

No more speech could be heard. Grodin, at that point, had switched to another frequency. On the tape there was only static...

Simon Butler, you may recall, underlined that point when the television documentary was transmitted. He said: "Bravo Jezebel? A form of code? Almost certainly. But what did it mean? Absolutely nothing to the estimated six hundred million people listening in on earth..."

Remember the allegations, which we outlined in section one of this book, made by former NASA man Otto Binder?

"Certain sources with their own VHF receiving facilities that by-passed NASA broadcast outlets claim there was a portion of Earth-Moon dialogue that was quickly cut off by the NASA monitoring staff."

That censored portion, according to Binder, included these words from Apollo 11: "These babies were huge, sir...enormous...Oh, God you wouldn't believe it!...I'm telling you there are other space-craft out there...lined up on the far side of the crater edge..."

Could that have a direct link with the exchange heard on the Grodin tape? Had Grodin, like the men of the Apollo 11 mission, seen something too startling to be revealed to ordinary people?

Or were these moon-explorers all mistaken? Was there something in outer space which induced hallucinations?

The idea of unknown and unidentified space-craft being "lined up" on the moon - to the astonishment of human astronauts - has surely too ridiculous. And YET...

Grodin agreed to be interviewed by Sceptre Television, via Satellite, from a studio in Boston, Massachusetts. The plan was to tape the entire interview and edit it later. In fact, as viewers will probably remember, the interview ended abruptly and in the oddest possible way. And it place an even bigger question mark on the whole subject of Alternative 3.

There was, right from the start, something slightly manic in Grodin's expression and he showed a tendency to laugh nervously for no apparent reason. But he talked fluently and he displayed no reluctance about discussing the breakdown he had suffered after his final return from space. Nothing remarkable happened, or seemed likely to happen, until Simon Butler asked a question which we present verbatim from the program which was transmitted:

Now it has been suggested, among others, by some very responsible people that you - that all of you on the Apollo program - saw far more out there than you have been allowed to admit publicly. What comment do you have to make on that suggestion?

77

The immediate effect on Grodin was electrifying. His face suffused with anger and he shouted: "What are you trying to do, man? Just tell me that! What are you trying to do."

Butler apologized. "I was only..."

"You trying to screw me? demanded Grodin. He leaned forward in his chair, glowering into the Boston camera. "That what you want? You want to screw me real good?"

"Of course not," said Butler quickly. "And I'm sorry if..."

"Like that dumb bastard Ballantine? Is that what you want to..."

He got no further. His voice was chopped in midsentence, his picture on the monitor screen vanished in a haze of white static.

"What is going on? asked Butler. "Hell's teeth...what's the matter with this..."

He was interrupted by Clement's voice. "We don't know where he's gone."

Like that dumb bastard Ballantine! That's the line which grabbed their attention. It had to fit in, somehow, with the mystery of the meaningless tape received by Hendry - and with the strange circumstances leading up to Ballantine's death. It just had to be connected with what the man Harry had said: "There was no way for that to be an accident...it was what they called and Expediency and I know why it happened."

"We've got to find him and talk to him face-to-face. Terry, love...see what your lad in America can come up with." He turned to Colin Benson. "I'll probably be sending you over there," he said.

Benson beamed. "Great!" he said. "But isn't Harman going to raise stink?"

"Probably," said Clements. "But leave that to me."

Harman did "raise stink". He raised it more vehemently than Clements anticipated. We have the memoranda which reveal the strength of Harman's feelings. In our view they show a strength bordering on fanaticism...

Wednesday, July 13, 1977. Another submarine meeting of Policy Committee. Chairman: A EIGHT. Transcript section supplied by Trojan starts:

R TWO: This Princeton man... Dr. Gerard O'Neill... appears to have a disturbing lack of discretion...

(Author's note: This meeting, being held a littler later in the month than was customary, was exactly two days after the Los Angeles Times published the controversial interview -- detailed in Section One of this book - in which Dr. O'Neill outlined the solution he called "Island 3". He

78

said in that interview - "There's really no debate about the technology involved in doing it. That's been confirmed by NASA's top people.")

The Trojan transcript continued:

A FOUR: Sure...he shouldn't have shot his mouth off in that way...but I don't see there's any real harm done...people will assume he's just talking theory...

A EIGHT: It is just theory, for Chrissakes, as far as he is concerned. He knows the technology but beyond that he knows nothing...

R FIVE: He is a respected man...a man whose words mould public opinion...and he should be discouraged from making such stupid statements...

A EIGHT: That's already been done...for him and for others like him...

R TWO: What is this you are saying? An unauthorized Expediency?

A EIGHT: Hell, no! That's not necessary. Like I said ...Gerard O'Neill doesn't know enough, not about

the politics...he doesn't even have any idea that we meet this way...

R SIX: Then what has been done?

A EIGHT: Let's keep this in perspective, shall we... Washington doesn't want publicly to pinpoint the O'Neill thing because that would make it seem too important...best to ignore it..that's the official attitude and I'm damned sure that attitude is right...

R SEVEN: But when O'Neill talked about Island 3...

A EIGHT: Hold on...let me finish. Something is being done but it's being done as a blanket operation... Right now there's a secrecy Bill being scrambled on to the Statute Book and I promise you that'll close every worrying mouth...

Fourteen days after this meeting of the Policy Committee, as we mentioned earlier, columnist Jeremy Campbell broke the news of the "suppression" Bill in the London Evening Standard. Campbell is a highly experienced journalist with a deserved reputation for knowing the background to the published news. Here, we are confident, is one of the rare instances where he did not know the real background.

The rest of the transcript supplied by Trojan was brief:

R SEVEN: That may well be but I have to tell you that our people in Moscow are becoming increasingly worried about the level of security in America...there was that bad business of Carmell...

79

A EIGHT: Oh no!...not Carmell again! Carmell's settled ...that's all over, okay?

R SEVEN: And Carl Gerstein?

There was no reply to that question. The meeting had obviously continued but that was the end of the transcript.

The end of August and the beginning of September, 1977 - only days before the "Suppression" Bill reached the Statute Book - brought more curious evidence of the treatment which had been given to Batch Consignment victims. It gave a deeper insight into the work which had been continuing in America and Russia. And in Britain.

This evidence is now public knowledge for, as library files show, it has appeared in reputable newspapers. But, because of its special significance, we consider it worth repeating here.

On August 27, William Lowther, the distinguished Washington correspondent of the Daily Mail, wrote an article which was headlined THE SPY WHO CAME IN FROM THE BATHROOM.

It said:

Morgan Hall was a spy. He always kept a jug of martinis in the refrigerator. He had a two-way mirror in the bathroom.

But Morgan's life was full of woe. His masters were slow in sending money. His assignment was awful sleazy. The code name for his project was "Operation Midnight Climax". It was meant to be a perpetual secret And no wonder.

For two full years Morgan spent his working hours sitting on a portable toilet watching through his

mirror drinking his martinis while a prostitute entertained men in the adjoining bedroom.

Her job was to persuade clients to drink cocktails. What they didn't know was that the drinks had been mixed by the mysterious Morgan. They were more chemical than alcohol.

Morgan had to record the results. We still don't know just what they were or how they worked. But some of the drinks gave instant headaches, others made you silly or drunk or forgetful or just plain frantic. The effects were only temporary and nobody was harmed, much.

Morgan was employed by the Central Intelligence Agency and it was America's top spy bosses who sent him out from headquarters near Washington to set up the "laboratory" in a luxury apartment overlooking San Francisco Bay.

Now, 1,647 pages of financial records dealing with the operation have been made public as part of a Congressional investigation.

80

(Author's note: That was the Congressional investigation provoked by the information supplied to us by Trojan.)
Lowther's article continued:

It was all part of the agency's MK-ultra mind control experimental program...it was reasoned that a prostitute's clients wouldn't complain.

The financial records released yesterday show that Morgan was always writing to headquarters. Says a typical letter - "Money urgently needed to pay September rent."

His bills for the flat include Toulouse -Lautrec posters, a picture of a French can - can dancer and one marked: "Portable toilet for observation post."

Says the CIA: "Morgan Hall died two years ago. We have no idea where he is buried."

Here we must ignore suspicions and accept the official word of the CIA. Our own inquiries in America have yielded nothing further about Morgan Hall and we must state, quite categorically, that we have found no evidence to support any suggestion of his having been an expediency victim.

Lowther's story was quickly followed by two more reports which confirmed something we had already been told by Trojan - a series of secret experiments in behavior control had also been conducted in Russia and in Britain.

On September 2 The Times gave front-page prominence to a report supplied from Honolulu by Reuter and UPI. It was headlined "PSYCHIATRISTS CONDEMN SOVIET UNION" and it said:

The general assembly of the World Psychiatric Association, meeting behind closed doors, has adopted a resolution condemning the Soviet Union for abusing psychiatry for "political purposes" in the Soviet Union..."

The international code of ethics, called the "Declaration of Hawaii", adopted by the congress follows years of criticism against the WPA for not taking action on ethical standards.

Other newspapers claimed that "scores of mentally healthy Soviet citizens are forcibly interned in mental

hospitals'. This is unquestionably true but the facts need to be seen in their proper perspective. The vast majority are detained because of their stand on human rights. They are sane people who are considered enemies of the State. Only a small percentage are there purely because they are needed as guinea-pigs. These are the ones who have been detained because of Alternative 3.

81

in Britain - appeared on August 28 in the Sunday Telegraph:

Hospitals for the mentally ill and mentally handicapped have been instructed by the Health Department to collect statistics on operations being carried out to change personality.

For the first time, ministers have acknowledged that there is growing concern. The operations, known as psychosurgery, are carried out to remove or destroy portions of brain tissue to change the behavior of severely depressed or exceptionally aggressive patients who do not respond to drugs or electric shock treatment.

The Sunday Telegraph said that "the change was irreversible" and quoted a prominent consultant psychiatrist as saying: "My hospital is littered with the wrecks of humanity who have undergone psychosurgery.

However, the newspaper did not point out that these operations can also be performed to control the behavior pattern of men and women who are completely sane. Or that, in fact, they have been performed on such people.

Dr. Randolph Crepsen-White spoke to us about these operations when we met him in the Somerset village to which he retired in 1975. He talked frankly on the strict understanding that we would not divulge his name. However, as he died of natural causes on October 19, 1977, we do not consider ourselves to be now bound by our undertaking.

