapter in the deception he had helped engineer so long ago.

William Woody. Like their French counterparts, William Woody and his father were salt-of-the-earth farmers near Roswell. They saw a very bright object arc across the sky for what seemed like 20 to 30 seconds, moving northward and apparently falling to the ground. Several days later, in true unlettered rustic fashion, they decided to look for the object.

From Woody’s affidavit: “We headed north through Roswell on U.S. 285. About 19 miles north of town, where the highway crosses the Macho Draw, we saw at least one uniformed soldier stationed beside the road. As we drove along, we saw more sentries and Army vehicles. They were stationed at all places—ranch roads, crossroads, etc.—where there was access to leave the highway and drive east or west, and they were armed, some with rifles, others with sidearms. We stopped at one sentry post, and my father asked a soldier what was going on. The soldier, whose attitude was very nice, just said his orders were not to let anyone leave 285 and go into the countryside. As we drove north, we saw that the Corona road (State 247), which runs west from Highway 285, was blocked by soldiers. We went on as far as Ramon, about nine miles north of the 247 intersection. There were sentries there, too.”

Instead of quoting the entire affidavit testimony, Pflock tells the Woody story in bits and pieces, here and there in the text. This is a ploy he uses throughout the book. When his last reference is made, he combines it with a dismissal of this extremely embarrassing testimony. If we are to credit the Woody testimony, a military maneuver of massive proportions was underway north of Roswell. In a footnote Pflock admits, “Newspapers from the period and official records contain no reports of either civilian or military aircraft accidents in the area during the period in question.” He hasn’t the nerve to suggest that the military was blocking civilian access to a downed Mogul array, but his response to the Woody testimony is equally absurd.

Pflock: “However, if the military had wanted to keep the incident quiet, sentries would not have been posted in full view of passersby on a relatively busy U.S. highway.” And, “If Woody . . . are relatively accurate in their recollections, then it seems more probable the soldiers were involved in something not involving security concerns, perhaps a training exercise.” This speculation flies in the face of the Woody testimony and common sense.

Sleppy and Proctor. Lydia Sleppy was a teletype operator at KOAT in Albuquerque. In early July 1947 she received a call from John McBoyle, general manager of KSWB in Roswell. McBoyle said a flying saucer had crashed north of Roswell, that he had interviewed Brazel, who said he had towed it in and stored it on his property, and that the object resembled a “big crumpled dishpan.”

Sleppy’s affidavit continues: “As I typed McBoyle’s story, a bell rang on the teletype, indicating an interruption. The machine then printed a message something to this effect: ‘This is the FBI. You will immediately cease all communication.’ Whatever the precise words were, I definitely remember the message was from the FBI and that it directed me to stop transmitting. I told McBoyle the teletype had been cut off and took the rest of his story in shorthand, but we never put it on the wire because we had been scooped by the papers. I never again discussed the matter with McBoyle, but the next day he told Mr. Lambertz the military had isolated the area where he saucer was found

and was keeping the press out. He told Lambertz he saw planes come in from Wright Field, Ohio, to take the thing away. He also said they claimed they were going to take it to one place, but the planes went to another.”

Pflock devotes considerable space to the Sleppy story. Incredibly, he dismisses it as physically impossible. This is accomplished by first claiming that Sleppy said she was transmitting the McBoyle story when her transmission, in mid-keystroke, was interrupted by the FBI command. Then he correctly points out that the 1947 teletype machines could not simultaneously send and receive. Ergo, physically impossible, and we Mogulists can breathe a lot easier.

The trouble with all this is that Sleppy never said her transmission was interrupted by the FBI message. She says very plainly that it was interrupted by a bell: “A bell rang on the teletype, indicating an interruption.” These bells were standard equipment, and alerted the operator to stop transmitting, and to manually switch to the “receive” mode. All operators used this procedure, whose main function was to allow other stations to interrupt to ask questions or make corrections to a story as it was being sent. In sum, exactly what her affidavit says, and what she has told other investigators. Incredibly, Pflock acknowledges the bell and its purpose and standard use in an earlier passage about Sleppy and teletypes. But this doesn’t prevent him from concluding, “While what Sleppy alleged to have happened could quite easily be done today, it would have been impossible in July 1947.” Incredible.

Another example of Pflock’s tortuous treatment of testimony occurs in a footnote commenting on Loretta Proctor, a neighbor of Brazel. “It is worth noting that, while in many interviews, including one with me, Loretta Proctor has claimed that when Mack Brazel showed a ‘sliver of wood looking stuff’ to her and her husband Floyd, Brazel and Floyd Proctor tried and failed to cut and burn the material. Yet in the April 20, 1989, interview with Kevin Randle cited above she explicitly denied this. Randle asked, ‘When he brought it up did you attempt to cut it or anything?’ Proctor replied, ‘No, we didn’t. He did. . . .’ From context, the ‘He did’ reference suggests that Proctor’s meaning was that Brazel *told* them he had tried to burn the ‘sliver.’” (Emphasis Pflock’s.) I ask the reader to consider this passage with the greatest care, and then to form an opinion about the credibility and state of mind of the man who wrote it.

Pflock arithmetic. After dismissing the truthfulness or relevance of the testimony of scores of witnesses cited in the Roswell literature, and winnowing the field down to seven, Pflock exults, “Funny what a little careful arithmetic can reveal.”

A “little arithmetic” seems as far as Pflock can get with technology. He exhibits a profound antipathy toward rigorous engineering analysis that has been applied to testimony about the debris.

Pflock: “The parallels between the descriptions of the markings/tape with markings on the debris found by Mack

Brazel and collected by Marcel and those on the novelty/toy tape used to reinforce the radar targets flown by the NYU balloon-project are impossible to dismiss. To my mind, they are virtually conclusive.” This is a critical issue, but the reader will search in vain for elaboration, and must be content with Pflock’s unsupported conclusion.

