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Wilhelm Reich, Orgone Energy, and UFOs

Peter Robbins at the Third Annual Crash and Retrieval Symposium

Dateline: Tuesday, October 18, 2005

by Peter Robbins

Author and UFO Investigator

"What do they want for Proof? There is no proof. There are no authorities whatsoever. No president, no academy, court of law, congress, or senate on this Earth has the knowledge or power to decide what will be the knowledge of tomorrow. There is no use in trying to prove something that is unknown to someone who is ignorant of the unknown or fearful of its threatening power. Only the good, old rules of learning will eventually bring about understanding of what has invaded our earthly existence."

-- Wilhelm Reich, Contact With Space

Reich moved from New York to an area just outside the town of Rangeley in rural southern Maine in the early 1950s. Here he built a new home and laboratory personally designed to integrate home and laboratory into a single, brilliantly practical building (now the home of the Wilhelm Reich Museum). Another laboratory was added soon after for students. This structure was the setting for the so-called **Oranur Experiment** -- a chilling example of the accumulator's undeniable ability to concentrate energy. The experiment called for the placing of a very small amount of radium in an accumulator, the unexpected result of which was to toxify a surprisingly large area of southern Maine surrounding his home and laboratory -- one that took several months to dissipate.

And so we come to it. Reich's interest in UFOs dates from 1953. Why did he become interested in them? And how did he arrive at his conclusions concerning them? Until 1953, there is no written or anecdotal indication that he had paid any attention to all the publicity surrounding "flying saucers" even when in 1952, some visitors to his home and laboratory reported seeing shining objects in the sky that were decidedly not stars.

In November 1953, though, he read one of the best books available on the subject at the time -- Flying Saucers from Outer Space. The author -- a retired Marine Corps Major named Donald Keyhoe -- was a highly-respected and decorated World War II fighter pilot and pioneered much of the basis for modern scientific UFO studies. Reich's writings indicate he was intrigued by Keyhoe's observation that the maneuverability, speed, and silence of the unknowns repeatedly defied conventional laws of mechanical flight. At the time, Reich wrote, "I had not studied anything on the subject. I knew practically nothing about it. But my mind -- used to expecting surprises in natural research -- was open to anything that seemed real."

Keyhoe's book was followed by E. J. Ruppelt's Report on UFOs. Ruppelt was a retired USAF Captain who had headed the Air Force's ongoing UFO record-keeping (and public relations) program '**Project Blue Book**'. And his book prompted Reich to note, "The Ruppelt Report on UFOs clearly reveals the helplessness of mechanistic method in coming to grips with the problems posed by the spacemen. The cosmic orgone energy which these living beings are using in their technology is beyond the grasp of mechanistic science since cosmic laws of functioning are not mechanical but what I term "functional". The helplessness of mechanical thinking appears in the tragic shortcoming of our fastest fighter jets to make and hold contact with UFOs. Being unavoidably outdistanced is not a flattering situation for military pride. The conclusion seems correct: Mechanistic methods of locomotion must be counted out in coping with the spaceship problem."

One night as he sat on the steps outside his home in Maine, something flashed by at great speed. Its behavior was not suggestive of a comet, meteorite, or shooting star. Reich reported the sighting to the Air Force Base at Presque Island, Maine. It was the first of many sighting reports that he would forward to the Air Force. Following his report, he was asked to fill out an official questionnaire. In March, 1954, Reich sent a copy of his survey on UFOs to the Air Force. The survey was actually a manuscript detailing his theoretical conclusions of them as spacecraft.

The questionnaire came out of 'AFR 200-2' -- the Air Force's regulations regarding the reporting of UFOs which had gone into effect in August of that year. Reich had filled out copies of the form following a number of sightings. His daughter Dr. Eva Reich -- now a retired physician living in Maine -- recalled that "the interest of the Air Force in UFOs was being totally suppressed at that time. When you reported a UFO, they came to you with this questionnaire and told you it was secret and had you fill it out. Then they took it away. What happened with it, nobody knows. When Reich published the questionnaire in Contact With Space, he revealed a big secret."

Basic to this scientist's understanding of the Universe was the pervasive presence of energy (which he termed "orgone energy"), implying the possibility of life in space. At this time, his questioning encompassed the galactic currents, the formation and destruction of star systems, and the origin of the Universe itself. Along with his deepening involvement in **cloudbusting**, he now began a careful examination of the stars and set about proving that some "stars" did not behave like others.

