

THE FATAL ENCOUNTER AT FT. DIX-MCGUIRE: A CASE STUDY; Status Report IV

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ABSTRACT

New testimonial evidence and a document are bared in Status Report IV, following the re-emergence in 1983 of the informant whose experience, as a witness, was first disclosed three years earlier and published as Case A3 in Status Report III, 1982. The source, a sergeant in the Air Force Security Police at McGuire AFB, adds substantive information relative to the reported fatal encounter on January 18, 1978, between an alleged alien entity and a Ft. Dix MP and relates his firsthand observation, while on duty, when the slain entity was found on an abandoned runway at McGuire AFB. The source also reveals his sensitive involvement with authorities in various agencies following his discharge from service because of his disclosures to this writer. Also reported are the communications with the source since 1980 and an arranged meeting between the source and a colleague to lend back-up credibility to the case. Investigation continues.

PROLOGUE: THE BURDEN OF PROOF

Proof! The burden of this one word, and perhaps its ambiguity, has haunted and frustrated UFO research since businessman-pilot, Ken Arnold sighted nine saucer-like things over Mt. Ranier in 1947. Proof! Its implications burden all of us who try to convince the skeptic that unidentified objects, flying under apparent intelligent control, have intruded into Earth's air space and sometimes allegedly land and, on rare occasions, crash.

All factors considered I believe we, in the domain of public research, do not have that exalted proof to exhibit for any of the foregoing anomalous UFO events. As Dr. J. Allen Hynek of CUFOS would say, we do have "reports" describing such events and, as we will agree, many are made by credible people. Yes, our research treasury has thousands of reports of UFO encounters of all kinds providing stacks of circumstantial but highly suggestive evidence.

Alas, these are not proof. Nor do affidavits, "leaked" government documents, and photographs constitute proof. Regrettably, experience has taught us that any of these so-called proofs may well be fakes. Even a released document through the Freedom of Information Act is not proof, for the subject it treats too often contains precious little of value, due to censored deletions, vague phraseology, or references rendered meaningless without additional support data which are never made available.

So, what is that proof that remains so elusive from public view? According to scientific discipline, proof, in the case of UFO, can be reduced simply to the possession of a captive craft or artifact or a cadaver, if you will, that can be seen, touched, and smelled, and to please Phil Klass, the world's foremost debunker, we might include, tasted. I must, therefore, face the inevitable questions in my special research: Has such a nondescript craft been retrieved and studied and, to stretch a point, duplicated at some secret base? And, has a crew member of exotic anatomy been secretly examined and maintained in chemical preservation at some medical facility?

In spite of all the known evidence, including the testimony I have published in my series of monographs, I can offer no *proof*, by my definition, of the recovery of an alien craft or its occupants. So be it for me in the public sector.

Then, there is the "official" sector whose military spokespeople from the outset have denied the existence of the UFO. Why? By now it should be obvious to every researcher that behind these denials, something "above top secret," as Senator Barry Goldwater has said, is being hidden — perhaps, something big enough to shake up our societal patterns.

Whatever we may think of its implications for mankind, we do know that much information has been bared since World War II by credible military sources about UFO intercept missions, aircraft losses, visual sightings confirmed by radar and yes, UFO landings on military installations and a crash, among several, one dating back to 1947. On the other hand, if all UFOs have simple explanations as the Air Force contends (and, as a spokesman once commented, "we are hiding nothing" at Wright-Patterson AFB), then why enforce such high degree of secrecy to hide nothing.

Logically, we may ask, what is it that must be hidden at all costs? Is it alien hardware? Alien cadavers? If so, why not tell the world? Why the long, agonizing secrecy? Here, again, we can only guess, but a likely one is that to face the media of the world they had better have answers for the UFOs origin and intent. Without answers, after so many years, the credibility gap of our Government and its scientific advisers would greatly suffer; and, without answers, the experts in the military, the CIA, the NSA, NRO, and NASA, who help form policy, will continue their secret probes in silence. It seems fair to say, we all have our proof problems.

I would like to be assured that governments worldwide, including Russia, and especially our own National Reconnaissance Office are working on these problems. In good faith, I address these problems with new evidence for Case A3, published "Status Report III, UFO Crash/Retrievals: Amassing The Evidence" (1982).

THE EVIDENCE AND ITS BURDEN OF PROOF

September 23, 1980, was to become more than just a typically busy day for me in UFO matters. According to my UFOLOG, I note that I had communications by phone and mail with Joe Brill, Michael Dougan, Bob Gribble, Diane Saghe, and a journalist in Japan. And, there was an envelope with an APO San Francisco return address.

Of interest, of course, was Gribble's call concerning a new source, a trucker who reported that he had transported something secret for the military from Aztec, N. Mex., in the late 1940's, and a response to a letter I had sent to Saghe seeking information from a source she knew who had seen a captured saucer at a Texas airbase. But, standing out above all else was the letter, APO San Francisco, dated September 16, 1980. It was typed in proper military format on stationery with official letterhead. (See Figure 1. Note that I have deleted the Security Police Squadron number. The name of the sender has been changed to "Jeffrey Morse" in this report.)

