

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

1-21

TO : The Director

FROM : Mr. D. M. Ladd

SUBJECT: FLYING DISCS

DATE: August 14, 1947

In connection with your request to be advised as to the facts concerning newspaper reports of flying discs in the Portland area and the reported conference of army officials in Portland concerning flying discs, the Portland Office has advised that Leavitt G. Richards, aviation editor of the "Oregonian," has stated that Captain William L. Davidson and Lieutenant Frank E. Brown of the Fourth AAF Headquarters, San Francisco, were in Portland on July 27, 1947. While in Portland they interviewed Dick Rankin, an experienced pilot, who had reported that he observed, on June 14, a formation of ten flying discs over Bakersfield, California. Richards added that Davidson and Brown had also interviewed the following four experienced pilots who were among the first to report seeing discs, Kenneth Arnold, businessman from Boise, Idaho; Captain E. J. Smith, a co-pilot; Ralph Stevens, United Airlines and Dave Johnson, aviation editor, Idaho "Statesman." In order to determine the purpose of these interviews Richards contacted Major General Twining of Wright Field, Ohio, and from him gained the impression that the AAF instituted this investigation to wash out the disc reports since they are definitely not of AAF origin.

On Friday, August 1, the plane in which AAF investigators, Captain Davidson and Lieutenant Brown, were flying, crashed at Kelso, Washington and both were killed. The wreckage was screened by AAF Intelligence from McChord Field. The "Tacoma News Tribune" and through them the United Press put out a story that the plane was carrying parts of a disc which had struck a boat owned by Harold Dahl and Fred Chrisman. It has also been inferred that this plane was sabotaged to prevent these disc parts from being examined.

STATUS

Investigation by the Bureau has reflected that this plane was definitely not carrying parts of a disc and there appears to be no substantiation of a sabotage charge.

For your further information there is attached a blind memorandum setting forth in more detail the results of the investigation surrounding the above plane crash. No further inquiry is being made in this matter.

ACTION

Air Force Intelligence has been advised of the results of our investigation.

RECORDED

INDEXED

161-83894-105

31 SEP 47

DMF:ajp

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Mr. D. M. Ladd *DL*

DATE: August 24, 1947

FROM : [REDACTED] *b7c*

SUBJECT: FLYING DISCS

There are attached two copies of a blind memorandum setting forth the facts relative to the reported air crash of two AAF officers investigating flying disc complaints.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that a copy of this memorandum be furnished by the Liaison Section to the Air Force Intelligence.

Attachment

RGF:mjp

RECORDED

15 AUG 19 1947

6307T 2

1947

203

P-344

Mr. Tolson	
Mr. E. A. Tamm	
Mr. Clegg	
Mr. Coffey	
Mr. Glavin	
Mr. Ladd	
Mr. Nichols	
Mr. Rosen	
Mr. Tracy	
Mr. Carson	
Mr. Egan	
Mr. Gurnea	
Mr. Hendon	
Mr. Pennington	
Mr. Quinn Tamm	
Tele. Room	
Mr. Nease	

August 14, 1947

FLYING DISCS

The "Tacoma News Tribune" and through them the United Press put out a story that an army plane which was allegedly carrying parts of a disc which had struck a boat owned by Harold Dahl and Fred Chrisman had crashed on August 1, 1947, killing two Air Force Intelligence officers who were interviewing persons who were alleged to have seen flying discs.

[redacted] and [redacted] when interviewed by Bureau Agents, advised in a signed statement on August 7, 1947, that in the early part of June, 1947, they picked up some strange rock formations from a gravel pit on Hauri Island, Washington. They sent a cigar box of these formations to one [redacted] of the [redacted] and also [redacted] of the [redacted] in Chicago, Illinois. According to them they requested [redacted] to make only a chemical analysis of the rock formations. [redacted] then wrote asking for additional samples stating he had been unable to analyze the material [redacted] and [redacted] remarked that a few days after the flying disc stories appeared during the latter part of June, [redacted] contacted them by telephone saying he would pay for an exclusive story if the materials they had sent him were fragments of a flying disc. [redacted] said he wrote [redacted] a letter in which he represented the material as being a part of a flying disc, and both [redacted] and [redacted] admitted that this statement was entirely false. b7c

[redacted] and [redacted] then received a call from one [redacted] of Boise, Idaho who requested them to meet him at the Winthrop Hotel in Tacoma on July 31, 1947. According to them [redacted] called in army intelligence officers from Hamilton Field, California and one Captain [redacted] of United Airlines of Seattle, Washington to attend this meeting. [redacted] and [redacted] maintained they told the intelligence officers Captain Davidson, Lieutenant Brown, [redacted] and [redacted] exactly how they got the rock formations and that they had no connection with any flying discs. [redacted] and [redacted] stated that they then furnished some of the rock formation to the intelligence officers as samples. b7c

Captain Davidson and Lieutenant Brown left Tacoma, Washington in a B-25 to return to Hamilton Field, California about 2:30 A.M. August 1, 1947, and were killed when their plane crashed at Kelso, Washington, after the left engine burned out an exhaust stack which in turn caught the left wing on fire which caused it to break off. The crew chief and each officer parachuted to safety.