The method he used was nocturnal, time-lapse photography. In this investigatory technique, the camera is carefully set to face the night sky with the shutter open. The experiment proceeded with unexpected results. Some of the stars did not produce the white lines caused by the Earth's rotation. These stars simply vanished indicating that they were something else. He now began to wonder in earnest what they might be and specifically what they were doing in the skies over Maine.

Reich saw the Oranur Experiment -- with its massive pollution of the Maine area -- as the cause of their immediate interest in the region. Considering his own observations, those of a number of co-workers, and independent reports of UFO activity over Maine, it was hardly egoistic that he should assume that his activities might be the subject of their special attention. If these craft had harnessed the sea of energy pervading the Universe, what might be the effect of training a cloudbuster on one? The results of this action were both profound and disturbing. He writes in Contact With Space:

"I hesitated for weeks to turn my cloudbuster pipes toward a "star" as if I had known that some of the blinking lights hanging in the sky were no planets or stars but space machines. With the fading out of the 2 "stars", the cloudbuster had suddenly changed into a **spacegun**. When I saw the "star" to the west fade out 4 times in succession, what had been left of the old world of human knowledge after the discovery of orgone energy, tumbled beyond

retrieve. From now on, everything – anything -- was possible. Nothing could any longer be considered ‘impossible’.

“I had directed the draw-pipes connected with the deep well towards and ordinary star and the star had faded out 4 times. There was no mistake about it. 3 more people had seen it. There was only one conclusion: The thing we had drawn from was not a star. It was something else -- a UFO! The shock of this experience was great enough not to repeat such an action until October 10, 1954.”

Preceding this on October 5 and 6, 3 large, yellow UFOs hung low over the southern horizon with another over the observatory on Reich's property. On October 10, a large reddish UFO hovered just to the south of the property. At this point, the cloudbuster was trained on it and it moved. The unknown became less red as the device kept its aim, then moved higher, and later sank down below the horizon.

Shortly thereafter, a second light (yellow) appeared in the west. After 2 minutes of direct drawing, it faded, came back, flashed, pulsed, and wobbled while moving irregularly from south-to-north. There was for Reich the distinct, subjective impression of a struggle. “It came back again shortly after, and again became fainter and smaller after drawing on it. The remaining 4 unknowns (to the north, south and west) then removed themselves, disappearing from sight.”

On October 10 for a second time, Reich dimmed "stars" and induced them to move "as if in flight in different directions." He again concluded they were machines and not ones of terrestrial origin. While it might seem naive to some, Reich chose to direct his written concerns regarding this likelihood directly to President Eisenhower. The White House response asked him to send such communications to the Air Force and to the CIA. As a result, a letter articulating his observations of and concerns about UFOs was sent to the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency -- a career Naval Intelligence officer named **Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter**. Reich would have had no way of knowing, but in more rarefied circles the Director was sometimes referred to by another title – ‘MJ-1’.

Not only had Reich inadvertently made contact with a member of the President's ultra-secret UFO working group [Majestic-12], he had reached out to its top man. Was the information Reich supplied a contributing factor in Hillenkoetter's becoming such a vocal opponent of UFO secrecy following his stepping down as Director? Or was this simply part of a plan to allow an extremely highly-placed operative to insinuate himself smack in the center of civilian UFO counterculture? I cannot say, but I am convinced that if the members of MJ-12 were not aware of Reich's UFO-related activities prior to October 1954. They were from that time on and would have identified him as a man whose actions bore monitoring. And possibly worse.

In Wilhelm Reich and the Cold War, Jim Martin identifies one other plausible link between Reich and MJ-12. His name was **Lewis W. Douglas**. Reich refers to him briefly in Contact With Space as the “Director Savings and Loan” and as a close associate of President Eisenhower. He was also Director of Research for the Institute of Atmospheric Physics in Tucson and a man very interested in **weather control**. Their first contact dates from 1954 when Reich had his assistant -- William Moise -- attempt to contact Douglas and arrange a meeting with him.

It had not been Reich who suggested to Moise that he get in touch with Douglas. It had been Charles Gardner, Jr., Executive Secretary of the Advisory Committee on Weather Control for the Government. He was also the National Weather Bureau's liaison with the Institute of Atmospheric Physics. Gardner had actually written to Moise on March 21, 1955 saying "we appreciate being informed of your activities."