Dr. Crepsen-White told us: "I performed five of these operations on people - four young men and one young woman - who appeared to be completely sane. There were two objects. The patients had to be completely de-sexed, to have their natural biological urges taken away, and they also had to have their individuality removed. They would, after being discharged, obey any order without question. In fact, they would virtually be thinking robots.

"I recognized that what I was doing was most unethical, and I did protest that very strongly, but I was told that the operations were vital to the security of the country.

"Nobody actually told me that those patients had been involved in espionage but that was the impression I was given. I was ordered to sign the Official Secrets form and that is why you must not mention my name - apart from the fact that I'm frightened, there'd be repercussions of a violent nature if certain people realized I'd been talking to you."

We should point out that, in order to protect Dr. Crepsen-White's anonymity, we had agreed not to be so specific about the number of operations he had performed. That agreement, of course, is now unnecessary.

82

He continued: "I still had distinct reservations about this aspect of my work. Soon it became apparent that I would be required to do more operations involving sane people...possibly many more...and that was when I decided to get right out."

"I had not intended to retire for another three years but, under the circumstances, I considered it impossible to go on."

Dr. Crepson-White, we are certain, knew nothing about people being collected into Batch Consignments. He knew nothing about Alternative 3. But a complete insight into the use being made of his work was eventually supplied to us by Trojan. It was supplied in an astounding document which we will be presenting later.

83

SECTION EIGHT

Leonard Harman was far from happy with the letter sent to him on August 12, 1977, by our lawyer Edwin Greer.

Letter dated August 15, 1977, from Harman to lawyer Greer:

I am surprised by the contents of your letter and I must insist on receiving undertaking from Messrs.

Ambrose and Watkins to the effect that I will not be mentioned in their projected book. I note that your clients are aware that Sceptre Television has admitted that the Alternative 3 program was an unfortunate hoax and I am puzzled by the apparent evasiveness of your second paragraph.

You state that your clients are 'mindful of the background to that statement." What, if anything, does that mean?

I repeat that it would be extremely wrong to perpetuate in book form what has already become a public misconception. There is absolutely no truth in the suggestion of any East-West covert action such as that described in the program and your clients apparently intend to compound what has already been admitted as a serious error of judgement.

If your clients persist in their attitude, particularly in respect to my privacy, I will have to seek legal advice and/or redress.

Letter dated August 13 from Edwin Greer to Leonard Harman:

There was no evasiveness in my letter of the 12th inst.

I merely pointed out that my clients have conducted their own investigations in Britain and America into the subject of their projected book. Indeed, that investigation is still continuing. Any decisions taken by Mr. Ambrose and Mr. Watkins, in consultation with their publishers, will depend on their eventual findings and I am instructed to inform you that it is not possible for them to give you any undertaking.

Six days later Greer received a letter from a well known Member of Parliament who had been lobbied for support by Harman. We included the name of the MP - and of one other

84

who tried to suppress this book - in our original manuscript but, because of Britain's restrictive libel laws, we have been advised to delete those names from the published version.

This particular MP was taking the same line as Harman. His letter said:

In common with a number of my colleagues in the House of Commons, I have already deplored the misguided motives which resulted in the television program about the so-called Alternative 3.

Letters from many of my constituents demonstrate the alarm which was engendered and which, despite the subsequent statement by the television company, still lingers.

The fact that your clients should apparently be determined to capitalize on that alarm is, to my mind, quite scandalous. I intend to seek an injunction to prevent the publication of this book...

He did try for that injunction. The fact that you are

reading this book at this moment is the proof that it was refused to him - and to one of his colleagues in the House of Commons. As we will explain later, however, these MPs did force us into a reluctant compromise.

However, they did not succeed in preventing us from using more of the memoranda which circulated inside Sceptre Television.

Memo dated April 92, 1977, from Chris Clements to Fergus Godwin, Controller of Programs - c.c. to Leonard Harman, Colin Benson, Terry Dickson:

Through contacts in America we have now traced former astronaut Bob Grodin to a new address. He is living with a girl and is not aware he has been located. I have instructed the American freelance to make no direct approach for, in view of the way Grodin went into hiding after the break-down of that Boston interview, he would almost certainly try to dodge us again.

I want to send Benson to America to quiz Grodin in greater depth for, particularly considering his reference to Ballantine, I am certain he holds the key to an immensely important story.

It would be essential, of course, for Benson to arrive without prior warning. May I have your authorization to make the necessary arrangements?

85

Memo dated April 12, 1977, from Leonard Harman to Mr. Fergus Godwin, Controller of Programs:

CONFIDENTIAL. The note from Clements, bearing today's date and relating to his interest in America, is clear confirmation of what I have already indicated to you and the Managing Director.

Clements has become unprofessionally obsessed with this ridiculous investigation with which he is persisting and I recommend that he be replaced immediately as producer of Science Report. I have studied his contract and we would be within our rights to transfer him to some area of our output where he would not be such an expensive liability - possibly the gardening series or the God Spot.

I have on several occasions had to warn him about squandering company time, money and resources -- remember those abortive film unit journeys to Norwich and Scotland? - but he has defiantly persisted in doing so.

I was told nothing of the inquiries which have apparently been commissioned on our behalf in America although, as I mentioned again at the Senior Executives' Meeting on Friday, it is company policy for matters of that nature to be channelled through me. It would be utterly wrong to sanction Benson's going to America. Nothing can possibly be gained by talking to this man Grodin - even allowing for what Clements admits is the unlikely chance of him agreeing to talk. I have formed the impression from newspaper accounts that Grodin is unstable and probably unbalanced and it is no part of our function as a reputable television company to hound such a man - particularly for such a ridiculous reason.

We should, I suggest, instruct Clements to abandon this fool-hardy exercise and we should also give priority consideration to replacing him.

Memo dated April 13, 1977, from Fergus Godwin to Leonard Harman:

CONFIDENTIAL. Let us not forget that Science Report is a Network success purely because of Clements. However, I note your objections and I must confess that I have also been concerned about the amount of money which has gone into this particular project. I have arranged for Clements to see me today and, naturally, I will keep you informed.

86

The meeting between Clements and Godwin - on Tuesday, April 13 - did not go well. Godwin had seen the unedited version of the interview filmed at Cambridge with Gerstein and he had not been impressed. The way the old man had veered away from any discussion of Alternative 3 had made him suspect that there was no Alternative 3 - that the dangers and the solutions were probably all theoretical. Science Report was already well over budget and Godwin knew how that would incense certain men on the Board. One of the Board members was an accountant, with the creative imagination of a retarded Polar Bear, and he was an apoplectic little man. Godwin didn't fancy another row with him - not on an issue where his own ground was so uncertain.

"Let me think it over," he said to Clements. "I'll let you know."

Memo dated April 14, 1977, from Fergus Godwin to Chris Clements - c.c. to Leonard Harman:

Further to our talk yesterday, I feel we would not be justified in sending Benson to America. If the situation should change as a result of any further information you may get, I will be prepared to discuss the matter with you again. For the moment, however, it's not on.

Clements read the note, pushed it across his desk to Dickson. "That bloody Harman!" he said. "This is his doing."

"Now what?" asked Dickson.

"We are going to do it. Terry. We are definitely going to do it. What we need now is some further information."

"Like what?"

"I don't know, love...you're the researcher...the sort of information that'll swing it with Fergus." He frowned, got up, started pacing the room. "What was it Gerstein said about co-operation between the super-powers?"

"He seemed to have the idea that they were working together on the Alternative 3 thing..."

"That could be it!" said Clements excitedly. "Do we know anyone who might develop that thought for us? It's have to be somebody with real prestige..."

"Broadbent?"

"Who's Broadbent?"

"Great expert on East-West diplomacy...runs the Institute of International Political Studies in St. James's..."

"Hm...well there's no harm in trying. Is Colin around?"

87

Dickson shook his head. "His day off."

"It's always his day off when I need him," said Clements unfairly. "Ask Kate to pop in and see me, will you? She can start sounding out Broadbent..."

At 5:15 p.m. that day reporter Katherine White started her interview with Professor G. Gordon Broadbent - parts of which, as you may recall, were eventually used in the transmitted program.

It took her some time to get Broadbent really talking. He was cautious, suspicious of her motives, anxious not to become involved in any sensationalism.

That was understandable for, after all, he is a man who is internationally respected. After a while, however, he was more forthcoming and we now print the significant part of that interview - verbatim from the transcript - as it was presented in the televised documentary:

BROADBENT: On the broader issue of Soviet-US relations I must admit there is an element of mystery which troubles many people in my field. To put it at its simplest, none of us can understand how it is that the peace has been kept over these past twenty-five years.

WHITE: You mean the experts are baffled?

BROADBENT: (with a smile): But also, for once, in agreement. The popular myth that it's been proof of the balance of nuclear power frankly doesn't entirely stand up. And the more you look at it, the less sense it makes. There are too many imbalances - especially when you put it in the perspective of history.

WHITE: So what is your explanation?

BROADBENT: Essentially what we're suggesting is that, at the very highest levels of East-West diplomacy, there has been operating a factor of which we know nothing. Now it could just be - and I stress the word "could" - that this unknown factor is some kind of massive but covert operation in space. But as for the reasons behind it...we are not in the business of speculation.

Clements went barging into the Controller's office without waiting for any response to his token tap. "You read the Broadbent transcript?" he asked.

Godwin, busy at his desk, sat back and smiled resignedly. "Yes - and your covering note."

"Well?"

88

"Well, what?"

Clements groaned, exasperated. "Surely that clinches it."

Godwin slowly shook his head. "No, Chris, not as far as I'm concerned. It's just more theory...that's all it is."

"But Fergus, it all fits! Gerstein and Broadbent -- each a top man in his own field - both suggesting some sort of secret co-operation in space between the super-powers."

"That man Harry, the American who claimed to know why scientists keep disappearing, and the links he seemed to have with Ballantine and with NASA. Then there was Grodin who, without any shadow of doubt, saw something really incredible up there on the moon...we can't just leave the whole damned thing now and forget it!"

"Stop bouncing around, Chris, and sit down." Godwin gestured to a chair. "Go on...sit down." He waited until Clements had done so. "Now, for the last time, let's get this clear. I realize that something odd may be going on but I don't consider it's any of our concern..."

Clements started to jerk angrily out of the chair, bursting to interrupt, but Godwin stopped him: "You've done a tremendous job with Science Report, Chris. Everybody thinks so and the rating have proved it. So I want you to get back just to doing what you do so well..."

"That means you're still saying "no" to America?"

"That's exactly what it does mean."

"If it's on grounds of cost, can I point out how much profit this company made last year..."