Needless to say, I was stunned by the sergeant's bold disclosure of a military incident of fatal consequences at McGuire AFB, N.J. My first reaction was that it was a hoax, perhaps designed, if it were published, to embarrass or discredit my probes into UFO crash/retrievals. Still fresh in mind was another episode in 1980 involving questionable photographs received from a source under clandestine arrangements requiring my travel to another State. In this case, although my initial role was to have the photographs studied and authenticated, I made the mistake of announcing their acquisition at the 1980 MUFON symposium in Houston. Thanks to a swift and well-orchestrated smear campaign, researchers, by and large, became confused and questioned both the photographs and my credibility. A hoax? A strategem to set me up? Probably, but a lesson was learned. (Note 1)

During this fragile period, being suspicious of any stranger with information to offer, I read Morse's letter over and over, and in between the lines, looking for anything detectably wrong. But, I could find nothing wrong. The letterhead was real, the military format was correct, the writer told his story as fact without emotional embellishment. Maybe, I reasoned, it was the sobriety of the official letterhead that made the story itself seem out of place with the real world. Like so many other stories of UFO close encounters it sounded like borderline fantasy, and some also involved the military, such as the British Rendlesham Forest Case. (Note 2)

Time will tell, I assured myself. Soon, Sgt. Morse would return home and if he had something of substance to back his claims it would be the breakthrough. I was determined to see this one case through disregarding time, energy, and cost. Proving it however, would be a monumental burden.

To better understand the incident and its ramifications, some of which later followed my source into civilian life, I believe it is essential to report verbatim most of my early exchanges of communications with him. This covers a span of time from

Morse's initial letter in 1980 into a period of apparent mail interference, then through his long interval of silence into his re-emergence in 1983.

As advised in Morse's overseas letter, my reply of September 27, 1980, was mailed to his home address. In the main, it was a message to establish a rapport of trust between us, one in which he could feel comfortable in sharing the burden of his experience, and to allay any anxieties he may have had about my research background. My questions were few and simple. One, for instance, asked for more descriptive detail of the recovered body; another asked how the body was removed from the scene and by whom and still another, if he could reveal any names of the personnel assigned to the area. I ended my letter with this thought: "Hope to hear from you soon and will follow your mailing instructions. Your letter will remain confidential at this time and, of course, your name not be used in any way."

Sgt. Morse, who was to be discharged and back home in November 1980, did not acknowledge my letter. Considering the time lapse as critical, I sent another letter November 18, 1980, quoted in part, "...Hope by now you're out of the service as you indicated in your letter from APO address....On September 27, I sent you a letter concerning my research endeavors which I trust you received at your home address. The incident you describe is, indeed, of interest to me and I hope you may find time soon to reach me by letter or phone, or, perhaps, to meet me at your convenience. You are certainly welcome to visit my home...I tried reaching you by phone last week, but your number is unlisted..."

In a letter dated November 27, 1980, from his home address, Morse answered as follows: "Sorry to have had such a delay in my response to you. I'm sorry to say I did not receive your letter of 27 September 1980. I haven't received any mail since August 1980. I don't know why. I am now out of the service and am home. I am prepared to answer your questions. I believe, however, I told you everything I know, but I'm not sure it was much to go on. But, I hope it leads you to someone who knows more about it. I'm sorry I can't recall too many names. The desk sergeant that night was Sgt. C (last name only) and he would know much more as fact. That's all I know of his name, however, I do remember that he was rather dedicated and may still be in the USAF. Well, I would like your next response ASAP and will try to give you my phone number by then."

On December 4, 1980, I sent Morse the following memorandum: "Your letter of November 27 arrived yesterday. I was surprised to learn that my letter of September 27 did not reach you. Fortunately, I kept a Xeroxed copy which I have duplicated and enclosed for your consideration. Hope you can send me your phone number. Enclosed is a gratis copy of my recently published Status Report II, which shows the scope of my research."

Again, Morse, for unknown reasons did not answer. Considering his expressed interest in my research and even allowing for other personal diversions, I thought that 2 ½ months were enough time for him to respond. On February 16, 1981, I wrote again,

expressing my concern and asked for a prompt reply as evidence of his sincerity. No answer.

Had it not been for Morse's brief letter of November 27 in which he asked for me to respond "ASAP" I would have dismissed his disclosure of the incident as questionable. Something was amiss. Or was the mail sent to this home being lost through negligence, a long shot, or lifted at his post office by directive to the Postmaster from one of the intelligence agencies? Whatever the method used to silence Jeffrey Morse, I reasoned, it was effective. All communications ceased and, like so many other informants in 1980, Morse became a phantom.

By March 1981, while preparing the text for Status Report III, I had decided it was time to take inventory; time for appraisal of the material on hand and of myself still in the midst of a heated controversy among researchers over the pros and cons of UFO crashes and retrievals. I needed outside thinking, and assessment of cases, a new perspective. To this end, I invited to my home two trustworthy friends who supported and contributed to my endeavors: Dr. Peter Rank, Chief of Radiology at the Methodist Hospital in Madison, Wis, and, Richard Hall, former Assistant Director of NICAP and then Editor of the MUFON UFO Journal. (Note 3) During our long weekend chats, evaluating every case I planned to publish, we agreed that the Ft. Dix-McGuire encounter was among the foremost as to potential value, providing we could establish the genuineness of Morse. On this premise, I gave Hall his name and address, hopeful that new blood might stimulate his response.

