

GORDON COOPER NASA ASTRONAUT SPEAKS ABOUT UFO LANDING IN AT US AIRFORCE BASE.

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Since the formation of NASA in 1958 a number of its test pilots and astronauts have testified to witnessing UFOs. However, none have been as active or as outspoken as Lt. Col. Gordon Cooper. One of the first Americans to orbit the earth Cooper has publicly admitted to having two major UFO encounters. The first which took place at Neubiberg Air Force Base, Germany in 1951 involved his attempted interception of a fleet of UFOs while piloting an F-86 jet. The second, far more spectacular incident, six years later, involved the photographing a UFO that actually landed at Edward's Air Force base in California.

In 1978, as a direct result of these experiences, Cooper attended a Special Political Committee of the United Nations General Assembly chaired by the Secretary General, Kurt Waldheim. The committee's aim was to persuade United Nations members to form a scientific program devoted to investigating the UFO phenomenon. In a letter written to Granada's ambassador of the UN he stated: 'I believe these extra-terrestrial vehicles and their crews are visiting this planet from other planets which are obviously a little more technically advanced than we are on earth. I feel that we need to have a top-level coordinated program to scientifically collect and analyse data from all over the earth, concerning any type of encounter, and to determine how best to interface with these visitors in a friendly fashion.'

THE RIGHT STUFF.

Cooper's NASA career began in 1959 when he was selected to be one of the first seven Mercury astronauts, America's first attempt to put men in space. His military career began in 1945 when he joined the Army Air Corps, as the US Air Force was then called, and became a test and fighter pilot. He worked in classified research and development in the late 1950s and was involved in the development of one of America's most effective cold war weapons: the U 2 spy plane.

His first flight into space began on May 15, 1963 when he orbited the earth 22 times in Mercury 7, staying in space for over 34 hours. He was the last US astronaut to go into space alone. On August 21, 1965 he blasted off again this time accompanied with Charles Conrad in Gemini 5 and succeeded in orbiting the earth 120 times. In 1970 he left NASA and retired as a Lieutenant Colonel. He later became president of the Galaxy Aircraft Corporation in California.

With his background as a test pilot, aeronautical engineer, and astronaut, Lt. Col. Cooper ranks as one of the most qualified people ever to talk about UFOs.

Q. Can you tell me about your first UFO incident in 1951 when you were stationed with the 525th Fighter Bomber Squadron at Neubiberg Air Force Base in

Munich, Germany?

Cooper.

It began when a weather man spotted something strange through his binoculars. He saw a group of objects flying over the base. These fly-overs lasted for about a day and a half involving formations of large numbers of objects, all flying east to west. We decided to send planes up to investigate, before long the entire fighter group was up there trying to get a closer look at these objects. It was difficult to gauge their size. We couldn't tell if they were very large and a long way away, or smaller and closer in, but we could make out their shape which was double lenticular or saucer shaped and clearly metallic looking.

Q. Did you try to intercept them?

Cooper.

Yes, but we could never get close to them. They were much faster and could go much higher than anything we had in the air at the time. They were moving in the high sub-sonic speeds, but my feeling in hindsight was that they could have gone super sonic any time they wished. Additionally, they were capable of performing impossible maneuvers. As I flew towards them one would occasionally stop its forward movement and instantly change to a direction 90 degrees from the original path. There is no technology that I knew of at that time that could do that sort of thing.

Q. Did you think they were piloted?

Cooper.

Yes, definitely. Each one probably had a pilot in it. One formation I observed, and there were many, had sixteen objects in them, all in formation, and all turning together, that means to me they were intelligently controlled and had to be in communication with each other to coordinate this manoeuvre.

Q. This incident must have had a powerful effect on you at the time?

Cooper.

Well, you have to remember that at the time we knew very little of what the Soviets were doing, so there was always the possibility that it was advanced Soviet technology. Also I was low down in the military hierarchy then so I had no idea what our own country may have been secretly producing.

Q. So could they have been advanced Soviet or US technology?

Cooper.

Absolutely not. I am now convinced that they were of extraterrestrial origin.

We later discovered that the Soviets were incapable of producing anything with those flight characteristics. Additionally, since it was 50 years ago, if it was some kind of secret advance from our own military it would have definitely been declassified by now.

Q. What did officials conclude these objects were?

Cooper.

Much to my dismay I later heard they concluded the objects were high flying seed pods! Not a very logical conclusion given they were all flying in formation and at great speed.

Q. Can you describe your second UFO event which occurred at Edward's Air Force Base in 1957.

Cooper.