Godwin has since told us ruefully that he dislikes only one aspect of his job - that of being the chief buffer between his editors and the money men above him. One lot inevitably think he's mean and the others suspect him of being a spendthrift. Being wedged in the middle...it's not much fun. That's why his reply to Clements was uncharacteristically sharp:

"It's hardly your place to point that out but, as you've done so, let me tell you something. The company does make profits and it makes good ones but it does not do so by sending teams gallivanting around the world on fool's errands...so, please, let it rest..."

"Clements got up, prepared to leave. "How about if I fixed a facility trip?"

"Airlines aren't throwing many free flights around these days - not across the Atlantic."

"Benson could do a piece for the holiday series while he's over there. I've spoken to Simon Shaw who's taken over the holiday programs and he's quite keen...and I know an airline who'll play ball."

"God...you don't give up, do you!" Godwin grinned. "All right...tell Benson to go to America."

"Why did you disappear that night?" asked Benson. "That night of the interview...why did you run out like that?"

"Have another beer," said Grodin. He pushed a fresh can across the low table and poured another for himself. "The bastard was trying to screw me. Did I see more than I've been allowed to admit publicly! Jesus...what sort of fool question was that?"

Benson forced a grin, tried to relieve the tension. He felt like an angler playing a difficult fish. Gently...gently...that was the only way. He took a long drink, sighing with satisfaction, as he put down the empty glass. "I needed that beer," he said. "Had myself a real

thirst."

'You planning on doing the same?" Grodin was glowering suspiciously. "You aiming to screw me as well?"

He was frightened. That was quite obvious. And he was trying to hide his fears under aggressiveness. Benson felt a twinge of pity. The man seemed so pathetically vulnerable and Benson was reminded of what Harman had said in that memo:

"Grodin is unstable and probably unbalanced and it is no part of our function as a reputable television company to hound such a man."

Maybe, after all, there'd been something in what Harman had said. Grodin clearly wasn't normal. It was all very well to be ruthlessly professional but would anything really be gained by pushing Grodin any further? Wouldn't it be fairer to drop the whole thing, to get back into the car and forget about Grodin? Benson hesitated. It would be so easy to tell Clements that Grodin had simply refused to talk, that there was no way for him to be persuaded. Clements wouldn't like it - in fact, he'd be bloody furious - but he'd have to accept it, particularly after the fiasco of that chopped-off interview.

Then he remembered the man called Harry. He remembered him at Lambeth - naked and terrified in that crumbling house. And he wondered how many more there were like him. And how many there would be in the future if the truth were not revealed.

"Camera, tape machines, witnesses - that's the kind of protection I need." That's what Harry had said. And they had failed him. They had arrived too late.

Protection from what? That was still a mystery. But it tied in somehow with the disappearance of Ann Clark. And with those of at least twenty other people including Brian Pendlebury and Robert Patterson.

Grodin had the key to at least part of the answer and Benson knew there was no choice. He had to get answers. Somehow he had to squeeze every bit of information out of this man...

90

"Well?" persisted Grodin. "You aiming to screw me as well?"

Benson shook his head, opened his next can of beer. "I,m just hoping for a few answers," he said.

They were in canvas chairs, just the two of them, on the green-slabbed patio behind the ranch-style bungalow which Grodin was renting in a lonely corner of New England. It was peaceful there. No neighbors. No town or community of any sort for fifteen miles. Far in the distance, beyond the vast spread of scrub, they could see the tow-like sprawl of the smoke-blue mountains. And the top of those mountains seemed to dissolve into the sky. Tranquillity. Only them and the drowsy-soft sound of insects.

There were no noises from the bungalow behind them but Benson knew that the girl called Annie was probably busy in the kitchen. Grodin had said they'd soon be having a nice meal so that's where Annie had to be. Benson had been introduced to her, very briefly, when he'd arrived and then she'd scuttled shyly out of sight. Annie, he felt, wasn't at all happy about this intrusion. She looked young, far too young for Grodin, with straight hair, no make-up and gold-rimmed granny-glasses. The soft of earnest girl who should be reading psychology somewhere. It wasn't hard to guess her

main function. Benson hoped she was also a good cook.

On the far side of the bungalow, at the top of the winding drive, Benson's technician-partner, Jack Dale, was still in the car checking and preparing his equipment. He had a small sound-camera but he knew better than to produce it until he got the nod. It had to be kept out of sight until Benson got Grodin into the right mood...

Grodin drained his glass. "Owned a place lie this myself once," he said. "Not just rented it like this one but really owned it. Thought I was putting down roots, y'know? Used to go up there in the summer with the family. Ah, it was all different then. We had a few horses and..." He stopped, pulled a face, smiled ironically. "Guess you can say I'm not much into planning for the future any more."

He studied his glass as if trying to puzzle why it was suddenly empty. He held the can upside-down over it and one small glob of beer fell out. "I swear they only half-fill the cans these days," he said bitterly. "That's how they make their money - y'know that? - by half-filling the cans." He threw the can away disgustedly and it clattered to the edge of the patio.

"That's how it is these days. Everybody screwing everybody else for all they can get. No ethics left, not nowhere." His speech was slightly slurred and Benson wondered how much drinking he'd done before their arrival.

"Cheap-jack booze-peddlers!" shouted Grodin. "Short changing bastards!" He turned in his chair, called over his shoulder. "Annie! We've right out of beer! Bring a couple more, will you..."

91

He glanced at Benson. "Or you want a real drink?"

"Beer's fine," said Benson.

Grodin grunted and shrugged. "Annie!" he shouted again.

"There are two men out here dying of thirst..."

She came out with two more cans of beer and shook her head smilingly, her expression implying that she saw him as an adorably mischievous small boy. As someone who needed mothering. Grodin squeezed her hand. "Thanks baby." He seemed to feel some explanation was necessary. "They don't fill them like they used to..."

She smiled again. "They never did," she returned to the bungalow. "And she ain't my daughter! Right? I want that on record!"

"How about getting something else on record?" suggested Benson quietly.

"Like what?"

"Like what you know about Ballantine..."

The guarded expression was back on Grodin's face. "I never knew the guy."

"That time he went to NASA HQ...didn't you meet him then?"

"Drop it, kid, will you! I told you, for Chrissake. I never knew him...I never met him..."

'But you know what happened to him - and why."

Grodin stood up. "Time to eat," he said. "Let's give your pal a shout."

Towards the end of the meal Grodin switched to drinking bourbon on the rocks. He tried to persuade the others to join him but Benson and Jack Dale stuck with beer. So did Annie. And later, while she was sorting out the dirty dishes, Grodin agreed to be interviewed. By that time he was a little bleary but he was still thinking coherently. That interview, filmed by Dale, was presented in the famous Science Report program on June 20, 1977. We now quote direct

from the transcript:

GRODIN: All I know about Ballantine is that he showed up at NASA with some tape he'd made, and got pretty damn excited when he played it back on their juke box.

BENSON: Juke box?

GRODIN: De-coder. You can pick up a signal if you have the right equipment, but you can't unscramble it...

BENSON: without NASA's equipment?

GRODIN: Right. Some young guy helped him do it. Say, now he should've known better.

92

BENSON: This man?

Benson then showed Grodin a postcard-sized photograph of Harry Carmell - blown-up from a frame of the film taken in the street. Grodin frowned, trying to remember.

GRODIN: Could be. Yeah, that looks like him. Sure you don't want a bourbon?

BENSON: Beer's fine.

GRODIN: Bourbon's better for you.

BENSON: No, thanks...are you saying Ballantine was killed because of what he discovered on the tape?

GRODIN: I'm saying nothing. I just saw the way those guys were looking at him. But I knew those looks ...I've seen them looking at me that way.

BENSON: "Them?"

GRODIN: Oh, c'mon...! Have a proper drink, for God's sake.

At that stage there was a break in the interview. Viewers say Grodin empty his glass and shamle across the room to refill it at the bar in the corner. They did not see Annie come back from the kitchen. Nor did they hear the argument between her and Grodin. She was, as Benson has told us, frightened that Grodin was saying too much, that he was being dangerously indiscreet. But by then Grodin had enough drink in him to make him reckless - and to make him resent getting orders from a girl. He yelled at her, cruelly and crudely, telling her that she didn't have "no nagging rights" because she wasn't his goddamned wife and so would she start minding her own goddamned business. She went on arguing, trying to persuade him, and he got still madder. He threw a tumbler of bourbon at the wall and the glass exploded all over the place. Then she left in tears and he apologized for her behavior. "Women!" he said. "Think they goddamn own you!"

For the next hour he drank. He drank heavily. And Benson was starting to worry that he would soon be unable to speak but, surprisingly, Grodin was still making sense. At one time he seemed to hover on the edge of being hopelessly drunk, of collapsing across the bar, but then he had another drink and, in some strange way, that seemed to pull him through. It was, in Benson's words, as if he was "starting to drink himself sober".

Grodin was having problems forming certain words - "as if his tongue was slipping out of gear" - but his mind seemed clear enough. And eventually he agreed to continue with the interview:

93

BENSON: Bob...what did happen out there...the moon landing?

GRODIN: Well...I don't know how best to put this... but we had kind of a big disappointment...the truth is we didn't get there first.

BENSON: What d'you mean?

GRODIN: The later Apollos were a smoke-screen...to cover up what's really going on out there...and the bastards didn't even tell us...not a damned thing!

Here, as viewers will recall, there was another break. It lasted only a split second on the screen but, in fact, filming stopped for more than half-an-hour. When they resumed Grodin was sweating heavily. He was sweating because of the alcohol and because of his excitement over what he was saying.

They'd said he wasn't to talk about it. That's what the bastards had said. Well, he'd show them Bob Grodin wasn't of guy to be scared into silence. They didn't own him. He was out of the service now and, anyway, maybe it was time for someone to talk. He was holding yet another drink as he waited for Benson's first question...

BENSON: Bob, you've got to tell me...what did you see?

GRODIN: We came down in the wrong place...it was crawling...made what we were on look like a milk run...

BENSON: Are you talking about men...from Earth?

GRODIN: You think they need all that crap down in Florida just to put two guys up there on a...on a bicycle? The hell they do!...You know why they need us? So they've got a P.R. story for all that hardware they've been firing into space...We're nothing, man! Nothing! We're just there to keep you bums happy...to keep you from asking dumb questions about what's really going on!...O.K., that's it, end of story. Finish. Lots o'luck, kid.

And that was it. End of interview. Grodin finished his drink in one great gulp and then he fell. Tight there on the carpet. Annie heard the thump, came running into the room, told the pair of them to get out. They suggested helping her get Grodin into bed but she refused the offer. She just wanted them out. So there it was. They left.