Douglas's secretary wrote up Moise's calls in the form of memos. The first one read in part: "He {Moise} had just come from Washington and had spoken to people in the Dept. of Agriculture, Weather Bureau, and in Mr. Gardner's office about weather control. They suggested that Mr. D {Douglas} might be interested in information he had." But no answer was forthcoming until July 27 when Douglas cabled Moise, and Reich and Douglas began to correspond. They likely would have met in Tucson later that year, but Douglas had to be hospitalized for major surgery during the time Reich visited Arizona.

My colleagues Jim Martin and Kenn Thomas (archivist, author, and conspiracy-related publisher) have engaged in some educated speculation on the possibility of a link between Lew Douglas and MJ-12 and it is worth relating here. I draw directly from Martin's published comments in doing so. Douglas was known to be very close to Eisenhower and had a well-known interest in weather control. The Douglas-Moise Memo is dated July 14, 1954, only 10 days prior to the seminal National Archives, MJ-12 document, the Cutler-Twining Memo. Thomas reminds us that Robert Cutler had been with the CIA as a **psyops** (psychological operations) expert and instrumental in bringing Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" to completion.

In his memo, Cutler informs USAF **General Nathan Twining** ('MJ-4') that a scheduled meeting is being changed and that the "Special Studies Project" would now meet "during the already scheduled White House meeting of July 16, rather than following it as previously intended." What the actual reason for this change, it insured that President Eisenhower would be in attendance. Quoting Martin:

"Thomas suggests that the timing of this sequence of events might indicate that Douglas - as a member of Eisenhower's 'kitchen cabinet' -- may have been privy to or associated with the MJ-12 group. I agree that Douglas -- one of the most powerful men in American politics at the time -- would have known about MJ-12 if it existed. Thomas argues that Douglas -- having been briefed about the meeting of MJ-12 members on July 16 at the White House -- developed a more serious interest in Reich's planned operations in Tucson on the basis of Reich's observations of UFOs. This would have explained the sudden change in attitude on July 27, 1955 when Douglas sent a telegram to Moise inviting further correspondence. After all, Douglas had hired a 'UFO nut' -- James E. McDonald -- to head the IAP in 1954."

Freewheeling conspiratorial musings or grounded, informed speculation? Personally, I subscribe to the latter. For the record, Martin establishes that Reich drove through Roswell on his way to Tucson. There is some intriguing anecdotal evidence that he returned there, but it is not inconclusive.

Reich's point-of-view on UFOs shifted between 1953 and 1957. At first, he theorized they were benign observers. But then he gradually became convinced that either by intention or accident, they were contributing to the pollution accumulating in the atmosphere. Contact With Space -- privately published after his 1957 death -- documents early weather modification -- or CORE (Cosmic ORgone Engineering) operations -- and the 1954-55 cloudbusting expedition to Arizona. The book -- published in an edition of only 500 -- details a great deal more information than this paper is designed to cover. And it is not my intention here to synopsise this sweeping text. Only that Reich's scientific observations of, interactions with, and findings on UFOs chronicled in Contact With Space made it indispensable in the preparation of this article.

The following day -- October 11 -- Reich authorized his friend, research associate, and son-in-law (who was a trained cloudbuster operator) to call the Air Technical Intelligence Command (ATIC) in Dayton, Ohio and make an appointment to discuss the disabling of the UFOs the previous day. Moise was in Ohio on his way to Arizona at the time. A meeting with a General Watson was agreed upon on for October 14. Over the phone, Watson asked Moise -- if necessary -- could their conference be continued into the evening? And how did Reich know that the UFOs had been disabled?

Moise arrived at the facility early on the 14th where he was met by a Dr. Byers, a physicist employed by the command. Byers escorted Moise to the conference, also attended by a USAF Captain Hill and a civilian named Harry Haberer [6:8]. Asking where General Watson was, Moise was told that he was unable to attend. Angered, Moise left and returned to his Dayton motel. The next day, Moise received a phone call from Captain Hill conveying Watson's apologies and was asked if the report could be made to ATIC Deputy Commander Colonel Wertenbaker. Moise agreed and they met later that day. Present were Captain Hill, Dr. Byers, Haberer and the Colonel. Moise gave an oral presentation and all took notes except the Colonel. Feeling that this had been a significant meeting -- that at least some breakthrough had been made in interesting a branch of the Government in Reich's observations of the involvement with UFOs -- Moise wrote that:

"The contact with Col. Wertenbaker was excellent throughout the conference. He was serious, intent and looked at me while I talked. He was the only one who did. His excitement increased as the report progressed."

