

On the Trail of Saucer Spies by Nick Redfern. New York: Anomalist Books, 2006. 308 pp. \$15.95 (paper). ISBN 1-933-66510-6.

This book begins with a suggestion, attributed to ufologist Robert Durant, that each investigator should "check your file," by which he means that each ufologist should request the US government file on him/her. I did, about ten years ago. Two years later I received my FBI file. I haven't checked since then, but at that time a large part of the Secret file was unreadable and blacked out. I know the main reason there is an FBI file on me: I talked to a Russian. After I spoke at public UFO conference near Washington, DC, in February, 1993, I was contacted by an assistant military attaché who was stationed at the Russian Embassy (gulp!). He wanted to know how to obtain US government files on UFOs, including the FBI file, about which I had spoken during the conference. I seem to recall (but I am not certain) that he also telephoned me once from the Russian Embassy. Yes, the Cold War was essentially over, but there are rules for US government employees, especially employees of the armed services (I work for the Navy): if you are contacted by a "foreign national" you must report to your security service. OK, so a day or so later I called the Naval Investigative Service (NIS). The lady who answered the phone gave me a polite "thank you" for reporting and hung up. That was it. I never heard from the NIS (I was expecting an interview). I also told a contact at the CIA. Again, no interest. So, you can imagine my surprise and amusement when, about six months later, while I was at work I got a call from the "dreaded" FBI. The agent wanted to talk to me at my home. He wouldn't say what it was about, but I could guess: (a) I was the first to obtain the FBI file on "flying discs" way back in 1977 and I had publicly talked about it many times, and, more likely, (b) I had talked to a Russian.

During the interview it became obvious to me that the agent didn't know much about the UFO phenomenon and was amused to learn about the FBI files on that subject. But he was especially interested in my interactions with the military attache. My interactions were minimal and I didn't have much to say. Nevertheless, about five years later, when I got my FBI file, most of the paragraphs were partially or totally blacked out. (It was nice to learn that I didn't have any police record, according to the Maryland Criminal Justice System, which the agent had checked.) Was this evidence of the government keeping an eye on ufologists?

Back in the middle 1970's when Jack Acuff was the director of what then "remained" of NICAP (The National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena, originally directed by Major Donald Keyhoe; NICAP closed in 1980), Jack told me that he had been contacted by a Russian who offered to make a donation to NICAP to support UFO research in return for access to case files. Acuff reported this to some of his government contacts and didn't see the Russian again. In the same time frame, noted UFO skeptic Philip Klass told me he had been contacted by a Russian several times. I have a fuzzy recall on this,

but I believe Phil said that he gave the Russian a boat ride on the Potomac. (Phil also had "inside" connections because of his writing for *Aviation Week*, a defense oriented magazine, often cynically called *Aviation Leak*.)

Anyway, I bring up this subject of the Russians contacting people in UFO investigation because it has a direct bearing on the theory advanced in Redfern's book: that the intelligence agencies that monitored the activities of potential adversaries (Soviets primarily) were worried about the possibility that the adversaries were using ufologists as sources of information on secret American (and British) government defense activities. Apparently, according to Redfern's contacts, the intelligence services in the USA and Britain were afraid that the attempts by ufologists to penetrate the secrecy surrounding the UFO subject would provide information that would be useful to our adversaries. Even more disturbing to them was the possibility that some spies were using UFO investigation activities as a cover for their desire to learn military and government secrets that would give the adversaries an advantage. The Russians were, of course, at the top of the list of adversaries back in the 70's and 80's, but also of interest to British intelligence, according to Redfern, were activities related to the Irish terrorists such as the IRA. Redfern makes a strong case for the idea that at least one UFO group in England was set up as a covert recruitment agency with the goal of finding people who are interested in penetrating the government UFO secrecy and then "turning" them toward more political activities such as learning and publicizing political secrets. The bottom line, according to Redfern's well-documented book, is that there has been a considerable amount of government spying on ufologists, but it was not so much carried out because of a fear that ufologists would learn government secrets about flying saucers, but rather because the intelligence agencies were afraid that some ufologists were being "used," wittingly or unwittingly, as information sources by foreign intelligence services.

This is not a book about UFO sightings and analysis. Instead, it is a book that tackles the "MIB" problem. This refers to the "Men In Black," who, according to the mythology, are either agents of the government or are aliens . . . or both(!), and who contact witnesses after sightings and advise them to keep silent about their sightings. Redfern demonstrates that the MIB myth is not without foundation. Many (but a small fraction of the total number of) witnesses have been visited by two men, often dressed in black, who usually show credentials and then proceed to ask questions about the sighting. Before leaving they advise the witness that it would be best to say nothing to others about the event.

UFO sightings are not the only phenomena which attract MIB. Government agents have been reported snooping around after cattle mutilations and the appearance of agriglyphs ("crop circles"). Of particular interest to me was to learn of the interest on the part of the British intelligence agencies, information not generally available on "this side of the pond." Apparently, British intelligence has been particularly interested in the agriglyphs because they considered the possibility that the circle makers were sending messages to British enemies. This feeling by the British apparently dates back to the Second World

War when markings in agricultural crops may have actually been used in attempts to signal to enemy pilots.

Of course there is a lot in this book ranging from surveillance of **Adamski**, and other 1950's "contactees," to Paul Bennewitz, who was the victim of a concerted attempt to turn his attention to bizarre UFO stories and away from his discovery of ongoing secret research at **Kirtland Air Force Base**, and to **Matthew Bevan**, who was accused of (and admitted to) hacking into Air Force computers at **Wright-Patterson Air Force Base** in search of UFO information in the 1990's. Of course, **Redfern** was also subjected to surveillance. So, there is something here for everyone who has wondered about the truth to the MIB-type stories. I recommend this book to everyone and especially to those who have not yet requested a copy of their "file."

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FURTHER BOOKS OF NOTE

Wilhelm Reich: Psychoanalyst and Radical Naturalist by Robert S. Corrington. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2003. 320 pp. \$27.00 (hardcover). ISBN 0-374-25002-2.

Those who are seriously interested in the logic of the development of the work of the psychiatrist and scientist Wilhelm Reich will find this book rewarding. Robert Corrington is a professor of theological philosophy at Drew University in New Jersey, and he gives us a philosophical anthropologist's view of what made Reich tick. The goal of philosophical anthropology, according to Corrington, "... is to develop an encompassing perspective on the whole self-in-process as it manifests its cumulative directionality in both its conscious and its unconscious dimensions" (p. xiv). In doing this, Corrington relies heavily on the work of the Euro-American philosopher C. S. Peirce, who described how "Each self-in-process moves through signs, objects, and interpretants ... so that meaning can be had in a chaotic world" (p. xv). I warn you, however, that this is heavy going, especially in the early chapters where Corrington analyzes Reich's early writings in psychoanalysis. Aside from Corrington's philosophical analysis of Reich's work, on which I do not have the expertise to comment, he appears to have presented an overview of the corpus of Reich's work without distortion or bias. Gratefully, after the many years of the misrepresentation of Reich, especially in his leaps through many domains of nature, Corrington recognizes the rationality of the logic inherent in Reich's thinking as he made transitions through psychology into biology, then physics and cosmology.

As a psychobiography, Corrington sees Reich as a "radical naturalist", one who believes that not only is nature "... all that there is" but also that the "'one' nature manifests (and is) a deep pulsating energy that spawns new life out of itself" (p. 193). Having immersed myself in Reich's writings, and conducted research in various aspects of **orgonomy** and practiced the therapy he originated for about 45 years, I find that I well agree with this assessment.