94

In November, 1977, we visited that bungalow in the hope

of getting Grodin to elaborate. We were certain there was far more he could tell. And we felt he might talk more freely without the presence of a film-camera.

The bungalow was empty. It had been empty, as far as we could tell, for weeks or possibly months. We have been unable to find the girl Annie. She appears to have completely disappeared. But we did trace Grodin. We traced him to a mental hospital on the outskirts of Philadelphia. He was allowed no visitors. At least, that's what we were told. We tried to insist on seeing him but they were emphatic. Quite out of the question, they said. His condition was too severe. And, anyway, a visit would be quite pointless. Grodin couldn't string together two consecutive words. His mind was completely gone...

Grodin's death was reported in the newspapers in January, 1978. Suicide. That's what the world was told. Grodin had knotted pajama trousers around his neck and hanged himself from a hot-water pipe fixed high on the wall of his room. We have suspicions that he may have been the victim of an Expediency but, without evidence, they can be no more than suspicions.

Another intriguing piece of the jigsaw was supplied by the American freelance hired by Dickson. It was a copy of a tape containing dialogue between NASA Mission Control at Houston and the Lunar Command Module Pilot during a 1972 moon mission. And Clements puzzled over it when he first played it at the Sceptre studios:

MISSION CONTROL: More detail, please. Can you give more detail of what you are seeing?

LUNAR MODULE PILOT: It's...something flashing. That's That's all so far. Just a light going on and off by the edge of the crater.

MISSION CONTROL: Can you give the co-ordinates?

LUNAR MODULE PILOT: There's something down there...Maybe a little further down.

MISSION CONTROL: It couldn't be a Vostok, could it?

LUNAR MODULE PILOT: I can't be sure...it's possible.

All this fitted logically with the content of the taped conversation between Mission Control and Grodin - during Grodin's first moon walk:

MISSION CONTROL: Can you see anything? Can you tell us what you see?

95

GRODIN: Oh boy, its really...really something super-fantastic here. You couldn't ever imagine this...

MISSION CONTROL: O.K....could you take a look out over that flat area there? Do you see anything beyond?

GRODIN: There's a kind of a ridge with a pretty spectacular...oh my God! What is that there? That's all I want to know! What the hell is that?

It also fitted with the exchange - reported by former NASA man Otto Binder - between Mission Control and Apollo 11 during the Aldrin-Armstrong moon walk:

MISSION CONTROL: What's there?...malfunction...
(garble)...Mission Control calling Apollo 11...
APOLLO 11: These babies were huge, sir...enormous...
Oh, God you wouldn't believe it!...I'm telling
you there are other space craft out there...lined
up on the far side of the crater edge...they're on
the moon watching us...

There was, however, one reference in the latest tape which made it startlingly different - the reference to a Vostok. Russia's Vostok flights took place in the early Sixties. According to the information made public, they were not designed to reach the moon but were merely Earth-orbiting spaceships.

So what could be made of the casual suggestion by Houston Mission Control - and an equally casual acceptance by the Lunar Module Pilot - that an obsolete Russian craft might be sitting on a crater on the moon flashing its lights in 1972?

We now know that, for many years, the super-powers have taken immense trouble to hide the extent of advances made in space technology. Remember, for example, how people were encouraged to believe that the first living creature to be sent into space was a dog in 1958?

Yet that dog mission was seven years after the four Albert monkeys were hurtled into the stratosphere in a V2 rocket. And there are sound reasons for doubting, that those monkeys were the first.

So was the official objective of the Vostok flights also a blind? Were they, to paraphrase the words of Bob Grodin, also a P.R. job for all the hardware that had been fired into space?

96

One dominant question develops automatically from all the others: Was the first publicly-announced moon walk in 1969 no more than a cynical charade - played by agreement between the super-powers - because by then men had really been on the moon for the best part of a decade?

If that was the truth, and all the evidence points to it being so, what was the purpose of that charade? And why has it been perpetuated? The answer to both those questions is Alternative 3.

The all-embracing threat to this planet, described by Dr. Carl Getstein, is horrifying enough to make America and Russia kill their comparatively petty rivalries - and their archaic concepts of pride in national achievement - in a desperate bid to snatch some sort of future for mankind.

Simon Butler put the known situation into clear perspective in that Science Report program. He told viewers: "The drive to make the first man on the moon an American was launched by President Kennedy - in competitive terms. By the late Sixties it appeared that the race had been conclusively won. The Russians, it seemed, had simply dropped out and stopped trying. America had won.

"Yet today Cape Canaveral is a desert of reinforced concrete and steel. The most ambitious project in the

history of mankind is apparently over."

"More and more, however, we hear talk of Skylab and a space shuttle. But shuttling what? And to where?"

All of us have seen on television the phenomenal amount of power required simply to pull a space-rocket clear of the earth's gravitational field. But suppose that power did not have to be consumed principally in merely getting into space. Suppose the rocket could start from space. What kind of travel would that bring within our grasp?

Technical journalist Charles Welbourne, author of three highly-acclaimed books on aerospace, was questioned on the tack by Butler. Here is a transcript of the key section of that interview:

WELBOURNE: Obviously we could go further with less power, or send a much larger craft. In fact, the only way we're going to see space travel on any scale is by this kind of extra-terrestrial launching - for instance from a space platform orbiting the Earth.

BUTLER: Or from the moon?

WELBOURNE: Sure...if we could get the material there to build the craft, it's make real good sense.

BUTLER: Could we transport the materials there?

97

WELBOURNE: It'd take one hell of a shuttle...but, sure, we have the machines now...in theory we could do it...especially with some kind of international co-operation.

"International co-operation." Welbourne's tone suggested that he considered such a likelihood rather remote. Certainly on the scale being discussed. But at the time of that interview, it must be remembered, Welbourne knew nothing about the Policy Committee and its submarine meetings. Nor did Butler.

Through the summer of 1976, while the Sceptre team continued its investigation, there was dramatic evidence to show how this planet was experiencing traumatic changes - sort of changes which later were to be explained to Butler by Dr. Gerstein.

The great drought of that year was unequalled in recorded history. And Butler eventually told viewers: "There was no panic...only a growing unease that what we were experiencing was unnatural and that the Earth's climate was moving towards a radical change.

"The earthquake barrage in China and the Far East has done more damage and killed more people than several nuclear attacks. Meanwhile, on the other side of the Pacific, it seemed as if the whole Caribbean was about to blow up.

"Also in Italy and Central Europe the Earth's crust was undergoing dramatic changes.

"For the first time scientists are beginning to see glimmerings of the workings of spaceship Earth, a huge but delicate machine buffeted by the forces of the interplanetary ocean."

At the height of the drought British government

scientists contemplated trying to meddle with the weather. They decided not to do so - pointing out that Common Market countries might accuse Britain of stealing their rain. So Britain, like the rest of the world, went on suffering. Roads buckled in the intense heat. Firemen could hardly contain the infernos which raged through forests and across moors. And there was an astonishing range of unexpected casualties. Bees starved because there was not enough nectar or pollen in the parched flowers...thousands of racing pigeons, unable to sweat like humans, collapsed with heat exhaustion.

On September 27, 1976, one of the authors of this book - Leslie Watkins - wrote a major article in the Daily Mail which started:

98

Houses which have stood solidly for a hundred years or more - together with modern ones and impressive blocks of flats - are today unexpectedly splitting and threatening to collapse. Out long summer of drought has brought acute anxiety to the insurance companies - and the prospect of financial disaster to many families. Damage estimated at early £60 million has been caused by subsidence. Homes in many parts of the country, but particularly in London and the South East, have been slowly sinking at crazy angles into the parched and contracting ground.

Britain has, in effect, been ravaged by a slow-motion earthquake.

However, few people then suspected that the drought was merely the start of a cataclysmic change in the world's weather. But soon it became apparent that the pattern was beginning to go berserk - lurching from one disastrous extreme to the other - like the frantic flailings of some gigantic, doomed creature.

On June 15, 1977, the main feature article in the Daily Mail - also written by Watkins - said:

No man in the world gambles more heavily on dry weather than 54-year-old Peter Chase.

That was why, early yesterday, every flash of lightning showed the misery etched on his face.

His wife Phobe was urging him to get back into bed, to ignore the torrential rain and forget about business. But he stayed at the window, trying to calculate the cost.

Mr. Chase has good cause to be horrified by the violent electric storm which brought such devastation to many parts of Britain. He is the pluvius under-writer for Eagle Star - the leaders in rain insurance.

This has been a bad year for Mr. Chase. Jubilee celebrations, with street parties and other festivities almost drowned by deluges, were particularly disastrous...

We have, in fact, been experiencing the second heaviest spell of sustained wet weather since records were first kept in 1727. And the outlook for the rest of the week is "showery"...

Most people have assumed that this sequence of drought

followed by heavy rain was, in some mysterious and providential way, Nature trying to compensate and restore the balance - that the downpours have nullified the facts which have now been outlined by Gerstein.

99

That assumption, unfortunately, is incorrect. Meteorologist Adrian Lerman explains that the excessive rains were produced by the excessive heat, that they are not a pointer to long-term cooler weather.

He says: "There is far more evaporation during periods of intense heat, with water vapor being drawn in great quantities from oceans, lakes, reservoirs and rivers, because warm air absorbs that vapor more efficiently than cold air."

"This inevitably results in an eventual increase in precipitation.

"Gerstein is undeniably right in anticipating that the greenhouse syndrome will continue to produce a great increase in global temperatures but I consider he has not laid sufficient stress on the most immediate threat to humanity - the threat of world - wide flooding."

"I am certain that Gerstein is wrong when he predicts that countries like England and America will become scorched wildernesses. They'll be destroyed all right...and they won't support life...but they'll be drowned rather than burned."

"Extreme heat, such as that which is now inevitable, will melt land glaciers. That will result in a marked rise in sea level and then there'll be the start of the extensive flooding - with London and New York among the first cities to be affected."

So Lerman, having studied the situation with scientific precision, expects a replay of the global disaster described in the Bible.

"Genesis" 6-17: "And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and everything that is in the earth shall die."

So there is a conflict of opinion between those experts who agree with Gerstein and those who agree with Lerman. They are, however, in total and terrible agreement on the key issue - that this world, because of man's stupidity, is now irrevocably doomed. Flame or flood...one of them, in the comparatively near future, will bring the agonizing end.

And what of the men behind Alternative 3?