Several days later, the Colonel wrote to the Director of Intelligence for the Air Force (somehow this note ended up in the Food and Drug Administration's case file on Reich). It read in part:

"General Watson did not talk personally to Mr. Moise, I am happy to say. But I interviewed this person ... The information given us by Moise defies description and I'll not attempt to give you the details ... The Air Force will do well to avoid entanglements but what is absolutely necessary from the standpoint of good public relations."

Dr. Byers, the physicist, told Moise that he was familiar with Reich's work. Harry Haberer -- the civilian in attendance -- was described as working on the history of UFOs with the Air Force. Leaving Ohio, Moise continued on to Arizona. Meanwhile Reich, his son Peter, and several others were driving west as well. Each vehicle carried an appropriate assortment of laboratory equipment and had a cloudbuster in tow. They arrived at the leased property 10 miles outside of Tucson on October 19, 1954. Once settled in, they commenced drawing operations, regularly observing the atmosphere with their meteorological instruments. Records were kept in accordance with strict scientific method. Individual journals were also kept.

Robert McCulloch -- another trained cloudbuster operator -- assisted Reich and Moise in the operation. Drawing began at the end of October. Many UFOs were observed during the nights of October 31 and November 1 over the area. By November 7, moisture in the atmosphere had risen from the usual 15% to 65% -- an unheard of relative humidity for Tucson. Drawing continued, mostly from the southwest direction. On November 7, the first clouds were forming thickly and soon covered the sky, indicating rain.

Then without apparent explanation, the clouds began to decompose. That evening, a large, bright UFO was seen coming up from the north. It moved slowly southwest until it stopped and hovered for several hours 10-to-15 degrees above the southern horizon. A connection between the dissipation of clouds and the presence of UFOs in the skies seemed unavoidable after this sequence of events continued to repeat itself.

Weather modification was a subject of genuine interest to a number of military and civilian offices within the Eisenhower Administration. The Tucson-based Institute of Atmospheric Physics was founded in 1953 as a direct result of the President's 1953 Advisory Committee on Weather Control. An atmospheric physicist with a background in Naval intelligence was appointed to the committee as Associate Director and at some point during that November or December may have met Reich.

His name was **Dr. James E. McDonald**. We know him to be another scientist of great courage and passion. One who like Reich, had the temerity to work toward bringing the subject of serious UFO studies to the American public, much to the detriment of both their careers. Eva Reich recalled that McDonald had visited the cloudbusting site when a TV crew came to film their operations. And that both he and Reich had been interviewed for the report. But the footage was never aired.

From what we know of Dr. McDonald, there is every likelihood he would have had cause for serious interest in at least 2 areas of Reich's work. Still, we do not know conclusively whether the two actually met and possibly talked that day. Or whether their paths had merely crossed on the edge of that desert. But there is the additional factor to consider as well -- that at the time McDonald was working closely with and for the previously-discussed Lew Douglas.

By November 13, the relative humidity had risen to 67% and rain seemed imminent in a location which had seen none in 5 years. But by that evening, the humidity had dropped 20 points to 47%. The next day, 2 bright, pulsating, flashing UFOs were seen low in the eastern sky. Upon direct draw, the first dimmed after an initial stronger blinking ... then remained dim. The second wobbled. Then it too, dimmed markedly. Suddenly, a third came up in the east as if from nowhere. Early on the morning of the 18th, a UFO was seen on the horizon and within 2 hours, an Air Force aircraft was seen circling the area. More UFOs continued to be observed in direct relationship with the destruction of the relative humidity.

On the morning of November 29, Reich -- looking at the eastern sky through a 3½-inch refracting telescope -- observed a fully articulated **cigar-shaped craft**. In his notes, he writes that he first refused to accept the notions. But windows were clearly observed on the object and recorded in his drawings. The ship was observed -- as cloud cover would allow -- off and on between December 1 and December 17. Charts of its movements were kept.

By December 14, the atmosphere in the area of the base camp -- and indeed in Tucson itself -- was oppressive and deadening. Just prior to this, Reich's associate Dr. Silvert had transported a small amount of radioactive material that had been exposed in an accumulator from Maine to the Tucson site. The material had to be towed on a cable 100 feet behind a hired plane as its lead shielding was unable to contain its altered reaction.