On April 10, 1982, Hall sent Morse a certified letter offering, on my behalf, to meet him anywhere, anytime, to discuss the incident and provide my professional services and funds if needed. Curiously, the certified letter was received and signed for by Morse, April 12, but the silence continued. It continued for 17 months! Then, on September 27, 1983, Hall received an urgent letter from Morse, quoted as follows:

"I am writing you in regards to your letter, 10 April 1982. I'm sorry that it has taken so long to answer your letter. I had to be sure about you and your organization. My mail has not been monitored for some time now, however, I must not express my information in the letter form. I have been warned, threatened and I have personally been interrogated as recently as February 1983, in reference to the subject I discussed with Len Stringfield. I also have further information...which I know will interest you...I have the opportunity now to travel to D.C. area. So if you wish to contact me again, you should still have my address. Hope to hear from you soon. If after 2 weeks I have not heard from you, I will no longer acknowledge my participation with your group, nor will I answer any mail."

When Hall phoned the news to me I advised that he follow up quickly by letter and arrange for a meeting. Unfortunately, because of personal circumstances, Hall's reply, October 10, 1983, was sent a couple of days later than the deadline set by Morse.

Again, silence. On November 30, 1983, I wrote Morse the following letter, quoted in part:

“...I held off writing until today, hoping that a little breathing time would give you the motivation to write. It is difficult to believe that the mail I sent you in 1980 and 1981 failed to reach you, or, if you had received my letters that you were unable to reach me in some manner. Obviously, there was interference both ways...I felt hopeful that Hall’s letter could open a new door of communications or, better still, a personal meeting with him. Now that several weeks have passed, I feel, again, concerned about your safety...Assuming you are still a ‘free’ person, I suggest you simply call me, reversing the charges...Jeff, please respond in some way, if only to acknowledge you received this letter.”

Morse surfaced by phone on December 6, 1983, and I heard his voice for the first time. He called me at dinnertime, identifying himself by first name only. He said he felt safe now as enough time had passed since an official visitor warned him about his oath of secrecy. Talking cautiously for about 15 minutes, we covered the basics of many issues. Among his highpoints, however, were the disclosures that two days after the incident he and others on duty at the scene were summoned to Wright-Patterson AFB for interrogation, and that each was transferred promptly to a separate base overseas. His assignment was to a new Security Police Squadron in Okinawa. “Others,” he said, “went to the Philippines, Germany, and Korea.” Finally, he promised to answer my questions I had by letter and he gave me his phone number.

Morse’s phone call opened the gates. I followed up the next day with a four-page letter in which I reiterated questions asked in 1980. Also, excerpted from my letter: “Your testimony is important. Of course, I’ll need back-up witnesses such as Dick Hall so that credibility is established...Enclosed is a copy of Status Report III. Your report, Case A3 in on page 9 with my comments about our correspondence problems. At one point I wondered if you really existed or if your letter was a hoax. So, you can imagine my relief when I heard your voice.”

Morse replied promptly, his letter post-marked December 14, 1983, included a map he sketched of the scene of action and a rough drawing of the body. (Answers, to some of my key questions appear later in the text of this paper wherever the subject is appropriate.) Additional information came by phone, December 13, 1983. In this exchange, I got the names and ranks of the officers who were his interrogators at Wright-Patterson. These, he said, were obtained from a source still in the Air Force he preferred not to identify.

With the Ft. Dix-McGuire case going from Square One to Square Two, my dialogue with Morse was now on a constant but cautious track, always mindful of surveillance.

The next event came as a surprise by certified mail postmarked December 23, 1983. On the flap of the envelope it said “Merry Christmas. I hope you like it.” Inside,

was a Xeroxed copy of the Incident/Complaint Report (Form 1569) that Morse had hinted, by phone, he might be able to procure as important back-up. The Report was brief, but essentially contained the same story told by Morse. Prepared by Desk Sgt. WC and signed by 1st Lt. WS, it was channeled to Col. Landon, Commanding Officer of McGuire AFB; Brig. Gen. Brown, Hdq., 21st Air Force (at McGuire AFB); and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI). It contained the names of the security policemen involved, including Morse, and the name of the MP assigned to Ft. Dix whom Morse later identified as the person having shot the alien intruder. (See Figure 2, Incident/Complaint Report.) However, as agreed in our ensuing talks, I have deleted the names of the persons in the document. Also to protect the persons named, as he later confirmed when questioned, Morse had opaqued out the social security numbers opposite each name in the report. "These numbers are private," he said.