They, presumably, have also studied the Bible version of the horrendous mass-death. "Genesis" 7-21, 22, 23: "And all flesh that moved upon the earth died, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark."

100

There can now be no doubt that those men, the ones who have supervised the mechanics of Alternative 3, have cast themselves jointly in the role of God - taking their cue from

other verses in that chapter of Genesis.

The Lord instructed Noah to collect the people and the creatures destined to board the ark, the ones to be lifted clear of the global devastation.

Technology has made space-craft the modern equivalent of that ark. Who, then, decides which people shall be evacuated in the arks of the twentieth century?

These anonymous men have assumed the right to decide who shall live and who shall die. Their decisions are based, in the main, on information supplied by an elaborate international network of computers - an aspect of the operation which we will later examine in more detail.

They have also assumed a prerogative which many will consider far more obscene: that of deciding which people should be plucked away from their homes - to be mutilated and moulded into slaves. These people, these tragic victims, are those who - together with disappearing cattle and horses and other creatures - become part of Batch Consignments.

Tuesday, January 10, 1978. Another envelope from Trojan. This one, arriving exactly a week after that Photostat copy of The Smoother Plan, contained the most serious indictment yet of the men behind Alternative 3. Trojan had again been scouring the archives and, as a result, had secured two documents - one dated Wednesday, August 27, 1958, and the other dated Friday, October 1, 1971. Both had been issued by "The Chairman, Policy Committee". Both here addressed to "National Chief Executive Officers" and both were headed "Batch Consignments".

The covering note from Trojan was tersely triumphant. It said:

"Maybe now you'll really believe me! This is what made me decide I wanted out - and it's the only reason I'm working with you."

The 1958 document said:

Each designated mover will, it is estimated, require back-up labor support of five bodies. These bodies, which will be transported in cargo batch consignments, will be programmed to obey legitimate orders without question and their principal initial duties will be in construction.

Priority will naturally be given to the building of accommodation for the designated movers.

101

However, it is stressed that, in the interests of good husbandry, accommodation will also be provided for the human components of batch consignments - as well as for relocated animals - as a matter of urgency. The completion of this accommodation, which will be of a more basic and utilitarian nature than that allocated to designated movers, will in normal circumstances take precedence over the creation of laboratories, offices, other places of work, and recreational centers. All exceptions to this rule will require written authorization from the Chairman of the Committee in Residence.

It is estimated that the average working life-span of human batch-consignment components will be fifteen

years and, in view of high transportation costs, every effort will be made to prolong that period of usefulness.

At the end of that life-span they are to be considered disposable for, although this is recognized as regrettable, there will be no place for low-grade passengers in the new territory. They would merely consume resources required to sustain the continuing influx of designated movers and would so undermine the success potential of the operation.

Preliminary work is now progressing to adapt batch-consignment components, mentally and physically, for their projected roles and the scope of this experimental work is to be widened. Further details will be provided, when appropriate, by Department Seven.

Pre-transportation collection of batch-consignment components will be organized by National Chief Executive Officers who will be supplied with details of categories and quantities required. No collection is to be arranged without specific instructions from Department Seven.

The 1971 document said:

Experimental processing of batch-consignment components is now producing a 96 per cent success rate. This is considered not unsatisfactory.

The Policy Committee briefing circulated on September 7, 1965, explained the necessity for all components to be de-sexed: 1) To eliminate the possibility of them forming traditional mating relationships which could detract from the efficiency of their sole-function performance. 2) To ensure components do not procreate and so haphazardly perpetuate a substandard species. This second consideration is of

102

particular importance for the products of such procreation, during their initial years of growth and development, would have no operational value and would merely be a liability on the resources of the new territory.

The permanent elimination of self-will and self-interest has presented great difficulties. Long-term laboratory tests have revealed that an unaccountably high percentage of components eventually regress towards their pre-processing attitudes, so rendering themselves unreliable and unsuitable for the envisaged role.

Advanced work, conducted principally in America, Britain, Japan and Russia, has now resulted in a substantial reduction of the "Component-personality" failure ratio. However, this branch of research is now to be intensified.

The Policy Committee has given careful consideration to suitable means of jettisoning rejected potential components. It has been agreed that they are not to be considered responsible for their unsuitability and that there is nothing to be gained by killing them. Such a solution, although simple enough to implement, would be unnecessarily harsh. They are therefore to have their memories destroyed - a process for so doing has now been perfected at Dnepropetrovsk and details are

being circulated to all A-3 laboratories - and then they will be permitted to resume their lives.

In future no de-sexing will be done until after the personality-adjustment of the projected component, male or female, has been assessed and approved. This will ensure that those which eventually return to their homes as rejects will betray no evidence of laboratory work.

On August 22, 1977, this story appeared in the London Evening News:

A mystery girl who baffled Scotland Yard for two weeks has discharged herself from the hospital.

And the Yard said today it still does not know who she was or where she has gone.

The girl, aged between sixteen and twenty, was admitted to Whittington Hospital, Holloway, after wandering into a hospital building late one night.

She appeared to have lost her memory and, despite intensive efforts by doctors and detectives, her background remains a mystery.

103

One week before that story appeared, Hertfordshire police were appealing for help in identifying another amnesia victim - a man in his mid-thirties - found wandering on a golf-course near Harpenden. So were police in Manchester. Their memory-blank case was a man aged about twenty.

That particular section of August, 1977, produced a great rash of people with the same problem. They turned up in Germany and in France, in Italy and in Canada. They were all physically fit and apparently normal - apart from having no idea who they were or where they had been.

What produced that extraordinary epidemic of amnesia? Far too many cases were reported for the global outbreak to be dismissed as coincidence. Had something gone dramatically wrong with a complete batch of "projected components"...something so severe that it had been necessary to return them to their old surroundings?

For instance, that man found wandering on the golf-course near Harpenden...was he there simply because the Alternative 3 planners had rejected him as a slave?

We do not claim to know. And although we have interviewed him - in addition to twenty-three other amnesia victims who appeared at about the same time - we see little hope of conclusively establishing that these people had been part of a "Pre-transportation collection". However, in view of the 1971 document supplied by Trojan, we do consider that to be a distinct possibility.

Monday, May 2, 1977. Clements was now spending as little time as possible in his own office. The smells from the canteen below, he swore, were getting stronger every month. Nothing could be worse than a floating reminder of yesterday's unwanted cabbage...

He operated, most days, from a desk in the big open-plan office which had been allocated to Science Report. At times, however, it tended to be too noisy - with too many telephones and too many people - and occasionally he was forced to retreat to his own tiny room behind Studio B. This Monday morning was one of those occasions. Clements and Benson were closeted there together - studying a transcript of the final interview with Grodin.

Clements marked a section with a red pencil. "There, love," he said. "That's the bit that really intrigues me. What exactly did he mean?"

Benson read the lines again: "We're just there to keep you bums happy...to keep you from asking dumb questions about what's really going on!"

"I just don't know," he said. "That's where he dived up. I couldn't get another damned thing out of him."

"Well that still leaves us with a load of questions, doesn't it?" said Clements. "And what I need now, Colin, is answers."

"Yes, but..."

"No "buts", love, please. I'm getting all of those I need from Harman. He's raising hell, y'know, about this American trip of yours..."

"Chris, I promise you, no-one could have got more out of Grodin..."

"He's put in a complaint about you to Fergus Godwin...says it was unethical of you to persist in questioning a man when he was drunk - particularly, as he puts it, when that man has a history of instability...He's even suggested that we should junk the film because Grodin was talking nonsense..."

"It wasn't nonsense, Chris. All right, so he was a bit smashed, particularly towards the end...I'm prepared to admit that...but I'm certain that he knew what he was saying and that he was telling the truth..."

"I know - and then he fell flat on his face." Clements chuckled. "You stick with your version, love, because the Controller wants to see both of us this afternoon."

"You're serious, then? Harman really is trying to kill it?"

"Believe me, I was never more serious. Let's face it. Colin...we've put two fingers up at him all along the line on this investigation and he's out to make all the trouble he can. You might like to know, by the way, that he's complaining you didn't bother to do the other job in America..."

105

"What other job?"

Clements grinned. "The piece you were meant to do for the holiday series, the one we promised Simon Shaw he'd get for his next run. The airline are going to be narked when they find they've thrown away a facility - and young Master Shaw's not too happy either..."

"Oh, come on..."

Clements stopped him. "He can fill in with the Isle of Man - that's the least of our troubles," he said. "We still need answers."

"Then maybe we should be searching harder for Harry."

"That crazy American! The one who attacked you!"

"He's got answers," said Benson. "Remember what he said on the telephone...about knowing why scientist keep disappearing and about knowing who's behind it..."

Clements sniffed, frowned with disgust, got up to close the window. "So where do you start searching?"

"Could try the police again."

"Be back by mid-afternoon," said Clements. "We've got that session with the Controller."

The desk sergeant was polite but unhelpful. "You any idea how many people get reported missing in Britain every year?" he asked. "About five thousand. And they're the ones officially reported. God only knows how many more never get reported..."

Benson handed him the photograph he had shown Grodin. "That's him," he said. "Last seen on February 11 at that address in Lambeth."

The sergeant glanced casually at the picture. "And you don't even know his surname." He snorted. "Gives us plenty to go on, doesn't it? Anyway...what makes you think he is missing? Maybe he just doesn't want to see you any more..."

"He was frightened, very frightened, and he got me confused with somebody else," said Benson. "He seemed to think that somebody was planning to kill him."

"You think that he's been killed? That he's been murdered? Is that what you're trying to say?"

"I don't know," said Benson miserably. "I don't think so but I don't know."

"Why should he confuse you with somebody else?"

"Because he wasn't normal that morning. He was...well...bombed out of his mind."

"Drugs?"

"That's right."

They were short-handed at the police station and it was a busy morning. The sergeant decided he'd already wasted too much time. He pressed the picture back into

106

Benson's hand, made a big play of putting his pen down firmly on the counter, sighed patiently. "So what have we got, sir? An alien of uncertain age and of unknown name who uses drugs and who was last seen by you, briefly, nearly three months

ago in a condemned house where he was apparently squatting.

"He imagined you were somebody who, for a reason we can't establish, wanted to murder him. Now, although he may have gone back to America for all you know, you want us to find him for you.

"Would you say that was a fair summing-up of the situation?"

Benson shuffled his feet and looked sheepish. "Sounds a bit daft, doesn't it?"

"I've got your name and address," said the sergeant politely. "If Mr. Anonymous does turn up, I'll mention you were asking after him."

