

CNN LARRY KING LIVE

Suze Orman's Survival Guide; UFOs in Texas

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Was there a UFO sighting in Texas or not?

People saw something, but what?

Lots of controversy, lots of talking a cover-up next on LARRY KING LIVE.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: There was no even trail of any kind of flare behind it. It was a solid object with lights.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: All of a sudden, at one time, they all just shot off in this direction over here.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I can't explain it. We couldn't explain it. But it was real.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: We're back. Earlier this month, several people witnessed mysterious lights in the Texas skies, and we sent our cameras to Stephenville, Texas to check out their claims. This is what we learned. (BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Look off this way, we have some lights approaching us at a high

rate of speed. Came within probably a mile of us, about 3,000 foot over the ground, very unusual lights, not from around here. It went past us towards Stephenville.

The lights reconfigured, turned into flames, and then it disappeared.

It came back by this way, and it had two military jets in pursuit.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I looked back to the Southwest and there was a very bright light. A couple of seconds later, the second light came on. The next day, a friend of mine calls, and tells me about a UFO sighting that had come over my house. I'm not saying I saw a UFO, but with all the reports from everybody else, apparently that's what I saw.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: They came right across the sky, across the northern edge of Stephenville, Texas, which I'm two blocks from the courthouse right here. They were quite large, and moved quite slowly. They were at low altitude and made absolutely no noise at all.

They were glowing red. The lights were moving together as though they were in formation, or attached together in some way, invisibly or something, I don't know. We don't know what they were.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KING: Originally, the Air Force said nothing was going on in the area, but now they claim they were training that night. Is that true or is this a cover up? Let's meet our panel to see what they make of this information.

Here in Los Angeles, Captain Robert Salas, the United States Air Force, retired. Back in 1967, Bob was a missile launch officer at Maelstrom Air Force Base in Montana. He says a UFO hovered over his nuclear missile sight and disabled all the missiles. He wrote a book about it called "Faded Giant." In Washington, James Fox, the documentary filmmaker of "Out of the Blue." and in San Francisco, Michael Shermer, the publisher of "Skeptic Magazine," author of a new book titled "The Mind of the Market."

I know you weren't involved in this, captain, but does this story surprise you?

CAPT. ROBERT SALAS (RET), UNITED STATES AIR FORCE: It does not surprise me at all. Seems like every time there's a credible UFO story out there that involves the Air Force, the Air Force has some kind of reason to discredit it. Certainly, that was the case in my story, also.

KING: We're now also joined by Sergeant Jim Penniston, United States Air Force, retired, as is Captain Salas. He was a Woodbridge security supervisor at the Brentwaters Woodbridge Base. He said he sat with a UFO on the ground for 45 minutes before it hovered over him and shot into the air. Why weren't you taken seriously, sergeant?

SGT. JIM PENNISTON (RET), UNITED STATES AIR FORCE: Well, I believe that at the time, we were taken very seriously, just that I think the Air Force wanted to go ahead and make sure that they had a handle on the situation.

KING: James Fox, I know you have been probing this for a long time. We have never got an

answer to this. Why do you think the Air Force doesn't want this out?

JAMES FOX, AUTHOR, "OUT OF THE BLUE": What are they going to say? We don't know what's flying around with impunity?

KING: Why can't they say that?

FOX: I wish they would. If the Air Force is listening tonight, why don't you tell us the truth?

KING: Why do you think they don't?

FOX: I think to admit that there are objects of unknown origin flying around in our airspace with impunity, that can fly rings around our fastest jets, they probably are fearful of releasing that information. I want to say something --

KING: Hold on, Jim. Michael, now that they have said that there were objects flying in the sky, do you think this is a cover up here or this is a cop out? What do you make of it?

MICHAEL SHERMER, "SKEPTIC MAGAZINE": I think before we assume that there's some sort of conspiratorial cover up, we have to remember that, you know, bureaucratic agencies are not always going to be swift to give a proper answer until they check with channels on what can be given to the American public in the interest of national security.

Remember, we're at war, so we are not likely going to be told about top secret aircraft and so on. Somebody has to check with somebody, has to check with somebody up top before they leak it to the press what was actually going on. We should expect that kind of thing, not a cover up, just national security interest.

KING: Do you think Captain Salas is lying? Do you think --

SHERMER: No, not at all. I think we're not always reliable observers. It's hard to say. We misunderstand, honestly misunderstand or misperceive things. I think before we say something is out of this world, let's first make sure that it's not in it. And just because we can't explain something doesn't mean it's, you know, extraterrestrial.

KING: I have to get a break, let me pick up with that and more on the comments of Michael right after this.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP) UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Bunch of BS. If you all want to believe it, that's fine with me.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: There was something that just came straight across our house and then just zoomed right on off. And I don't know what it was, so --

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I think it was just low flying airplane.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Do you think your wife's crazy --

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: No, it was not. I guarantee you it was not.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: OK.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Captain Salas, Michael is saying that you're not corrupt or anything, you just didn't see what you saw.