At about 4:30 PM, a huge black cloud formed over the Tucson area, gradually turning deep purple with a somewhat reddish glow. The background radiation count in the area jumped to an alarming 100,000 counts-per-minute. The usual background count had been holding at 600-800 counts-per-minute. 12 Air Force planes over flew the base camp and their contrails (made of water vapor) quickly dissolved. 20 minutes after both cloudbusters began drawing, the skies cleared. At 5:30 PM, 4 B-56 bombers flew in low over the area. Reich felt that this "cloud" masked the presence of other UFOs. If so, this incident was indeed properly categorized as a **battle**. Interest in the newly arrived and highly aggravated radioactive material was a suspected cause of their appearance.

As these historic events were transpiring, the University of Arizona's weather modification study was ongoing and in process. Part of the study involved the time-lapse photography of jet planes contrails. As recorded, Reich had observed and reported their presence during various cloudbusting operations and had observed the disintegration of their contrails during operations in Arizona. He even wondered "Whether the Air Force had actually such problems in mind, I cannot tell." Investigative author Jim Martin was able to locate color film from the 1950s in the University of Arizona's Physics and atmospheric Science Building showing Air Force jets being used in weather modification experiments as Reich himself had wondered about.

These and other such findings led me to believe that **our Government had a very real interest in Dr. Reich's UFO observations and findings, as well as in his weather modification work** from the President on down. By way of one last example (or coincidence, we should take note that on November 22, 1955, President Eisenhower's proposal for the peaceful use of atomic energy was accepted by the United Nations. It was called "Atoms for Peace". Some months prior, Reich had sent Eisenhower a copy of his paper documenting the Oranur Experiment, and the operations and experiments that had sprung from it. That paper was entitled "Atoms for Peace".

The literature generated about Reich's contempt trial is considerable. And any treatment here must oversimplify its many complexities. While interested readers should try and locate a copy of Jerome Greenfield's book Wilhelm Reich versus the USA among other works on the subject, the basics are as follows.

The Federal Drug Administration had begun accumulating information toward building a case against the scientist shortly after Mildred Brady's article appeared in 1947. But it had been slow going. None of Reich's past or current patients or any of those with the physicians that he'd trained in medical orgone therapy had registered a complaint with the FDA or any other authority for that matter. Reich and his associates had broken no laws. But given that the FDA "knew" he was a quack and orgonomy a fraud, it stood to reason there was no need to put any of his alleged experiments to the test. Their responsibility was to bring this sex-obsessed medical menace to justice. And they remained undeterred in their efforts.

And so the FDA went to the federal court and brought a complaint against the interstate shipment of accumulators or any components thereof. Their break came in 1955 when one of Reich's physicians -- Dr. Michael Silvert -- did just that. And Reich -- then involved in the Tucson cloudbusting operation -- took legal responsibility for the injunction's violation. Silbert felt that allowing the matter to go to court would be the equivalent of admitting they were in the wrong. After due consideration, Reich agreed and wrote to the judge explaining his decision noting that his argument might be rejected. They did, and the complaint became an injunction.

FDA agents began showing up on Reich's property. But he refused to allow them access to any of his apparati or written materials and continued with his experiments. This resulted in a contempt-of-court citation. And while their original legal parry had been civil, it had now graduated to a criminal and a court date was set. Given the betrayal of his lawyers, he decided to represent himself and -- against the advice of some of those closest to him -- chose to make the trial a forum for the validity of his research and findings. Eloquent though he was, the judge would have none of it. He was convicted and sentenced to 2 years in Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. He was 59 years old.

Once in prison, Reich underwent psychiatric evaluation. Staff psychiatrists noted that he "gave no concrete evidence of being mentally incompetent" but diagnosed him as being a paranoid schizophrenia, this while admitting their finding was "not based on physical evaluation". Early release was denied and the Supreme Court chose not to comment on his final writ. He was found dead in his cell on November 3, 1957 -- **just 7 days before his scheduled release date.**

Since his death, most accounts of Dr. Wilhelm Reich's life and work -- be they supportive or otherwise -- follow a similar logic: that the level of importance which he ascribed to his UFO observations (and his allegations that the Communists were out to get him) were, in themselves, a means of "proving" -- or at least suggesting -- that he had gone quite mad during his last years. Such material is often presented in a manner suggesting that a good deal of "fairness", objectivity, and patience were

spent in sorting all this out for the reader. Some writers don't even bother. With no real interest in fair scientific inquiry or method -- and no serious grounding in UFO studies, orgonomy, or the documented specifics of the conspiracy to destroy his reputation and discredit his work -- Reich's detractors accuse and rant, exposing the madness they perceive. Often written in angry displays of public-spirited concern, they warn the good reader away like police at the scene of an accident. Other accounts are simply inaccurate.