The document is avowedly not proof. For it to be established as bona fide would, in turn, require additional irretrievable reports, memoranda, tapes, ad infinitum. In this regard, however, Morse said on several occasions that he had attempted to obtain a later Form 1569 Report mentioned by the desk sergeant, but was unsuccessful. Nevertheless, the Incident/Complaint Report, as it stands, is a strong link of evidence not easily dismissed, even if denied officially or by any of its named personnel who might be coerced to so do. (Note 4)

The genesis for Case A-3 as it is designated in Status Report III is a taped rebroadcast over the Armed Forces Far Eastern Radio Network of an interview conducted by Charlie Tuna of KATZ, Los Angeles, July 28, 1980. I remember the interview well, concerning my UFO crash/retrieval probes at which time I was promoting Status Report II, published by MUFON. At the close of the interview, I gave my home address for listeners who might contribute information. By chance, Morse, with his new Security Police Squadron in Okinawa, heard it as did others in the U.S. Armed Forces in the Far East. As confirmation of this, I have a letter of inquiry from a serviceman, D. N. Cook, stationed in Korea who mentioned the broadcast. (Letter on file.)

To establish how it all began, I believe, is important for it diminishes the chance that Morse may have acted in collusion with a Stateside hoaxer. Also, to verify that he was stationed in Okinawa, I asked questions about the island's terrain and its little-known offshore island, Ie Shima. His answers were right on target as a I knew these islands well, having been there myself with the 5th Air Force in World War II.

For the incident itself at McGuire AFB we have only Morse's word and his word only that it happened the way he described it based on his recall of his own experience and observations. Other than the Incident/Complaint Report which produced names, no other person has responded to Morse's request for back-up testimony. One letter he addressed to another member of his unit on patrol went unanswered; still another refused to surface to his request fearing for his career in the services. "No way," was the response.

Additional details about the affair came bit by bit based on specific questions by phone and letter during 1984, which are broken down for simplicity into categories as follow:

1. The Humanoid Factor. At varying times during his patrol duty, Morse was within 40 to 70 feet from the prostrate body on the abandoned runway #5. Never close enough to observe details such as facial features, or its hands and feet, he did recall that, under the glare of truck headlights, the skin of the unclad, hairless body was wet, shiny, and snake-like. As reported in his initial letter, the entity was about 4 feet in height with large head, slender torso, thin arms and legs, and overall, of grayish-brown coloration. Unquestionably not human, it was however of humanoid stature, fitting the anatomical description so often heard from military sources who have made claim to having seen entities at crash sites and as defined, coincidentally, by a medical source who allegedly performed an autopsy on a specimen in the early 1950's. (Note 5) (Also, see Figure 3, drawing by Morse.)

Always pressing for more detail, I once proffered the notion that the McGuire corpse could have been that of a wild animal, a deer perhaps or an escaped ape from a military experimentation lab, or a zoo. To this Morse replied, "No zoo nearby. We did have a problem with deer on the runway, but no one ever made such a big fuss over a deer."

The only other animal anomaly that Morse attributed to the presence of the body was the strong smell of ammonia in the cold night air, and, I note here that the same odor also prevailed at the alleged crash site in Case A-2 of Status Report III.

2. UFO Reports. Morse, who never sighted a UFO before or after the incident, was among many on duty who witnessed the bluish-green lights flying high and in tight formation over the adjoining Ft. Dix-McGuire bases. And, in the Incident/Complaint Report is the confirmation of their flight by the radar operator, A/IC R, on duty at the airbase control tower. Also, he had learned from the state trooper and later from his desk sergeant, WC, that one of the UFOs had come in at low level over the Ft. Dix MP's patrol car causing temporary failure of his radio transmission. (See Figure 4 and Figure 5. Drawings of UFO flight formation and map of Ft. Dix-McGuire showing sites of shooting and location of body, based on sketches by Morse.)

Although he never was able to see or talk with the Ft. Dix MP, JS, Morse did seek confirmation after his military service from the New Jersey State Police for their part in the incident, but he got nowhere, claiming they would not cooperate. Also, attempts to locate the state trooper he met at Gate #5 were futile. In this runaround, I recall Case A-8 in Status Report III where the police personnel involved in the 1966 Hillsdale-Dexter, Michigan, encounter were immediately transferred to new posts in the county, and that all records on their blotter regarding the incident were removed.

My search for UFO reports coincidental to the January 18, 1978, event, mainly in the eastern part of the U.S.A., indicates there was no national flap and no concentration of sightings in the New Jersey area at that time. A check into the reports collected and evaluated in the *International UFO Reporter* (CUFOS) for that time period show that 82 reports, according to editor Allan Hendry, were judged to be “indentifiable or inappropriate,” however five were selected for review in the March 1978 issue. These occurred in Toledo, Ohio, 1/23/78; Williamston, N.C., 1/27/78; Key West, Fla., 1/27/78; Montvale, N.J., 1/31/78; and Peoria, Ill. 2/5/78.

The only case possibly akin to the Ft. Dix-McGuire encounter is the January 31 report in Montvale, N.J., which involved humanoids. This story was reported in the February 1978 issue of the *MUFON UFO Journal* with drawings of the entities, bearing little resemblance to the biped described by Morse. It was also fully reported in the April 1978 issue of the *International UFO Reporter*. Only because the encounter happened in New Jersey and within a reasonable time frame is it of relative interest.

