

MEMORANDUM

TO: Files

DATE: 12 February 1968

FROM: Robert J. Low

SUBJECT: Discussions with David Saunders and Norman Levine Concerning James McDonald's Possession of a Memorandum Written to Deans Archer and Manning on August 9, 1966.

Both Saunders and Levine admitted to being members of a "group" that had reached a decision to give a copy of the memorandum in question to McDonald. The discussions revealed that McDonald had known about the contents of this memo long before a copy of it was given to him. Both persons admitted to having actually transmitted the document to JEM at a meeting in Denver "a couple of months ago." Neither admitted to having transmitted the document himself. Saunders stated that he did not do it; Levine would not say.

Levine said that McDonald asked for the memo, and it was given to him. But Levine could not recall - he said he couldn't remember - how it was that the memo happened to be taken down to Denver that evening. He would not admit to any planning or preparation for the act. EUC asked whether such a thing could possibly happen by coincidence, that one of the members of the "group" just happened to have a copy of the memorandum at the time that McDonald asked for it. Levine refused to provide further information on this point.

Saunders indicated that he had loyalty to the work, that is to the study of UFOs, but that he did not have any loyalty to the project or to the persons who have been brought together in the study to examine the problem. Therefore, he said, if he felt it were necessary to give McDonald a copy of the memo for the greater benefit of the study of UFOs, he would do so even if it entailed damage to the project, to the persons associated with the project, and to the University.

Levine admitted that he was aware that the transmission of the document could indeed be damaging to the University and to the project, but he, too, served a higher allegiance - namely, the UFO problem rather than the project or the University. It was pointed out by EUC that the act had taken place approximately two months ago; yet neither person had advised EUC or RJL what they had done.

Both persons were asked what they thought the project should be doing that it was not doing. Saunders said that we had not been sufficiently vigorous in pursuing the investigation of the "conspiracy hypothesis," and he gave as examples the Edwards Air Force Base case and one other, which I cannot remember. In the case of Edwards, Low commented that he (Low) had carried that one as far as he felt it was possible to go, and it was a matter of judgment whether anything further could be done. Low felt that we had reached a dead-end, having contacted the person who allegedly received the

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report. That person had stated flatly that he did not receive such a report. What more can be done? Low emphasized, however, that he did not prevent or discourage Levine or Saunders from carrying the investigation further if they could see a way to do it. Saunders complained that Low's help was needed to pursue some conspiracy investigations and Low failed to provide the support necessary and that he disagreed on many occasions with Levine's proposed approach. Low indicated that there were a number of cases in which he disagreed with Levine on how to approach the matter and he pointed out that, when there were such disagreements, Low indicated that Levine could go ahead on the basis of his own (Levine's) approach if he wished to do so, but Low would not devote time to an effort he regarded as ineffective. Low stated he was interested in pursuing the conspiracy hypothesis, but he would only give effort to it when he felt the approach proposed held promise of getting us someplace.

Saunders could not think of anything else that we were not doing that we should be doing.

Levine also mentioned the conspiracy question and said that we weren't doing that right. On another matter, he stated that he felt in any research project the first thing one does is get hold of all of the results of past work in the field. He mentioned that Reports 1 through 12 in a series that led up to Special Report 14 had not been obtained and indeed that Special Report 14 had not been obtained, although Low pointed out that it had been right at the beginning of the project. RJL responded that we could not get Reports 1 through 12 because we did not know of their existence, and, although the Air Force is under obligation to give us everything that is relevant to the problem, they did not give us these reports. He asserted that we cannot be faulted for not requesting something the existence of which we are not aware. Moreover, it is difficult to fault the Air Force for not sending it to us, because, in response to the demand that everything on the subject be sent to us, it is difficult for them to think of everything, and it is always a judgment matter as to what is relevant and what is not.

Both persons were asked whether there were any other lines of attack that should be pursued that were not being. Saunders said that he needed a little time to think about that. Levine said that at the moment he could not think of anything.

Levine and Saunders indicated that they regarded communications as bad. EUC pointed out that he was easily available, but Saunders and Levine had not troubled themselves to call him to discuss their misgivings. EUC pointed out that, if communications were bad, they were bad in the other direction. That is to say, Levine and Saunders had been given an almost completely free hand to do what they wanted - and they both agreed that they had been - but they had not taken the trouble to inform EUC of their progress or of their actions. Levine did not inform EUC what trips he had authorized, and EUC often found out about them by reading it in a newspaper. EUC asked why, if we were prejudiced, we would give them so much freedom to proceed as they wished. They had no answer to this.

other

Neither Saunders nor Levine would reveal who were the members of the "group," if any.

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Saunders was interviewed first, then Levine. Levine came into the room while Saunders was still present. Although Low had indicated, when he called Levine to ask him to come over to EUC's office, that we wished to interview persons alone and individually, Saunders made no motion to leave the room when Levine arrived. RJL indicated that we wished to see Levine alone. Saunders then stated that this was contrary to an agreement he had with Levine, whereupon Low ordered Saunders to leave the room. He did.

It appeared from the evidence given, that the night the document was given to McDonald was the evening before the conference at Denver Stapleton Airport to discuss the survival of the VFON network. That cannot be determined with certainty, but it looks likely. That evening Craig and Ahrens (according to reports by Craig and Ahrens) returned from a sighting, and, knowing that McDonald and Hynek were in town, they thought it might be a good idea to join the group; they knew that Levine and Saunders were going into Denver for a meeting with McDonald and Hynek. Accordingly, Craig called the Holiday Inn, where Hynek and McDonald were staying, and got Levine, who said, apparently after first consulting with Saunders, that this would not be an appropriate time for them to join the meeting.

We obtained no information on the extent to which, if at all, Hynek may be implicated in the goings on.

END OF MEMO

RJL:mla

cc: E. U. Condon