In Contact With Space, Dr. Wilhelm Reich's reflections on the possible implications of an *extraterrestrial* reality are often moving, profound, and disturbing. He dares, as a scientist, to exercise a most precious right: the right to challenge an established and accepted belief -- the right to think a thought, no matter how others might perceive it, recording that thought for publication and standing by it in the face of almost universal criticism. Read out of context -- that is, without benefit of any serious study of his previous writings, methodology or discoveries -- even the most intelligent and perceptive reader may find it preferable to dismiss his observations and conclusions as bearing witness to a great mind finally derailed, rather than even considering them seriously. The very act of claiming to have observed UFOs and, over time, their behavior; interacting with them via the cloudbuster; ascribing to them intelligence and intention; keeping the Air Force, the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Bureau, and the office of the President apprised of his activities; and finally the posthumous publishing of Contact With Space proved intolerable to all by a few.

Even A. S. Neill -- the distinguished British educator who was Reich's loyal friend and colleague of many years -- seemed convinced these findings would only prove to be an embarrassment to orgonomy. But not at first. In March of 1955, Neill wrote to Reich:

"Thanks for the saucer book which came a few days ago. It sure made me sit up. So much Air Force testimony can't be ignored. Inclined to accept your opinion that they are benign {an opinion which changed markedly}. The only problem I can imagine would be their arrival here to stop the inevitable atomic destruction of all life. Mutual fear won't stop war. Almost looks as if Freud was right in saying there is a death instinct when one sees the whole mass of people thinking of football and radio etc. at a time when the sinking of a U.S. aircraft carrier off Formosa or the enthusiasm of a U.S. pilot might set the light to the gunpowder barrel. Hence I say let the spacemen come. They might save us and if they came as destroyers they could not be more dangerous than man himself."

I should stress here that Reich had few friendships or professional relationships of such duration and depth. And it is not my intention to put a particular cast on Neill here. It is just that he articulated the prevailing attitude so well. In December 1957, a month after Reich's death, he wrote this to Ilse Ollendorff, Reich's former wife and co-worker:

"The difficulty will not be to separate what's valuable from what isn't. The idea that the trial was orchestrated from Moscow is just bunkum, and we have no proof of flying saucers anyway. Why should Reich's great work be mixed up with either factor? That Reich later had some illusions I think right. But they don't do anything to lessen his work. We all have illusions and maybe the greater we are, the greater the illusions. But that Eva {Reich's daughter} and Moise {his son-in-law} and Steig {cartoonist and illustrator of Reich's book Listen Little Man} and a financial backer of the Arizona expedition} should go on having illusions is bad, bad for the future of Reich's acceptance as a scientist.

And there's the rub: "bad for the future of Reich's acceptance as a scientist" -- a consideration not taken lightly by Neill and others deeply concerned about the future of orgonomy. I can only wonder how Neill would have reacted had he been in the room when students and faculty members at his

beloved Summerhill school described the UFO sightings they had had from the Summerhill property in Leiston, Suffolk on the occasions I was a speaker there. Author David Boadella sums the conundrum up:

“Why did the orthodox scientists and psychologists condemn Reich? Why did they dismiss him as a paranoiac while Raknes (a Norwegian colleague) and Dr. Hoppe of Israel and lots of the sane American surgeons and physicians and I thought him to be the most important thinker of our time? ... I must face the question that was so often raised by his enemies -- his sanity... Apparently he believed that flying saucers were from other worlds without due proof. Yet when the judge ordered him to be examined by a board of psychiatrists, they pronounced him sane.”

They were not alone. The great Reich scholar Professor Paul Matthews of New York University observed in his 1973 review of Boadella's book Wilhelm Reich: The Evolution of His Work:

“Reich's scientific integrity, creativity, and genius -- even to the end of his life -- need no defense or confirmation from me. Nor does his sanity need defense in the opinion of those who were closest to him and in a position to gauge his mental status, character structure, and work capacity at that time.”

But does all this really come down to a question of Wilhelm Reich's sanity? Medical researcher Ludwik Flek notes in his 1979 book The Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact:

“What we are faced with here is not so much a simple passivity or mistrust of new ideas as an active approach which can be divided into several stages.