I was the project manager for a number of aircraft related test programs which took place on the Mojave dry lake bed at Edward's. We were conducting precision landings on the lake beds. A number of USAF photographers were recording the landings with movie and stills cameras for analysis. Later these guys came running into my office and told me that a flying saucer had flown right over their heads, put out three legs and then landed on the dry lake bed about 50 meters from them. They picked up their cameras and walked towards it filming as they went. When they got fairly close, the craft lifted up, the landing legs withdrew and it tipped on to its side and took off at a great speed.

Q. Then what happened?

Cooper.

I immediately sent them off to develop the film. Then I started looking up the regulations to see how I should report the incident. As I made various calls, I was passed higher and higher up the chain of command until I reached a Colonel who told me to put the processed film in a courier pouch and immediately fly it to Washington DC. I was ordered not to run any prints. That was the last I ever saw of it.

Q. Did you watch the film?

Cooper.

I didn't have a chance to project it, but I held it up to the light so I could view what they had shot with my own eyes. It was good film, excellent close-up shots. It looked like the typical saucer shaped UFO, but with no cupola, similar in fact to the objects I saw in Germany. It was metallic and big enough to contain a human sized crew. By this time, I was involved in classified research and development at the test centre, so this time I knew we didn't have any technology like that and I was ninety-nine and nine tenths sure it wasn't the Russians. At that point in time, I was in no doubt that what I was looking at *was a vehicle manufactured from some place other than earth.*

Q. Besides the film was there any other physical evidence left behind?

Cooper.

No physical evidence of the landing remained and as far as I know the photographers didn't suffer any ill effects from exposure to the craft when it took off.

Q. Did you try and follow through to find out what became of the film?

Cooper.

Look you have to understand that there is no way within the military of keeping track of something that is classified unless you are directly involved with it and I was not. All I knew was it went to Washington DC. I'm certain that a lot of that sort of stuff was probably just thrown into a file someplace in Washington and forgotten. There are probably rooms full of such movies. I don't think a great deal of UFO information was ever classified. As a rule, if you really want to keep something secret, you don't classify it. I learnt this when I worked on the U2 Spy plane program. We didn't put classifications on that program. When you classify something every Congressman in the US tries to get hold of it and broadcast it all over the country. Our classification system isn't always the best way to keep something secret.

Q. Were any of your UFO encounters reported in - Project Blue Book - the US Air Force's official investigation in the UFO phenomenon?

Cooper.

No, they were not. And I'm very angry about this. This is one of my complaints about Blue Book. In my opinion it was obviously a total and complete whitewash. A cover up.

Q. Why do you think they are trying to keep the UFO subject a secret?

Cooper.

I'm not sure what the exact reason is and there maybe several. I think the secrecy began in world-war 2 or shortly thereafter. I think they believed that the public would be frightened if they knew somebody has vehicles with much better performance than anything we possessed. Maybe they thought this would create panic if the public learned about them. So, they started telling lies about it, then they had to cover a lie with another lie. Now they have told so many lies they don't know how to get out of it. It would be very embarrassing for them to admit that every administration since WW2 has lied to the public.

Q Do you think they want to disclose this information?

Cooper.

I think every president would like to come clean and not have to perpetuate the lies. Eventually something is going to happen that will be so undeniable they won't be able to get out of it and they will have to confess they have been lying to us for years.

Q. There have been rumours that various US astronauts had close encounters while in space or on the moon. Is there any truth to these stories?

Cooper.

Some of my astronaut colleagues do believe in UFOs and some have had occasion to see a UFO either on the ground or from an aircraft, but have chosen not to speak about this for fear that the press would misrepresent the information. There have been so many wild stories out there that they are reluctant to get involved with all that. Another false claim is that NASA had secret protocols in the event of ET contact and that astronauts are under strict orders not to discuss any sightings. I never saw evidence of this when I was the space agency.

Cooper's claim that NASA had no protocols to withhold UFO information is apparently contradicted by evidence from a number of sources. Documentary evidence in the shape of a 1967 NASA operating manual outlines the procedures staff must follow when handling reports of UFO sightings. The document asks the observer to record details of what they see and then states that 'Under no circumstances will the origin of the object be discussed with the observer or the person making the call.'

Further evidence of NASA duplicity comes from the testimony from Donna Hare who in 1970/71 worked as a laboratory technician at the NASA Johnson Space Flight Center in Houston, Texas. She has stated that it was standard policy for NASA to remove images of UFOs from any pictures before they were released to the public.