These hypothesized “parallels” can be analyzed. For example, I published a study demonstrating that the C. B. Moore “flowered tape” could not account for the “hieroglyphics” reported by the witnesses (*IUR*, Summer 1998, pp. 7–9, 32). The analysis was based on the geometry of the tape and of the radar target structural members. This study was available to Pflock. But he can abuse the topic and his readers secure in the knowledge that very few who might read this book will ever see that analysis.

Robert Galganski is a professional engineer specializing in testing structural and other physical properties of materials. In extensive laboratory work, Galganski tested the various anomalous qualities of the “sticks” reported by witnesses (*IUR*, Winter 1997, pp. 3–7). These included the claims that the sticks could not be burned, could not be broken, and could not be cut with a knife. Balsa sticks exactly like those forming the radar target kite skeletons were used. First, the properties of bare balsa sticks were tested. Then Galganski coated them with increasingly thick layers of Elmer’s glue. He even coated them with special aviation-grade casein glues. Then he tested all of these with the same professional care that any laboratory would use. Even the most heavily glued sticks broke easily, cut easily, and ignited easily. In this way Pflock’s Mogul radar target hypothesis was tested—and found to fail.

Galganski has also studied related issues such as how much debris a Mogul array could deposit. Then he relates it to the various reports of the extent of the debris field (*IUR*, Summer 1998, pp. 3–6, 32). Like Galganski’s other work, this is not a literary exercise. Rather, it is an engineering study. Needless to say, this rigorous analysis demolishes the plausibility of the Mogul theory.

These engineering studies were available to Pflock, but the sum of his rejoinder is to dismiss Galganski as “garbage in, garbage out.” Presumably, the garbage is the offensive “anomalous” testimony of all those witnesses.

GAO. Pflock gives a thorough recounting of other Roswell claims that have not been given much attention by specialists, but that have formed a significant part of the public’s perceptions. Philip Corso’s *The Day after Roswell* sold very well, and Corso was featured on television “documentaries” and as a speaker at many UFO conferences. Ray Santilli’s “alien autopsy” film caused a sensation, was exploited in a series of Fox Network television shows, and for a while was the bestselling home video in the United States. Tim Cooper’s seemingly endless source of MJ-12 documents failed to get air time, but continue to fascinate many ufologists. All of this bunk is efficiently explained and disposed of by Pflock.

A long chapter is devoted to the story of Congressman

Steven Schiff and the General Accounting Office investigation of the Roswell paper trail. Pflock's wife was a senior member of Schiff's staff, a powerful connection that led to Schiff's interest and ultimately to the GAO study.

All ufologists should read this chapter with care. Especially today, when there is another resurgence of talk about Congressional investigation of the UFO issue, it is instructive to understand how very difficult it is for a congressman to put his reputation on the line and to open himself to ridicule from the press and colleagues by even the most marginally positive stance regarding UFOs.

The GAO investigators were initially given *carte blanche*, but soon found themselves badgered by supervisors claiming they were running over budget and pressuring them to wrap up the inquiry. Pflock: "Highly reliable confidential sources have advised me that one day investigators Weeter and Kriethe were told they were out of funding for the investigative phase of their work, and it was time to write their report. Neither man was happy with this. Kriethe in particular believed a good deal more needed to be done, but the bureaucratic-political handwriting was on the wall: Give the congressman his damn' report, make it good enough to cover his and our butts, and move on."

It is not clear if this pressure was caused by fear that something ominous would be found. It is just as likely that the topic alone was found so embarrassing by the top levels of the bureaucracy that they wanted to dispose of it quickly. By this time, public interest in Roswell was huge. That is nearly always sufficient to generate investigations, some of them quite elaborate. But the public demand for answers about Roswell was more than balanced by the fear of ridicule that pervades the subject of UFOs.

GAO investigators were unable to find the critically important collection of outgoing messages from Roswell Army Air Field. Further inquiry revealed the messages had been destroyed, apparently in violation of federal record-keeping regulations. Pflock manages to gloss this as "a bureaucratic oversight."

A dangerous book. This is almost certainly the last book on Roswell. After being shopped to mainstream publishers with no success, it was finally accepted by Prometheus Books, the quasi-vanity publishing arm of the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal. CSICOP is a large, well-funded organization devoted to attacking topics such as parapsychology and UFOs, among their very long list of targets. Some of their activities are silly, like the way they continuously beleaguer newspapers that carry astrology columns, and like their perennial attempts to force local law enforcement officials to arrest "Madame Zola" tarot-card readers.

CSICOP has a staff of full-time employees. Its membership exceeds 29,000; MUFON, by far the largest UFO organization, has a membership of about 2,900. CSICOP's main thrust is the vigorous behind-the-scenes lobbying of journalists and scientists. This is why the Pflock book will be received by the Establishment as the "final word" on

Roswell, and why even if it sells no more than a dozen copies, Pflock's *Roswell* will be very influential.

This is a dangerous book because it will overwhelm the reader who is not well-versed in the complexities of the Roswell story. Whether an alien spacecraft and its crew crashed in New Mexico in 1947 is no small matter, weighed in any scale. That it was just a Mogul array misapprehended is really out of the question. Ironically, Pflock's book serves as proof that the Mogul explanation is impossible. But what is the truth about the Roswell event? Scholarship on that question has already been relegated to a small intellectual ghetto within the larger ghetto of ufology. Thanks to this book and its sponsors, Roswell will be submerged even deeper, and the awesome secret will never be addressed by the Congress or any other relevant institution. ♦