SALAS: I said I didn't even see a UFO. I was in a capsule, 60 feet under ground, and the UFO was reported by my topside guard. A bright red oval object hovering outside the front gate.

KING: He told you?

SALAS: He told me in very -- he was very agitated, frightened when he told me this over the phone. Now, the reason I believe that what he told me was true is because they had no access to our missile system. They had no way to control it. While this object was up there, my missiles shut down. And, these Minuteman Missiles are very reliable, as you might imagine. Nuclear weapons we're talking about here.

KING: Shut down.

SALAS: They shut down one after the other. I remember losing all of them. And not only that, but ten more missiles were shut down under similar circumstances; UFOs were observed at another launch control facility. So, this is 20 missiles in 1967 were shut down with UFOs.

KING: And sergeant, you sat with a UFO on the ground?

PENNISTON: Yes, I fully investigated it, myself and my team. We went around and checked the parameter of the craft out. We measured it. We took temperature readings. We took photographs. We did a complete examination, thorough examination of the craft on the ground.

FOX: Penniston, talk about the symbols that you saw on the craft. I find that remarkable.

PENNISTON: Well, the symbols -- if it wasn't astonishing enough just to have a craft like that in front of you, then, looking for crew compartments and things like that, and intakes, we find -- measuring about three feet, we find symbols that were etched into the side of the craft, that to this day, I have no idea what they are, but it's amazing.

KING: Where did the craft go?

PENNISTON: Well, after the 45 minutes, Larry, it went up -- it lifted off. It started emulating a very bright light. And it started to raise to tree top level, and then it momentarily sat there above the tree line and then took off at incredible rate of speed.

KING: Did it make a lot of sound?

FOX: No sound.

KING: No sound. James, you weren't there. Let him tell me.

FOX: Sorry.

KING: It made no sound, Jim?

PENNISTON: No sound, Larry. And the most interesting part that I found about it is that there was no air displacement. I mean, something leaving that fast has to have sonic booms. It was literally gone in a blink of an eye. It had to have air disturbance.

KING: James, we have asked you this before; why wasn't the Sergeant Penniston and the Captain Salas story front page news?

FOX: I don't know. You are forcing me to speculate, Larry.

KING: That's all we can do.

FOX: I think the lack of an explanation -- clearly, the Air Force feels compelled to come up with a conventional explanation, when clearly there just isn't one. We were in Stephenville for the last three with a whole camera crew, interviewing witnesses, and whatever it was, it certainly wasn't military jets, because, you know, a silent flight, 90 degree angle turns.

KING: I will go back to this. So, the -- let's forget the Air Force. The "New York Times" doesn't believe you? They don't believe Captain Salas. They don't believe Sergeant Penniston. They don't believe you. Right? Is that what our guess is? They don't believe you?

FOX: I think the tables are turning, don't you, Jim?

SALAS: Well, you know what, here is what I find. Let's talk about Texas, if you don't mind, about the Air Force in Texas. Here is a public relations officers, right, they release a statement from the 301st, saying that they made an error. I'm going to tell you right now, 21 years in the service, the Air Force don't release statements that say they made an error.

What they are doing is covering their tracks. If they said there were ten aircraft out there, out there in the area --

KING: Jim, I got to get a break. We'll come back to you. I want to get Michael's response to this. We are close on time.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Moved through the forest, bobbing and avoiding trees. Something broke into other objects. I definitely saw something under intelligent control that could do things that I don't think any human can do. I went out to disprove what I had heard had taken place, and was thinking at the time, why did I ever get involved in this? Nobody's going to believe me.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: You can't deny it. It did happen. It's proven that it did happen. I can't explain it. We couldn't explain it. But it was real.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: Michael Shermer, do these accounts seem ill-founded to you?

SHERMER: Well, not ill-founded. We're not perfect observers, and I think it's important to remember that the general public, all of us, and most people in government are way behind the curve of whatever experimental technologies the Air Force may be working on. And, you know, we didn't find out about the U-2 Spy Plane until one was shot down. We didn't find out about the Stealth Bomber until many years after it had been flying over the Mojave desert.

In fact, it flies over my house in Pasadena every January 1st over the New Years Rose Parade. And it's really spooky looking. It's quiet. It's black like a hole in the sky. You don't hear it. Imagine that it was dusk and we didn't know about it, it would easily be interpreted as a UFO.

KING: Why do you disbelieve it, though?

SHERMER: I don't. I need to make a distinction between are there extraterrestrial out there somewhere and have they come here. Science, by nature, is skeptical. I publish "Skeptic Magazine," that's what we do. Because there are so many strange ideas out there, usually that don't turn out to be true, it's -- the default option is skepticism until you prove otherwise.

KING: Michael, would you have laughed, for example, at the Wright Brothers?

SHERMER: But we actually have the plane, and --

FOX: I want to say something really quickly.