The afternoon meeting with Fergus Godwin was also a rough one. The Controller had already been worked on vigorously by Harman and he was in a foul mood. He saw trouble looming with the Board over this particular Science Report project, especially with that apoplectic accountant, and he bitterly regretted having authorized Benson's trip to America.

Harman's words kept niggling at the back of his mind. Maybe Harman was right. Maybe Clements was becoming "unprofessionally obsessed". Godwin certainly had doubts about allowing the transmission of such a curious interview with a man who was patently drunk. There could be all sorts of repercussions...

"But Fergus...it could prove to be an invaluable part of the program," argued Clements. "It's just that, at the moment, there are still some missing links."

"Come back to me when and if you find those links." Godwin glowered balefully at the pair of them. "Until then that film gets locked away - and I can't see much chance of us ever using it."

They returned to the small office. Clements sat at the desk and sniffed. "Thank God there's no fish on Mondays," he said. "Fish days are always the worst."

"Now what?" asked Benson.

"Gerstein - he's all we've got left. If only we could get him to open up on this Alternative 3..."

"You want me to try him?"

Clements shook his head, picked up the grey internal telephone, dialed a number in the main Science Report office. "Is Simon Butler there?"

In May, 1971, the authoritative publication Computers and Automation carried an article by Edward Yourdon which said:

107

tremendous improvement in various phases of Government...if one has faith: faith, that the computers will work properly...men had lost faith in their human leaders, and now...things will be better if they have faith in a cold-blooded mechanical computing machine."

Only a few months earlier, at the end of 1970, the staff magazine of Barclays Bank, Spread Eagle, had contained an article which read:

Computers have given birth to the Technological Era, have ushered in the Space Age, have begun to play such a dominating role in fields as diverse as military science, weather forecasting, medicine, industrial

design and production, communications, commerce, business and banking that the question is seriously being asked whether they are beginning to dominate man himself.

Some even hold the view that in the foreseeable future we shall be stripped of our individual privacy and reduced to a string of meaningless dots stored in the magnetic bowels of some giant Government computer - a sort of Big Brother whose prying gaze will have us constantly under his attentive scrutiny.

Neither of those writers realized he was anticipating a situation which was by then firmly established. "Individual privacy" had been scrapped years earlier because of covert decisions made within governments and between governments.

108

Some of this background, just occasionally, spills into the open.

On September 9, 1977, The Times published a front-page story, by Home Affairs Reporter Stewart Tandler, which had a headline reading: NATIONAL SECURITY CITED BY POLICE AS REASON FOR MAINTAINING SILENCE ON USE OF RECORDS.

Tandler's story said:

The names and personal details of tens of thousands of people scrutinized by the Special Branch for reasons of national security are to be fed into a new criminal intelligence computer bought by Scotland Yard and shrouded in mystery.

Note those last three words. "Shrouded in mystery." The Times is not a newspaper which would lightly use a phrase of that nature. The story continued:

When plans for the computer were drawn up two years ago it is understood that the Special Branch was allocated space on it for up to 600,000 names out of the system's total capacity of 1,300,000 names by 1985...

Census projections have indicated that Britain's population will not increase in the next decade. So that

figure of 600,000 means that the Special Branch was preparing to feed details of one person out of every ninety-five in the entire population into that computer. But that is merely the start...

Discount from the total population all geriatrics, young children, and those who have been judged incurably insane...and the ratio under surveillance comes down to about one person in fifty.

Take that one step further and the implications are startling...

If the average household comprises two adults - and that is pitching it at its most conservative - the ratio is reduced to one household in twenty-five.

That means there can hardly be a street of road in Britain where at least one household - and probably far more - is not considered to merit computer-monitoring by the Special Branch.

Can you now be confident that you or your immediate neighbors are not being studied by the Special Branch? You can be absolutely certain that people you know, probably people very close to you, are getting this particular treatment.

And the figures we have given, astonishing as they may seem, do not allow for those people programmed into other Special Branch computers - computers which so far have remained hidden on the classified list.

109

Does all this savour of normal Special Branch work? Or does it indicate an operation on a far bigger scale? One, possibly, as enormous as Alternative 3?

The Home Office was clearly embarrassed by Tendler's discovery and sought to "play it down". His story went on:

Yesterday a police source said that the Special Branch had yet to decide how many names would be placed on the computer and denied that anything like 600,000 would eventually be filed.

Scotland Yard said last night: "The question of the involvement of the Special Branch in the project to computerize sections of the records of C Department (the department covering CID and specialist detective squads) is not one we are prepared to discuss, since most of the work of the Special Branch is in the field of national security.

"The publication of any figures purporting to indicate the total number of records in any part of the project would amount to speculation"...

It (the Special Branch) is still surrounded by a certain amount of mystique and the same is true of the new computer. The Metropolitan Police and the Home Office have made few public statements about the nature of its use.

Tendler also said in that story that the activities of the Special Branch were "a closely guarded secret" and he added: "It is not known whose names and details have been gathered by the officers."

We cannot prove that this particular computer has been used to sift "Designated movers" for Alternative 3. However, because of information from Trojan, we are able to state categorically that similar computers are used for this purpose. We know of six - apart from the master one at the operation-control centre in Geneva. They are located in America, Britain, Germany, Japan,

Poland and Russia.

There may be others. In fact, there almost certainly are. However, we have no information about them and, as we have already said, we have no intention of making statements which cannot be substantiated.

Britain's principal Alternative 3 computer is officially used exclusively by a local authority in the north-east and, as a cover, a small percentage of routine local-authority work is processed by it. The main one in America, installed and maintained at the expense of the Federal Government, is officially owned by a manufacturing company in Detroit. The Polish one is in the Academy of Sciences in Warsaw's Plac Defilad.

110

Comparatively little trouble is taken over the selection of "components" for Batch Consignments. They need to be strong, to have years of physical labor left in them. That is the prime criterion. Their personalities, back-grounds, mental agilities...these are of secondary importance, for they will be scientifically moulded into the approved pattern. And, after all, they are expendable.

But what of the "designated movers?" How is their value measured? And this mysterious "new territory" in which they are apparently destined to live -- what sort of society is being created there?

Trojan has supplied partial answers. He found them in a 1972 document - addressed to National Chief Executive Officers - from the Chairman of the Policy Committee:

Standing Instructions relating to the recruitment of designated movers have already been circulated by this Committee. However, recent reports from the Chairman of the Committee in Residence indicate that there have been certain failures in the execution of those instructions.

These failures have produced unwarranted problems in the new territory and have resulted in an unacceptably high wastage of post-transportation designated movers.

This situation cannot be tolerated and the Policy Committee therefore requires me, once again, to specify the aims and the requirements of the Committee in Residence.

Every effort is to be made to eliminate the problems which men have become conditioned into accepting as inevitable in the old territory.

Alternative 3 participants have evolved, or must be taught to evolve, away from the concepts of national or tribal interests which have traditionally resulted in warfare. This will become of increasing importance when the new territory becomes more intensively populated. National Chief Executive Officers will therefore give priority attention to this aspect of the operation and ensure it is fully understood by their regional subordinates.

No person is to be nominated as a potential designated mover if there is any doubt about him or her having the potential to evolve in this manner.

This requirement over-rides all other

considerations of skills and training.

111

As this particular personality trait still cannot be assessed from a computer print-out, it is imperative that judgements be based on individual interviews. This puts the onus on regional officials for, in view of the size of the operation, it is not possible for this aspect to be handled centrally or even nationally.

There was more in this vein. Much more. This was by far the most comprehensive document obtained by Trojan. It stressed the need for an even mix of nationalities and colors among the designated movers for, although they were to be "integrated into a new conception of a family community," it was considered that all ethnic groups should be represented in the new territory. That was emphasized in one particular sentence: "The object of Alternative 3 is to ensure the survival of all strains of the human race and not merely those from the more advanced and privileged back-grounds."

That sounds fine and noble -- until one considers the nightmare treatment of those regarded contemptuously as "components." They have been pitilessly shanghaied from their families and reduced to sub-humans. They now labor as mindless beasts of burden. And their only escape from degradation lies in death. That is the true and unforgivable obscenity of Alternative 3.

The document continued:

Representatives of all aspects of human culture will eventually be transported to the new territory. Therefore, in time, designated movers will also be recruited from the arts. They will include writers, painters, sculptors and musicians.

In the early stages, however, only those with skills essential to the foundation of the new society are required. Approved category lists have already been circulated.

Explorations in the new territory have revealed certain factors which had not been entirely anticipated and, principally for this reason, amendments have been necessitated to category quotas.

The Committee in Residence particularly requests more intensive recruitment of doctors, chemists, neurologists and bacteriologists.

The new territory, for the moment, has a satisfactory complement of computer specialists, mining technicians, and agricultural overseers. Recruitment of these categories is to cease until further instructions.

112

Expansions and wastages will inevitably result in changes and monthly lists of personnel requirements will in future be circulated to National Chief Executive Officers by Department Seven.

The document then detailed the Alternative 3 attitude to children. They were to be introduced into the new territory for it was considered that their presence would have "the beneficial effect of adding an additional dimension of social-structure familiarity". That, when the jargon is stripped away, means that the emigrants would appreciate having them there, that children would help them feel more "at home".

However, children were not considered productive - not in the way required in the new territory - and so the quota was to be severely restricted. Only those with "key parents" were to be transported - and then only if the parents could not be persuaded to make other custodial arrangements for them in the old territory:

There may be instances in which vital personnel can be persuaded that their children can be left with relatives in the knowledge that they will be reunited with them at a reasonably early date and, where applicable, every reasonable effort should be made to secure the success of such persuasion.

No figures or percentages were given in that document but it would appear that mathematician Robert Patterson's children - sixteen-year-old Julian and fourteen-year-old Kate - are part of a very small minority. Unless, of course, there was a change of attitude towards "the child quota" between 1972 and the time of their disappearance from Scotland in February, 1976.

Ann Clark, on the evidence of that document, is also part of a minority. All women are, in Alternative 3. The ratio among designated movers is apparently three males to each female. Unless, again, there has been a policy change since the document was circulated in 1972.

No facilities can yet be spared for maternity care, although naturally there are plans for the future, and so pregnancies are outlawed in the new territory. The Committee in residence will provide notification of when this ruling is rescinded.

113

Accidental pregnancies will be automatically aborted and parties to the offence will be arraigned before the Committee in Residence.

The rest of the document dealt mainly with the provision of recreational and entertainment facilities. There is, apparently, a cinema. There are also a number of communal television-viewing rooms into which flow programs transmitted from many parts of the world.