Another case occurring January 15, 1978, three days before the incident, involved a pilot, Roger K., and passengers flying in a Sundowner from Evansville, Ind., to Lunken Airport in Cincinnati, Ohio. I received the pilot's call who got my telephone number from the Control Tower, explaining that he had a harrowing experience 20 miles north of Louisville, Ky., at 5,500 feet when he observed two white lights, one moving back and forth, the other stationary. Watching the one object make a circle, he said, it all of a sudden headed for the Sundowner on a collision course. To escape its path, he dove 1,000 feet and watched it pass overhead and out of sight. Calling the Control Tower at Staniford Airport in Louisville, he heard they had received calls from people in the area who saw a UFO.

In early January 1985, my hopes to get a back-up UFO report were heightened when a letter from Morse stated that he had traveled to Baldwinsville, N.Y., to see a friend retired from the Air Force, a former M/Sgt. HPS who had served in the 21st Air Force Headquarters at McGuire in the late 1970's. Morse said that he briefly mentioned the incident to HPS and learned that he recalled a night in 1978 when took an urgent call from a C-141 pilot reporting a UFO while flying near McGuire. Morse said that HPS was vaguely aware of his incident and suggested I check further, giving me his address. I called HPS the day I got Morse's letter. HPS confirmed that he got the call from the pilot in 1978 which he said was “quickly squelched,” but he could not pinpoint the date. “Too long ago and I kept no records,” he said, adding “I don't recall a base alert, but the call I got from the pilot could have happened the same night of the other incident.”

While on the phone I asked about Jeff as a person. “He was always friendly,” he said. “I lived with my family on the base and he would often stop by in his patrol car and play with the kids. We got to know him well.” HPS added that he had no reason to question his honesty or sincerity. In my opinion, had Morse been a shrewd hoaxer he could have inveigled someone else into adding spicy details to the incident instead of

HPS, who, in all honesty, provided little of real substance to support his case. Buy my call was worth the cost; HPS vouched that Morse was at McGuire in 1978 and that he was a likeable person.

The most significant event of UFO activity, pinpointing the exact date, January 18, 1978, is a report I received from a police officer, Ron Jones, while on duty in Erlanger, Ky. His UFO was a large lime-green, egg-shaped object flying erratically across Kentucky skies. Other reports of a green object were also reported that night in northern Kentucky and into Cincinnati, including one coincidentally, that flew low over the home of the Jones family, causing a moment of terror. The story made big news on the local radio stations and in the headline of the Kentucky edition of the Cincinnati Post. (See Figure 6 for the newspaper account.)

Of pertinence in this event is that the UFO was green as were those observed by Morse. Despite a variance in shade, perhaps, in my research green is among the least common of colors in the spectrum reported for UFOs. Most often reported is white, yellow, orange, and red. Considering that Erlanger, south of Cincinnati, is as the crow flies, a short hop for a UFO to New Jersey, the two events may be plausibly linked.

3. The Retrieval Operation. It was maximum security, said Morse, who, alone, in his patrol car, received word by radio that a state of alert was in effect at McGuire as a result of the shooting incident. He was ordered to Gate #5 to answer the request of a state police officer who had been “running code” with the MP during his encounter at Ft. Dix and wanted admission to the airbase. Morse was ordered to “comply,” but when the trooper wanted to get closer to the runway he was told that all personnel—including he and other members of his security police unit—were restricted from entry into the roped-off zone. Taking command was a new and unfamiliar team of Blue Berets that suddenly descended onto the scene, just moments after the runway had been cordoned off. With speed and efficiency “they took over” he said, “and when asked who they were we were told nothing and ordered to stay outside the ropes.” Perplexed by this covert action, he noted that all of them were staff sergeants and up, wearing fatigues without patches or insignia. And for headgear, he said, “they wore blue berets just like mine.”

In one letter Morse vaguely speculated they were “undercover cops” and, by phone, he said he felt certain “they” were stationed somewhere at McGuire to account for their quick deployment to the runway. In support of this, when asked if helicopters were seen or heard overhead or landed on or near the scene, his reply was negative. This, it seems, would rule out any notion that they had been transported from an outside base. It also strengthened his belief, and mine, that a UFO had not crashed or been disabled nearby requiring close tactical air support. But, what of a landed craft, perhaps one that touch-landed earlier at Ft. Dix? Could it have deployed one or more of its kind to perform a duty, forever unknown, at one or both of the adjoining military installations? The book, *Clear Intent* by Lawrence Fawcett & Barry Greenwood (Prentice-Hall, 1984) relates

many reports of UFO surveillance over airbases in 1975-76 and I know of many more hidden under the lid of secrecy.

At McGuire, once the sensitive area had been roped off and ECP (Entry Control Point) established, a generator unit was brought in for better lighting. At least a dozen men, said Morse, armed with M-16's were assigned to guard at the ropes and no one was allowed to enter except the base commander, the security police squadron commander, 1st Lt. WS of the security police squadron, and a base photographer.

While on patrol, Morse watched the Blue Beret specialists spray the corpse from a portable tank and cover it with a white sheet. Before daybreak the body was carefully placed onto a platform and a wooden frame built around it. This was finally placed into a large square silver metal container, about 10 x 10 feet with undistinguishable blue markings.