“A contradiction to the system appears unthinkable

“What does not fit into the system remains unseen

“Alternatively if it is noticed, either it is kept secret or discredited

“Laborious efforts are made to explain an exception in terms that do not contradict the system”

Despite the legitimate claims of contradictory views, one tends to see, describe, or even illustrate those circumstances which corroborate current views and thereby give them substance.

Thus the unacceptable or unacceptable theory is excluded. The individual who persists in putting forth such a theory may ultimately be excluded and -- in a number of historic incidences -- declared to be out-of-touch with "reality" or insane. You may have the knowledge of a master scientist and still not be able to analyze or even see beyond the accepted theories of your own era. Reich's work demands that we do just this.

Do Dr. Reich's observations, deductions, and conclusions concerning UFOs all conform to the best contemporary knowledge on the subject? Many of them do and are virtually identical to those of countless other individuals. Can we say with certainty that his death was the result of a conspiracy or fowl play tracing back to MJ-12, the FDA, the Communist Party, the "Hoodlums In Government" ("HIGS," as Reich termed them) employed by the FDA, or to that powerful segment of society who tend to mystify biology, then mechanically attempt to impose their own sex-negative morality on the rest of us?

No. The fact is that at the time of his death, Dr. Reich had high blood pressure, was overweight, and a chronic smoker. But based on what he represented to such diverse and powerful groups, would any (or all) of the aforementioned have desired his death and had the will and means to implement it?

Oh, yes! Without a doubt. And with the official cause of death listed as a heart attack, the question of murder is likely to remain an open one.

Irregardless of whether he was murdered or died of natural causes, humanity lost a brilliant and courageous thinker in November 1957 and one whose UFO-related work remains an extremely significant area of study for any student of ufology. I hope this paper will encourage readers to seek out the truth of this matter for themselves through reading and practical application. While the most recent of the events described here linger in the mists of history nearly 50 years past, they continue to remain as shattering and relevant as if they had occurred last week. Knowledge is often its own reward and anyone who takes the time to Reich's understand work will only benefit from it. To ignore the profound truths it embodies affirms the actions of those who array themselves against all that is life affirmative, and again sets the stage for the worst aspects of history to repeat themselves. Remember -- "Love, work, and knowledge are the wellsprings of our Life. They should also govern it."

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And conversations with Dr. Elsworth F. Baker, Dr Reich's former first assistant; Reich biographer Dr. Myron Sharaf; author and scientist Dr. Jim DeMeo; and investigative writer and author Jim Martin.

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While almost all of the books written by Wilhelm Reich are currently out of print, various editions are available through better used book stores, book location services, and on the Internet. Recommended sources are The Wilhelm Reich Museum Bookstore, The Orgone Biophysical Research Laboratory, and The American College of Orgonomy Bookstore. Books by Wilhelm Reich include:

American Odyssey: Letters and Journals, 1940-1947

Beyond Psychology: Letters and Journals, 1934-1939

The Bioelectrical Investigation of Sexuality and Anxiety

The Bion Experiments

The Cancer Biopathy

Contact With Space

Character Analysis

Children of the Future

Early Writings, Volume One

Ether, God and Devil / Cosmic Superimposition

The Function of the Orgasm

Genitality

The Impulsive Character

The Invasion of Compulsory Sex-Morality

Listen, Little Man!

The Mass Psychology of Fascism

The Murder of Christ

Passion of Youth: An Autobiography

People in Trouble

Record of a Friendship

Reich Speaks of Freud

Selected Writings

The Sexual Revolution

Peter Robbins has been involved in UFO studies for more than 25 years as a researcher, investigator, writer, lecturer, activist, and author. He is a board member of Budd Hopkins' Intruders Foundation (which investigates the *alien* abduction phenomenon) and contributor to *Phenomena* magazine and to their sister website www.phenomenamagazine.com. He is also the only Western staff writer for the Tokyo-based *OUR-J UFO Report*. Along with Larry Warren, Robbins is co-author of the British best-seller Left at East Gate: A First-Hand Account of the Bentwaters-Woodbridge UFO Incident, Its Cover-Up and Investigation.

In December 2005, Peter will be embarking on a UK lecture tour to mark the 25th anniversary of the Rendlesham Forest UFO incident and publication of a revised and updated edition of Left At East Gate.

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