It is intriguing to realize that designated movers, including men like Brian Pendlebury from Manchester, were very likely watching that sensational edition of Science Report.

We have already mentioned how, in the course of that

program in June, 1977, Simon Butler told viewers that twenty-four people were then known to have vanished in mysterious circumstances - circumstances which pointed to their having been recruited into Alternative 3.

Three of those people, of course, were Ann Clark, Robert Patterson and Brian Pendlebury. Here we intended to give details of the other twenty-one - based on information collated for Sceptre Television by Terry Dickson. In eighteen of those cases, however, we have received family requests for anonymity and, in deference to those requests, we are restricting ourselves to three examples:

Richard Tuffley, 27, endocrinologist. Born in Sidmouth, Devon, but living and working in Swansea, South Wales. Orphaned when young and brought up by mother's sister, now deceased. Unmarried and no known relatives. Lived alone in small rented flat near university. Disappeared Monday, January 5, 1976. Last seen driving light-blue mini-van in direction of Cardiff. Van has still not been located.

Statement from his departmental chief: "He was a first-class and highly-conscientious colleague - certainly not the sort one would expect to let the team down as it now seems he did.

"He was rather introverted and made few friends but, I had no indication that he was in any way unhappy here."

Gordon Balcombe, 36, senior administrator with multi - national manufacturing conglomerate. Living in Bromley, Kent, and working in central London. Divorced in 1969. Father of three children, living with ex-wife, whom he did not see after divorce. Lived alone in former family home - detached house backing on to park - but said to have many women visitors. Some, according

114

to neighbors, often stayed overnight. Disappeared Thursday, February 5, 1976. Last seen leaving his office in a taxi. Taxi-driver never traced.

Statement from his managing director: "We were completely bewildered by his disappearance for he was a man with a tremendous future in this organization. Plans were being mooted for him to move to a more senior position in our base at Chicago and he seemed genuinely excited by the prospect.

"We regard his disappearance as a great loss."

Statement from Mrs. Marjorie Balcombe:

"Gordon, for all I know, could be anywhere. I suspect that he is probably somewhere in America."

"He is the sort of man that executive head-hunters do try to entice to new posts and it is quite possible that he would not bother to tell his old firm if he decided to accept a better offer. He would just go if it suited his purpose. That's the sort of person Gordon is. Self-centered. "And I shouldn't be in the slightest surprised to learn that he has some woman in tow. Women are his great weakness."

"The only thing that really puzzles me is the way he left so many of his clothes and other personal possessions in the house. That does strike me as being out-of-character."

Sidney Dilworth, 32, meteorologist. Living and working in Reading, Berkshire. Widower. Wife died in

car crash in October, 1975. No Children, lived alone in terraced house being bought on mortgage. Disappeared Friday, April 16, 1976.

Last seen driving hired car in direction of London. Vehicle later found in car-park at Number Three Terminal, Heathrow Airport.

Statement from his father, Wilfred Dilworth: "I keep telling the police that something really bad has happened to our Sidney but, although they're very sympathetic, they don't seem to be doing much about it. I've got a nasty feeling he's been murdered or something. He was always a very considerate lad and he'd never want me and his mother to have this sort of worry hanging over us."

"He was very upset after his wife was killed and he talked about trying to start a new life in Canada. In fact, in the January before he disappeared he said he thought he had a job lined up there but, as far as I could gather, that just fizzled out. At the research station they say he never mentioned anything about leaving but I suppose he wouldn't want to tell them until it was all settled."

"Now we've reached the stage where I dread opening the newspaper in the morning for I'm sure that one day I'll be reading that they've found his body."

115

Now we know that this pattern has been repeated in country after country. Right across the world.

Andrew Nisbett, 39, aerospace technician, born Tulsa, Oklahoma. Disappeared on Tuesday, October 5, 1976, from Houston, Texas - together with his wife, Rita, and their only son.

Pavel Garmanas, 42, physicist, born in Usachevka, USSR. Disappeared on Thursday, July 14, 1977, from his new home in Jerusalem, Israel.

Marcel Rouffanche, 35, nutrition specialist, born in the suburb of Saint-Rugg near Avignon. Disappeared on Wednesday, November 16, 1977, from his apartment in Paris.

Eric Hillier, 27, constructional engineer, born Melbourne, Australia. Disappeared on Thursday, December 29, 1977.

Intensive investigation has shown that the figures given by Butler in that television program represented only a fraction of the true total. And that total is still mounting.

The explosion of fear provoked by the Science Report program resulted, as we said earlier, in the company's being required to deny formally the truth of the material which had been presented.

The wording of that statement had been prepared by Leonard Harman and, despite violent opposition from Clements, it was released by the Press Office. Most newspapers accepted the denial - apparently making no attempt to verify the curious background stories of people like Robert Patterson.

The Daily Express, to Harman's relief, devoted most of its front page the following day to a splash story headlined: STORM OVER TV'S SPOOF.

The Express story started:

Thousands of viewers all over the country protested in shock and anger over a science fiction "documentary"

put out by ITV last night.

From the moment that "Alternative 3" ended at 10 p.m., irate watchers jammed the switchboards of the Daily Express and ITV companies to complain.

This story made no mention of the evidence which had been given on screen by Dr. Carl Gerstein or by other respected authorities such as Professor G. Gordon Broadbent. Grodin's important contribution was also ignored. However, the story did indicate that the "hour-long spoof" -- transmitted at peak viewing time - "purported" to show a version of the scientific brain - drain. It continued:

116

The program was introduced by former newscaster Simon Butler as a serious investigation into a disturbing trend of scientific discovery.

American and Russian spacemen were seen collaborating to set up the "new colony"...while viewers were left to suppose that the reason for the exploration was the end of life on Earth.

TV advertised the show by saying: "What this program shows may be considered unethical..."

Viewers taken unawares protested their shock immediately. Others, realizing the program was a spoof, complained of ITV's "irresponsibility".

Early today, a spokesman for the Independent Broadcasting Authority said it had thought long and hard before allowing the documentary to be shown.

But Mrs. Denise Ball of Camberley, Surrey, said: "I was scared out of my wits. It was all so real."

Mrs. Mary Whitehouse, the renowned clean-Up-TV campaigner, was another who completely believed the "Harman denial". She was quoted in another newspaper as saying: "I had hundreds of calls. The film was brilliantly done to deceive."

So that was the immediate reaction. And that was entirely understandable. The facts assembled by Clements and his team were so stupefyingly frightening that people were eager to believe they were not true.

People were delighted to accept Harman's denial because it drew a comforting veil over the unacceptable.

All this put men like Terry Dickson in a most invidious position. Over Robert Patterson, for example. Had Patterson ever really existed? That question, together with others like it, was implicit in the attitude of most newspapers. And, for some unfathomable reason, officials at the University of St. Andrews refused to make any comment. The vice-chancellor there who had explained about Patterson going prematurely to America, who had apologized so courteously for the resulting waste of time...he was on protracted leave somewhere in Europe and could not be contacted.

So was Patterson merely a figment of Dickson's imagination? Was that why Benson had been unable to interview him?

The questions were piling up. And they were getting crazier and crazier.

During the following few days, however, Fleet Street had time to make inquiries and certain journalists began to consider the television investigation in a rather different

perspective.

117

Terry Dickson has told us that the biggest moment of relief for him came on June 26 when he opened his copy of the Sunday Telegraph. Columnist Philip Purser, respected as one of the most perceptive commentators in Britain, pointed out that "a number of mysteries within the mystery posed by Alternative 3 remain unsolved."

The first of those "Mysteries" detailed by Purser related to "Dr. Robert Paterson (sic), one of the savants whose disappearance prompted this disturbing investigation".

Purser had a special reason for being interested in Patterson for, as he told his readers, he had indirect knowledge of the man:

The son of a friend of mine who lectures in the same department at St. Andrews tells me that Patterson, though an able mathematician and specialist in Boolean geometry, was also a true Scot, notoriously careful with his bawbees.

Those final five words are clearly a reference to the Patterson characteristic we described in Section Two - that of resenting having so much of his money taken in taxation. He tended to be such a bombastic bore on the subject that, as we said, many of his university colleagues were relieved when he announced he was leaving. Purser's contact at St. Andrews was probably one of those colleagues.

Philip Purser made it abundantly clear that he was too shrewd to be fooled by the Harman denial. He concluded his Sunday Telegraph article with these thoughts:

It would be a mistake to file "Alternative 3" away too cozily with Panorama's spaghetti harvest and other hoaxes. Suppose it were fiendish double bluff inspired by the very agencies identified in the program and that the super-powers really are setting up an extra-terrestrial colony of outstanding human beings to safeguard the species?

Letters flowing into the studios showed there was also a significant proportion of thinking viewers who recognized the truth. One of the first received by Simon Butler was from the President of the European Space Association who wrote: "I must congratulate you and Colin Benson on your assiduous research."

Here are extracts from other typical letters:

I am a recently-retired aerospace technician and your investigation explained certain factors which I

118

discovered in the course of my duties and which have been puzzling me for some years. Thank God someone has at last had the initiative and the tenacity to present the unpalatable truth - E.M., Filton, Bristol.

Congratulations on not allowing the politicians to muzzle you! Your Science Report was absolutely terrifying but, of course, the truth so often is and surely we have a right to know what is really happening. The subsequent back-peddalling by official spokesmen for your company, which appears to have been blandly accepted by most newspapers, does not surprise me. Most of my professional life has been spent in the Civil Service and I am only too aware of how pressures can be applied, particularly when it comes to so-called Official Secrets. Please maintain your vigilance - J.N., London NW1.

Yet newspapers still showed an extraordinary reluctance to pursue the subject of Alternative 3.

Why? Why did they not question people like Wilfred Dilworth and Marjorie Balcombe? Why did they not contact Dennis Pendlebury in Manchester...or Richard Tuffley's former colleagues in Swansea? These people were available for interview. They still are available.

Many attempts have been made, as we explained earlier, to prevent the publication of this book - and, because of action by those two MPs, we have been forced into a reluctant compromise. So is it possible that newspapers, have been subjected to similar pressures? And that they, in "the interests of national security", have yielded to those pressures? That, in a free society, may seem incredible. But the world has never before known anything as incredible as Alternative 3.

A key to the truth was provided by Kenneth Hughes in the Daily Mirror on June 20, 1977 - the day the program was actually transmitted. He had secured advance access to some of the material gathered by Clements and his team and his article was headlined: WHAT ON EARTH IS GOING ON? He wrote:

A science program is likely to keep millions of Britons glued to their armchairs.