Before going off duty, Morse and others watched the silver box forklifted into a C-141 which arrived about 7 a.m. from Wright-Patterson AFB (identified by special markings) and, later, at a distance he said he watched the plane and its secret cargo soar aloft into limbo, presumed destination, Dayton, Ohio.

For Sgt. Morse and others of the Blue Beret regulars at McGuire, it was far from over when the C-141, with corpse, took off. Two days later he and three others he named were also on a C-141 on orders to report to Wright-Patterson, the base of many sancta. The setting at Wright-Patterson was like that of a court martial, a table and chairs in an unadorned room which Morse describes as follows: "While there we were all together except for actual interrogations. Mine had two men, one apparently a civilian with pipe and beard who never spoke. At one point there were three men. One played nice guy, one mean guy, and, of course, the silent civilian. All they wanted to know was the nature of the incident, what I knew and then told me about my duty to keep my mouth shut...I signed a form and it is supposed to bind me for life."

Never once, as Morse recalls, did any of the interrogators offer information or an explanation of the incident. Nor did anyone ever refer to the retrieved dead body or suggest that it may have been of extraterrestrial origin. Said Morse, "they beat around the bush, all references to it were indirect." The day after the interrogation, Morse returned to McGuire, was debriefed by his Commanding Officer, Lt. Col. FM, and released for normal duty. The incident, he said, was not discussed again by anyone as though it never happened.

The names of the officers at Wright-Patterson, including a Brigadier General, which Morse had had confirmed by a source still in the military, have been known to me since our first telephone chat. Although I agreed not to publish these names, in respect to security, I did insist they be authenticated and by someone other than myself, to lend credence to the case. With permission, I gave the names to Richard Hall, who had access to such records at the Library of Congress.

For the most part, his time and effort were not in vain. Although the Air Force Register for 1978 was “off the shelf,” he said he was able to find in the 1979 edition a status entry for each officer except one, a Colonel B who Morse had said played the “bad guy.” Hall speculated that Colonel B may have been with the CIA, but according to Morse, all the officers, including the questionable Colonel, were in civilian clothes, and each was identified with a nameplate showing his rank in parentheses. Whatever the Colonel’s role we are left to conclude that the silent, bearded man with a pipe, who, according to Morse, was without a nameplate, may have been with the CIA or another covert agency. To stem any suspicion, I had Morse check a picture of Dr. J. Allen Hynek, well-known for pipe and beard. His comment: “Some similarities, but my man was about 50 and his beard was flat, not a goatee. Don’t think it was Hynek.” (Note 6)

For the record, the officers at McGuire were also checked out and confirmed, but unfortunately, as Hall explained, the assignments for the time and place of the Wright-Patterson officers were not obtainable in the Air Force Register or in any other immediately available record. Also, disappointing, there was no direct way to check on the enlisted men named in the Incident/Complaint Report without having the identification of a social security or military serial number.

4. Surveillance? Morse believes that his problem of living under the burden of surveillance began with his first letter to me from overseas. If we can assume for a moment that Morse’s story is true, then we can also assume that such UFO-related military incidents are safeguarded by any means necessary to maintain optimum secrecy. Thus, Morse being a risk had his mail monitored. Needless to say, at this point when his breach of security was discovered, his mail and, perhaps, mine in 1980 suffered interference which led to his having visitors with warnings.

An example of bugging Morse psychologically and/or electronically occurred January 12, 1984, when I called him and got only “yes” and “no” to my questions. In his letter written the same day to explain his evasiveness he said, “Sorry for waiting so long on reply to your letter...there was a Government car on the street the day I got it. I don’t think it’s related but I don’t want to take any chances...I don’t know if it [surveillance] is relaxed anymore or, if it ever was...I must also mention that we had much trouble with our phone in the past two weeks and several different repairmen have corrected the same problems each time. That is why I hesitated to speak to you today on the phone.”

It is no wonder that Morse may have had some second thoughts about reaching me until 1983. But, His affairs were not to get better.

In early 1984, I had expressed my desire, again, to visit Morse, but this overture fell short when he announced in March that he planned a visit to the West Coast. While there, he said, he hoped to see someone who might provide the back-up information I needed. Seven months passes, again, in silence. Finally, on October 4, 1984, he answered my letter from September 4, saying briefly that he had a new problem; this time related to

his application for a position in law enforcement with a Government service. Commented Morse, in part. "...the Government is giving me a hard time...First, they wouldn't let me have the job. I took them to Federal Appeals Court and they were ordered to hire me. They're appealing the decision. I guess we know why this is happening..."

Later, by phone in December, I was to learn that Morse had received a call from an attorney in the Justice Department (name on file), who stated during their discussion on Morse's employment, "Your acquaintance with Mr. Stringfield didn't help!"

Then, by letter, December 31, 1984, Morse wrote, "I was approached by a person, wearing a black suit, in my parking lot who mentioned things may go my way if I deny this incident. I just received notice by registered mail that the Department of Justice has decided to make me eligible for hire. I feel these two things are related."

5. Analogy: The Ellsworth Case. In a James Bond movie we all can recognize James Bond, but in UFO research we cannot always identify the real Bond from a bogus Bond. For certain, however, intrigue is highly visible in Bond of fiction and in some areas of UFO research, especially in the sensitive area of crash/retrievals. While Morse's disclosures may seem fictitious, there is one parallel case of violence that probably is just that, fictitious, and it deserves a hearing in this report. This one is known as the Ellsworth Case because the missile site where it allegedly occurred is under the command of Ellsworth AFB near Rapid City, S. Dak.