SHERMER: -- Actual physical evidence.

FOX: We need to make the distinction. We're not talking about extraterrestrial. We're not talking about aliens. A UFO is exactly that. It's an unidentified flying object. A lot of these citations defy conventional explanations. Why can't we just say we don't know what it was?

SHERMER: Of course we can.

FOX: We're not talking about aliens. You are the only one talking about aliens. We're not talking about aliens.

SHERMER: Your film is based on aliens.

(CROSS TALK)

KING: Captain?

SALAS: The point I want to make is, my incident happened in 1967. We have an object that hovered over our launch control facility, not only ours, but another launch control facility, disabled ten nuclear missiles. So, if the question is, was that a U.S. experimental aircraft 40 years ago, why haven't we seen that aircraft today.

SHERMER: Well, there were hover aircraft in the late '50s.

SALAS: This was not an aircraft, sir.

SHERMER: It's hard to say. You are the only eye witness to that. The difference between constructing an entire new world view based on fragments of evidence, you can't really do that. FOX: Fragments of evidence? There's not fragments of evidence. Go to the archives, Mr Shermer, and look into it, and you can easily establish beyond a shadow of a doubt that flying saucers have been whizzing around our air space since the '40s.

(CROSSTALK)

FOX: You agree with me that 95 percent of those are explained.

(CROSSTALK)

KING: We are going to take a break and be right back with some more moments. Don't go away.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KING: We're back. James Fox, why not a Congressional hearing into all of this?

FOX: we had congressional hearings back in '66, I believe in '68. It's time we had more Congressional hearings. People have to get together and put pressure from their constituents to your representative, and we need to get this thing over with. This is ridiculous.

KING: Sergeant Penniston, does it bug you that while the polls say 80 percent of the public believes there have been Unidentified Flying Objects, you tend -- people like you are not believed.

PENNISTON: You know, I -- it doesn't really bother me if they don't believe. I think the evidence is overwhelming. And, it's also compelling to believe that if these are unexplainable events, which the military clearly has demonstrated, then I would think that there would be higher numbers than that, as far as people believing in some type of the extraterrestrial craft. I would believe that.

KING: You think, Captain Salas, we're ever going to get the whole story?

SALAS: That's a good question, but I think we need to have the hearings. We need -- there's a preponderance of good witnesses out there that are ready, willing, able to testify. All my witnesses that I outline in my book, most of them are still alive, and would be more than willing to testify.

KING: In all honesty, I just recently ran into someone who, very logical person, who saw the Texas incident. He said, they were moving fast. They were making no sound. They were not airplanes. He wasn't crazy, Michael.

FOX: Can I say one thing really quickly?

KING: Hold it, James. Go ahead, Michael.

SHERMER: In science, there is the residue problem. In any given field, there's a residue of unexplained anomalies that no theory can account for every single one. So, James and I, for example, agree that 90 to 95 percent of all these thousands of sightings are explainable.

FOX: I agree.

SHERMER: What we're talking about is just that extra five or ten percent we can't explain. So, why not investigate, sure. But let's not construct a whole new world view around that.

FOX: We're not constructing a whole new world view. But I want to say really quickly, I met with a gentleman in Stephenville who unfortunately is not willing to go on the record right now because he's being harassed by the military. He's asked the military to stop harassing him. Their response is, stop talking about what you saw. And it's the most unambiguous -- he didn't see lights. He saw the craft.

SHERMER: Well --

FOX: And it was huge.

KING: They don't want him to talk about it?

FOX: He said, stop harassing me. They said, you stop talking about what you saw. I believe this guy. From the core of his being, he was being honest with me. There are being people harassed right now by the military, telling them to shut up.

SHERMER: What if it is a top secret military aircraft we don't want --

FOX: We should know about that technology. If they have technology that can fly around without making any sound without disturbing the wind, talking off in the flash of an eye -- it's obviously not getting here on Jet A fuel. With climate change and all these other issues, we should know about this technology. We paid for it.

SHERMER: In part, that's true. Except, on a need to know basis, there are certain national security reasons that people --

FOX: Then they've been hiding these craft for 60 years now. And I don't believe that.

KING: What are they afraid of, Michael?

SHERMER: Well, because if we have technologies, we don't want our enemies to know about. Naturally, we're not going to share it.

KING: Wait a minute. Iran is going to say, you -- we're going to do more on this. You never run out of stuff. Thanks for coming. Captain Salas' book is "Faded Giant."

Before we go, Fran Lewin, a pioneering journalist and CNN veteran was laid to rest yesterday. She died Saturday, one day short of her 87th birthday. Fran spent nearly three

decades working for this network as an assignment editor, and producing. Before that, she covered the White House for AP during six presidential administrations. She was a trail blazer, a role model. She loved to work and said it gave her a front row seat to history. Fran will be deeply missed by her friends and colleagues at CNN and by anybody who cares about journalism.

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