Even more spectacular testimony of what NASA may be hiding from the public comes from Karl Wolfe who was an Air Force technician leasing with NASA during the Lunar Orbiter missions in 1966-67. Whilst in a photographic facility that also served the National Security Agency (NSA) Wolfe claims he was shown pictures of some kind of base located on the dark side of the moon. He described unambiguous images revealing huge geometric shaped buildings rising far above the surface. Both Hare and Wolfe have agreed to testify before the US Congress as part of Dr. Steven Greer's Disclosure project.

Q. What about the alleged UFO sighting by James McDivitt during the Gemini 4 flight?

Cooper.

It's true that McDivitt did have a sighting of some form of unidentified object. He saw a bright metallic object through the front window of his space craft. Whatever the object was it was not located on his space debris chart. He described it as cylindrical in shape but was unable to gauge its size or distance. He managed to take a

picture of it but the amount of light reflecting off it made it impossible to determine its shape or any other information about what it was.

Q. Have any of your other friends or colleagues had UFO encounters?

Cooper.

Yes. A good friend of mine who is a commercial airline pilot has been involved in three incidents. On each occasion a UFO pulled up right alongside his wing and stayed in formation with the jet. He works for a major airline. The airline has a policy that their crews are not permitted to talk about UFOs.

Q. I know from talking to Apollo 14 astronaut Edgar Mitchell that the experience of going into space had a profound spiritual impact on him. Did something similar happen to you?

Cooper.

I think everyone changes after they go into space. The biggest effect on me was how much it humbled me. When you look at this beautiful universe that God created for us you realize you are such a small part of it. That really puts things into perspective.

Q. Are you convinced we are not alone in the universe?

Cooper.

That is definitely my view. It makes perfect sense to me especially when you look at NASA's own figures which states that there are some 400,000 other planets that could be habitable. I just can't believe that God would inhabit only this one planet and leave all the others bare. It's my personal opinion, but I feel we humans are out in the hinterland of all the galaxies. We are way out on the edge. Other galaxies are far closer together and I think it likely that other civilizations have a lot more travel to and from one another.

Q. As an aeronautical engineer have you spent much time thinking about how UFOs achieve their performance capabilities?

Cooper.

I am very interested in their propulsion systems. Also, it is clear that if you are going to be going in and out of the atmosphere you certainly need an aerodynamically shaped vehicle. We have done some modelling and design work on that score and the saucer shape has the capability of going through air at tremendous rates of speed and manoeuvring without making shock waves which cause sonic booms. It's one reason they can fly through our atmosphere at such high velocities without making any noise.

Q. What was your intention behind attending the panel at the United Nations?

Cooper.

I felt we should form a group at the UN level to start gathering information about UFOs and collect sightings from around the world. Our intention was that investigations should be conducted at the UN level. In some countries, like France and Russia, the government cooperates with civilian UFO groups, so we thought that by having all the data assembled into one place there would be a huge advantage in trying to determine what was real and what was not. Unfortunately, not much came out of this initiative. It's typical of the UN - they talked a good deal but never got around to doing anything about it.

Q. What is your opinion about the alleged crash of a UFO at Roswell New Mexico in 1947?

Cooper.

I have had occasions to know some of the people involved in that incident. I think it's very likely that a saucer did crash there. I have no idea what they may have done with the debris. I would like to think they reversed engineered it and did something useful with the knowledge they may have gained. This would have been the logical thing to do, but I can't be sure.

Q. A few years ago, John Glen returned to space on board the Shuttle. Do you have any ambitions of going back into space?

Cooper.

Absolutely, I want to go to Mars. When they finally get the Mars Mission organized I will be ready to go (much laughter). OK I admit I'm not on their list but I keep submitting my name. I'm going to see if I can slide my name to the top of that list somehow.

Q. Were you disappointed that you were not selected to go to the moon?

Cooper.

Sure, I would have loved to have gone there. The decisions involved a lot of political factors and I wasn't selected. But I was in the back up team for Apollo 10, so I was close. It was frustrating, but think about how frustrating it was for the crew of Apollo 10. They went all the way to the moon, made their descent and never landed. So close but so far. Don't you know they were tempted?

Q. Do you think the world would change dramatically if the reality of extra-terrestrials was confirmed officially?

Cooper.

It's difficult to say. I'm not sure it would really change all that much. It depends on the degree of contact. I think there is a huge potential in terms of what we can learn from them. I think they are just the same as we are in many ways only a little

higher, faster and better.

Q. Why do you think they haven't made their presence known in an undeniable manner?

Cooper.

Caution. They probably consider us a fairly primitive lot. But they can come and land in my back yard anytime. (laughter) I would welcome them.