The story begins with an unsigned note directed to the *National Enquirer*, January 29, 1978. It reads, in part, as follows: "The incident stated in the attached report actually occurred. The Air Force appointed a special team to investigate the incident. I was one of those individuals. I am still on active duty and so I cannot state my name at this time...the incident occurred on 16 November 1977...was classified top secret 2 December 1977. At that time I obtained a copy of the original report..."

At the *Enquirer*, Robert Pratt, a knowledgeable Ufologist, and a team of fellow reporters first thought it was a hoax. However, when they made a number of calls to Ellsworth and Rapid City to find that the men named in the report existed they decided to fly to the site for a firsthand investigation. The case quickly collapsed. By the time they finished their interviews with all concerned in the report, with the help of Ellsworth's Information Officer, and checked on each person's story, they were convinced that the incident was a hoax. Never published in the *Enquirer*, the story was scrapped until it was revived by some UFO enthusiasts circulating rumors that it was true and cleverly covered-up. To put it to rest, Pratt, during his tenure as editor of the *MUFON UFO Journal*, published his "Anatomy of a Hoax" in the January 1984 issue.

The Ellsworth case, although its Incident/Complaint Report predates the Ft. Dix-McGuire encounter, differs appreciably in that its source was so slipshod in handling of easily checkable facts about the personnel. Says Pratt in his expose, "we found more than 20 discrepancies or errors in the report – wrong names, numbers, occupations, physical

layouts and so on...It would be easy to say the Air Force falsified numerous documents, muzzled everyone on the base, published a phony high school yearbook, but that is highly unlikely...we spent a total of 44 man-days investigating this at a cost of more than \$15,000. We had no doubt that the incident in the so-called report never occurred.”

Morse, who has survived all of his ordeals since his story was published in Status Report III, remains openly agreeable to the investigation of his case. Cooperatively, he did not question my challenge to have the officer’s names at Wright-Patterson or the personnel at McGuire checked out, and welcomed the chance to meet and be interviewed on all issues by one of my more critical colleagues, Richard Hall.

For the record, Morse was made fully aware of the Ellsworth case with a Xeroxed copy sent to him for appraisal. He replied that the terminology used was pretty accurate, noting, “The form you see is probably a back office copy. It could have been rewritten.” In a later comment he said, “Without firsthand information, the case doesn’t mean much.” In short, what Morse was saying, “Where’s the source?”

6. Jeffrey Morse: The Person. In the Ellsworth case, the informant, who never surfaced, was remiss with facts in his Incident/Complaint Report. In the Ft. Dix-McGuire case, however, its bedrock of strength is not wholly reliant on the report, which was obtained for him by another source in his squadron. It is Jeffrey Morse, himself. It is the Morse who once wrote to me, “The public should know the truth.”

Through many letters and mostly by phone I got to know Morse as amiable, bright and alert and inclined toward reticence, never resorting to glib, idle chatter. When questioned on critical or touchy issues, he was trigger-quick to respond in convincing detail; but, in the main, he always spoke guardedly, revealing little personal emotion over his dramatic experiences. Sometimes I felt that behind this stoic reserve, and his admission that he didn’t have answers to many of my questions, he may have known more than he was saying. Above all, however, Morse never once contradicted himself with the information he chose to offer.

From experience, I knew all along that my one-to-one contact with my key source, who would remain anonymous to research, was not sufficient. I also knew, for good reasons, that my time to get a second witness, with an objective appraisal, was running out. Foremost in mind was the “deal” proposed to Morse by a stranger in a parking lot, which, if effected, could possibly stall or even prevent any further contact. Also, having selected Case A-3 as my topic for the MUFON symposium in St. Louis, I had no time to spare. My deadline for final copy was March 1st. Phone calls brought quick results. Morse and Hall met January 13, 1985, at a mall near Washington, D.C. Hall, with finesse in the role of playing “devil’s advocate,” agreed that the character of Morse was of greater importance than rehashing the details of the incident. In this manner, Hall watched and listened. Following are comments from his letter, January 13, 1985:

“I did not pursue any hard line of questioning, mainly wanting to gain his confidence and form some impression of his credibility. I broke the ice by showing him the typed list of name checks which we discussed for a while, and he spoke easily after that...Personally, A-3 was well-groomed, friendly, relaxed, calm, articulate. He spoke confidently and without hesitation in answer to questions, and did not come across at all as someone who has concocted a tall tale and might contradict himself or get caught in some sort of trap if he weren't careful. He showed no mannerisms that would betray any obvious psychoses or 'hang-up.' Other than a healthy dose of disdain for authorities for which he apparently had good reason, he did not have any obvious axe to grind.