[redacted] at Tacoma advised that two or three days after the flying disc story started he contacted [redacted] to check the story b7c

[REDACTED]
Harbor, Washington, to the effect that [REDACTED] had some flying disc fragments. At this time [REDACTED] admitted to [REDACTED] that the entire story was false. b7c

Relative to [REDACTED] stated that he was paid by [REDACTED] of the [REDACTED] and possibly the [REDACTED] to come to Tacoma and obtain a story from them regarding the flying disc fragments. b7c

On July 31 and August 1, a total of five anonymous calls were received by a [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED] at Tacoma giving information regarding the meeting at the Winthrop Hotel over the disc fragments and stating that the B-25 had been shot down or sabotaged which killed Captain Davidson and Lieutenant Brown, inferring that this was done because the intelligence officers were carrying disc fragments in their plane. b7c

[REDACTED] stated that these calls could only have come from themselves, [REDACTED] who, they stated, had a friend on the Chicago Times and was possibly selling the story to the Chicago Times through this friend. [REDACTED] denied making these calls. b7c

[REDACTED] upon interview, stated that reporter [REDACTED] of the Tacoma Times and [REDACTED] of the [REDACTED] in Tacoma had informed him that [REDACTED] had several anonymous calls and from the accuracy of the information transmitted [REDACTED] believes they were made by either [REDACTED] b7c

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

AUG 14 1947

TELETYPE

Rec 1000
7/12
Jm

Mr. E. A. Tamm
Mr. Clegg
Mr. Glavin
Mr. Ladd
Mr. Nichols
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Tracy
Mr. Egan
Mr. Gurnea
Mr. Harbo
Mr. Mohr
Mr. Pennington
Mr. Quinn Tamm
Mr. Nease

FBI SEATTLE

8-14-47

5-15 PM

FB

DIRECTOR

ROUTINE

Fletcher

FLYING DISCS SIGHTED BY [REDACTED], TACOMA
WASHINGTON, SM X. REURTEL INSTANT DATE. PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT

[REDACTED] DID NOT ADMIT TO [REDACTED] THAT HIS STORY WAS A HOAX BUT ONLY
STATED THAT IF QUESTIONED BY AUTHORITIES HE WAS GOING TO SAY IT WAS
A HOAX BECAUSE HE DID NOT WANT ANY FURTHER TROUBLE OVER THE MATTER.
COMPLETE REPORT NOW EN ROUTE TO BUREAU AMSD, WHICH INDICATES
PROBABLY [REDACTED] MADE THE ANONYMOUS PHONE CALL IN THE
HOPE OF BUILDING UP THEIR STORY THROUGH PUBLICITY TO A POINT WHERE
THEY COULD MAKE A PROFITABLE DEAL WITH FANTASY MAGAZINE, CHICAGO
ILLINOIS. [REDACTED] WILL NOT BE REINTERVIEWED UNLESS
ADVISED TO THE CONTRARY BY THE BUREAU.

67C

WILCOX

A AND HOLD PLS

9-16 PM OK FBI WASH DC GAR

RECORDED
INDEXED
38

162-8384-3
18
AUG 15 1947

G. I. R. PC: Mr. Fletcher
EX-67

5-RF

3 AUG 26 1947 252

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

August 14,

TO: COMMUNICATIONS SECTION.

SAC, Seattle

U R G E

Transmit the following message to:

REURTEL AUGUST TWELVE. IT IS NOTED FROM INTERROGATION OF [REDACTED] CLAIMS THAT DURING THE CONFERENCE ON JULY THIRTY ONE THAT [REDACTED] AND [REDACTED] APPARENTLY REPEATED THEIR FALSE STORY ABOUT THE MATERIAL BEING FRAGMENTS OF A FLYING DISC AND ONLY ON SATURDAY NIGHT AUGUST SECOND DID [REDACTED] ADMIT THAT THE STORY WAS A HOAX. IF SUCH IS THE CASE IT WOULD APPEAR EITHER [REDACTED] OR [REDACTED] MADE THE ANONYMOUS PHONE CALL SINCE THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN UNDER THE IMPRESSION AT THAT TIME THAT THE MATERIAL FURNISHED TO CAPTAIN DAVIDSON AND LIEUTENANT BROWN WAS ACTUALLY PARTS OF A FLYING DISC. IT WOULD ALSO APPEAR THAT [REDACTED] AND [REDACTED] DID NOT ADMIT THE HOAX TO THE ARMY INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS BECAUSE IF THEY HAD DONE SO THE OFFICERS PROBABLY WOULD NOT HAVE TAKEN THE ALLEGED PARTS WITH THEM ON THEIR FATAL FLIGHT. THIS MATTER SHOULD BE CLEARED UP BY A REINTERVIEW WITH [REDACTED] AND [REDACTED] WHEN THIS POINT IS CLARIFIED NO FURTHER INVESTIGATION NECESSARY.

HOOVER

RGF:mjp

RECEIVED
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
51

16-8
1 AUG 15 1964

Mr. Tolson
Mr. DeLoach
Mr. Mohr
Mr. Bishop
Mr. Casper
Mr. Callahan
Mr. Conrad
Mr. Felt
Mr. Gale
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Sullivan
Mr. Tavel
Mr. Trotter
Tele. Room
Miss Holmes
Miss Gandy

COPIES DESTROYED
270 NOV 18 1964

SENT VIA

R-344
413

62-83894-60

M

Per