“He explained his personal situation and repeated to me what he told you in case he suddenly denied the story...He professes not to be interested in UFOs and that he put the experience behind him without any lingering trauma...overall, I detected nothing in his manner, or story, to cause skepticism. To the contrary, he seemed very credible to me. He also spoke easily about his family and relatives toward the end of our interview, and was not at all 'full' of the story and wanting only to talk about it; no obsession. Pending further investigation, I would tend to give him very high marks. I kept a mental picture of other possible explanations, but they did not fit his image, style, or demeanor.”

SUMMARY COMMENTS

In bringing my report to a close, I recognize the need for more information about the shooting episode at Ft. Dix and the nature of the body retrieved from McGuire. But, for the moment, the testimony of the one and only available witness must carry the so-called burden of proof. Hall's informative meeting and my many exchanges by letter and phone certainly establish a strong base for Morse's integrity.

In closing, I must note that, in character with his downplaying of events, Morse never once stated to me that the entity he saw, despite its alien anatomy, was of extraterrestrial origin or that it might have come from one of the UFOs he saw overhead on that fatal night of January 18, 1978.

At this point, with so much at stake on the testimony of one witness, we must go beyond the anecdote and the support data and take a closer look at the witness himself. What kind of person is Jeffrey Morse? Born September 10, 1958, he was 20 years old at the time of the incident. After high school he attended various universities taking prep courses, finally majoring in computer science. A Catholic by faith, he attends church regularly and in keeping with his interest in law enforcement, he is a member of the Fraternal Order of Police. Among his hobbies and for recreation he is into video taping, foreign languages, plays softball, touch football, and is a coach in youth sporting activities.

Morse is not a UFO buff. He is not aware of most UFO events or nationally known researchers and authors. To this end, I submitted fifteen names to him for his comment, but he could not identify any one of them. When I mentioned this detail to one of my more perceptive contemporaries, he remarked, “You should expect this kind of pretended ignorance from a plant setting you up with false information.”

A point, indeed, but it’s a weak point. I know of no good reason for an undercover agent to continue to play games long after his story was published in my 1982 Status Report. Certainly if it were contrived to expose my gullibility and thus discredit my work, why have the conspirators not unleashed their stooges to flaunt their spoils of triumph by now? Moreover, Morse knows that I have no intention to present his case, in this paper, as proof.

Status Report IV is purely an analysis of events encompassing one case worthy of serious review. I believe the data I present here offer substantially more than other encounters or retrievals published in my series of status reports. Significantly inadequate by comparison is the Nellis AFB affair, 1968, in Case A-5 Status Report II, and the Lumberton (or Wilmington), Ohio, skirmish in Case B-13 of the same paper and updated on Page 44 of Status Report III. The only commonality, it seems, is that they all carry a burden of proof as do *all cases in UFO lore!*

Since 1982, new sources have emerged and vanished on the horizon of my research, none worthy of a monograph. I think Jeffrey Morse’s case is special and, if we like to ramble in our thoughts seeking answers, or feel inclined to speculate into the shadowy realms of intrigue, perhaps there is another side to secrecy, the side that occasionally *leaks* the truth, if you will, for the simple reason that it is long overdue.

NOTES

1. See Status Report III (1982), pages 40-41; also articles published in *MUFON UFO Journal*, Dec. 1980 and Sept. 1981.
2. Also known as the Bentwaters Case, site of U.S. air base in the Rendlesham Forest. See *Sky Crash* by British authors Brenda Butler, Dot Street, and Jenny Randles (Neville Spearman, England, 1984). I must, however, note that these authors are in error on page 213 where they state, “Stringfield was too scared to travel to the conference [Univ. of Nebraska, Nov. 1983, where my paper “UFO C/R Update” was read by Ray Boeche] because he believed he was in danger following his research.” Not so. There was no basis whatsoever for being scared. My reason, simply, was that I had no important information in my brief report warranting my presence or the expense of travel.
3. See statement in Epilogue, page 49, of Status Report III, signed by Dr. Peter Rank and Richard Hall.
4. See Incident/Complaint Report, Item 11, where the box for “Unfounded” is checked. Inasmuch as “Unfounded” suggests that the incident was baseless, I

asked Morse to explain this classification. He said that it referred only to the limited information available to his security police squadron, which was not in a position to evaluate the incident. Also note that the check in Item 13 indicates that the case was referred to "Other agency" (AFOSI) for final disposition, including "One body of unknown origin..." released to other authorities. The security police squadron had no basis for any other "Evaluation."

5. See Case A7 in Status Report II (1980) which includes letter from medical source describing, in layman's terms, his observation of alien specimen. See also analogous description by a former CIA person in Case A6, same report.
6. On my suggestion, Morse obtained a copy of the Feb. 1985 issue of OMNI magazine, which featured an article about Dr. Hynek with current pictures. Oddly, a letter sent to Morse on Jan. 12, 1985, with various enclosures, including pictures of Dr. Hynek (vintage 1978) for his comments, was never received.

Literature Availability. My earlier Status Reports referenced above are available as follows:

UFO Crash/Retrieval Syndrome: Status Report II, 1980. Order from: MUFON, 103 Oldtowne Rd., Seguin, TX 78155. Price: \$5.00 plus \$1.50 for postage and handling.

UFO Crash/Retrievals: Amassing the Evidence, Status Report III, 1982. Order from the author: 4412 Grove Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45237. Price: \$11.00.