Alternative 3 (ITV 9.0) is an investigation into the disappearance of several scientists.

They seem simply to have vanished from the face of the Earth.

119

Chilling news is read by former ITV newscaster Simon Butler who gives a gloomy report on the future.

Then came the truly telling paragraph:

"The program will be screened in several other countries - but not America. Network bosses there want to assess its effect on British viewers.

That is what columnist Hughes had been told. That is what he believed. The truth was, however, that television network bosses in America were permitted no discretion in the matter. Any screening of that Science Report program was forbidden in that country by higher authority.

It was no mere coincidence that two of the countries

where the documentary was banned were America and Russia -the two principal partners in this amazing conspiracy. Security forces in each of those countries were particularly alert to the nuances of public reaction...

The backlash of embarrassment which followed the transmission produced an immediate clamp-down of information in Britain. Even Professor G. Gordon Broadbent, a man noted for his independent attitudes, was reluctant to become more deeply involved. We wanted him to enlarge on the theories he had outlined in the program, to elaborate on the theme of covert co-operation between the super-powers, and so Watkins visited him at the Institute of International Political Studies in London. Here is a transcript from the tape of that interview which took place on July 7, 1977:

WATKINS: You are naturally aware of the statement which claimed that the Alternative 3 program was a hoax. What is your reaction to that statement?

BROADBENT: It would be wrong, in the present political climate, for me to make any comment.

WATKINS: You suggested that co-operation between East and West could involve some "massive but covert operation in space". Would you give your reasons for that suggestion?

BROADBENT: You may recall that I stressed that this could be the situation but I did not state categorically that it was. In fact, as I remember, I explained that I was not in the business of speculation and I see nothing to be gained by enlarging on what I have already said.

WATKINS: You took part in that program as an expert commentator. What are your feelings about this entire exercise now being dismissed as a hoax?

120

BROADBENT: Shall we say that the program was of a more sensational nature than I had anticipated when I agreed to participate? I was surprised by some of its findings.

WATKINS: But do you feel those findings accurately reflected what is really happening?

BROADBENT: I'm sorry...I'd prefer to say no more.

The interview was extremely unsatisfactory. However, only a few weeks later, we received more information which provided a deeper insight into the workings of Alternative 3...

Thursday, August 4, 1977. Another submarine meeting of Policy Committee. Chairman: R EIGHT. Transcript section supplied by Trojan starts:

A TWO: But losing a whole Batch Consignment just like that!

A EIGHT: We had bum luck...that's all there is to it...

A TWO: Three hundred bodies smashed to bits...a complete write-off and that's all you can say! We had bum luck! Look, I'm not a technical man and I tend to get lost with some of this technical talk...so will someone please explain just how a thing like this can happen...because, I tell you, I've got a gut feeling there's been carelessness.

R FIVE: It is not possible to legislate against accidents of this nature...they are part of the hazards of transportation to the new territory...

A TWO: Yes, but...

R FIVE: Please...I will explain. Meteors are very common, far more common than people realize, and about a million of them enter the earth's atmosphere every day. Nearly all are very tiny, not more than about a gram in weight, but some are considerably bigger...

A EIGHT: That's right...some are too big to evaporate completely on their journey through the earth's atmosphere so they land as solid lumps. We reckon that about 500 kilograms arrive this way from outer space every year...

R FIVE: Sometimes these lumps are gigantic. There was one in 1919, for example, which landed in Siberia. It devastated about 100 square miles of countryside...

A EIGHT: Then there's that classic meteor crater in Arizona...

121

R FIVE: It is the same in and around the new territory...millions of meteors are bombarding its atmosphere and our craft have to travel through that bombardment...

A TWO: But our pilots...don't they take avoiding action?

A EIGHT: Imagine yourself on a bicycle...trying to dodge an avalanche that's rolling right on top of you...that's how it was with this lot...

A TWO: And you're saying this one which hit the Batch Consignment craft was maybe as big as that Siberian one?

R FIVE: Possibly...but we have no means of telling... anyway, it wouldn't be necessary for it to be that big...one a hundredth that size would have completely destroyed the craft...

R EIGHT: This discussion, I feel, is leading us nowhere. Our scientific people at Archimedes Base have assured us that this disaster-our first, I must emphasize - could not possibly have been avoided. And that has been confirmed by the Committee in Residence. It is hardly our function to hold another post-mortem.

A ONE: That's right. We ought to be thankful there were no designated movers on board. So we lost 300 components...is that so desperately serious? All we've got to do is fix for another collection.

(Authors' note: The following month, you may recall, brought reports of mass disappearances in Australia. By the end of September many of those who had disappeared were found by chance in what was apparently a slave-labor camp-possibly in readiness for clinical processing and transportation. Many others have never been seen since. The discovery of those "slave-labor" men, coming so soon after that meeting of the Policy Committee, might, of course, have been merely a coincidence. However, we consider that to be highly unlikely).

R EIGHT: The legacy of that unfortunate television program is of far more immediate importance...
A FIVE: Listen...that program has been completely discredited. People have accepted it wasn't meant to be taken seriously, that it was no more than an elaborate joke...we don't need to sweat blood over it...

122

R EIGHT: Most people have accepted the official statements but there are those who cannot be so easily convinced. We must not under-estimate the damage that has been done by the program. It has made certain people think and wonder and that can be dangerous. We must make certain that its credibility is completely eradicated.
A TWO: I told you we should have killed that guy Gerstein...way back in February...I said then he was dangerous...
R FOUR: My friend is right...he did say that. And I pointed out then that Gerstein's talk could start a panic among the masses...
A FIVE: So what are you saying? An Expediency?
R ONE: What value would that be now? He has said all he can add...and now people are laughing at him. They say he is a crank. so what would be gained by an Expediency?
A TWO: He should never have co-operated with those television guys...he deserves to die and...
A EIGHT: I told you all before...we don't use Expediencies for punishment purposes...we use them only in the furtherance of the operation. So maybe we were wrong before...maybe we should have had Gerstein killed...but, now, I see no point...
R EIGHT: We will vote. Those in favor of an Expediency?...thank you...And against?...Good... I entirely agree. Gerstein did behave in a most foolhardy manner but we have nothing to gain by his death...
A TWO: But what about the regional officer concerned?
A EIGHT: You're right there. He should have stopped that television crap. He's proved himself to be utterly unreliable. He failed and failed badly and, what's worse, he could let us down again. The man, without any question, is a liability and I propose an Expediency.
R TWO: Seconded.
R EIGHT: Those in favor?...Then that is unanimous. The method?
A THREE: How about a telepathic sleep-job...maybe with a gun...
R EIGHT: That seems sensible...it's too soon after Ballantine for another hot-job.

That was where the transcript section ended. What had Gerstein said to cause such consternation? Those who saw the

123

television program will already know. In the next section, for the benefit of others, we will be giving full details of his interview with Simon Butler.

But what of the final part of that transcript: "telepathic sleep-job with a gun". That was gibberish to us -- at that stage. It was not until later that we got a possible explanation from Dr. Hugo Danningham. We were accustomed by that stage to surprises. But Dr. Danningham's explanation came as one of the most startling surprises yet.

124

SECTION TEN

Dr. Hugo Danningham lectures regularly on parapsychology at three British universities and is a committee member of the European Institute for Brain Research. He was

interviewed on our behalf by Colin Benson in Brussels on September 23, 1977. That interview, which Benson taped, provided an insight into the possible meaning of the phrase "telepathic sleep-job".

In the early 1960s, he explained, significant advances were made in the study of parapsychology at the University of Kharkov and at the University of Leningrad - advances which many experts feared were to be adapted for use in any future conflict between East and West.

They involved telepathy and, more specifically, the long-distance invasion and manipulation of minds. The potential military advantages were patently obvious. Enemies could be attacked and suborned literally from within. If the telepathic power were strong enough, they could be compelled to ignore the orders of their commanders in preference to those being beamed directly into their minds. They would, in fact, respond like remote-controlled puppets.

Military authorities in the West, fearful of the advantages this could yield to the Russians, initiated intensive research into this new style of weapon. And, as a result, it had been perfected by both super-powers.

"Experiments have proved that children, like birds and beasts and people in primitive tribes, are usually more receptive to telepathic messages and instructions than most adults in a civilized society," said Dr. Dunningham. "This is because once intelligence has been fully developed, and once a tremendous amount of education has been absorbed, information received on a major scale directly from other minds could easily result in mental confusion.

"As a result, the mind of civilized man has developed a protective barrier against telepathy. This barrier can be penetrated most easily when the defenses are down - such as when a person is extremely fatigued or is going through a period of great emotional stress. And the defenses of the mind, of course, are never more relaxed than during sleep. That is when a person is most vulnerable to telepathic invasion - particularly if such an invasion was being controlled by experienced professionals.

"That, I suspect, is the explanation behind that "sleep-job" expression."

Benson frowned, shook his head in perplexity. I'm sorry...I don't quite follow..."

"A sleeping man can be given instructions and, if the circumstances are propitious, he will obey those instructions - even if they are that he should kill himself..."

125

"Good God!" said Benson. "You're suggesting, then, a sort of somnambulistic suicide! But this is quite fantastic! These circumstances you mention...what exactly would they be?"

For any action as dramatic as self-destruction there could almost certainly have to be a synchronization of many factors, said Dr. Dunningham. "For example, it would be easier if the intended victim were at precisely the right period of his biorhythmic psi sensitivity cycle and..."

"But surely the instinct for self-preservation would countermand any instructions calculated to result in suicide...unless the sleeper wanted to kill himself anyway..."

"Not if the telepathic instructions were cleverly presented, said Dunningham. "Let me give you an illustration:

"Imagine you want to kill a man who, let's say, lives high up in a skyscraper block. Now you're not going to tell

that man to kill himself by jumping out of his bedroom window because - as you so rightly say - his instinct for survival would very likely intervene and reject the order.

"So what you do is feed him false information. You tell him telepathically that there is some wild beast rampaging around his room or that the building has caught fire. You tell him there is a safety net spread under the window and that, to save himself, he must jump. So, in a desperate bid to stay alive, he jumps - and breaks his neck.

"It is possible, of course, to play all sorts of permutations on this tack. You might persuade your sleeping victim, for instance, into believing there is some venomous spider attached to his chest, that he must stab it and kill it before it kills him. And so, in his sleep, he stabs himself."

"The variations, my dear Mr. Benson, are almost limitless. If the telepathic messages convinced your sleeper that he had accidentally drunk some corrosive poison and that the only antidote was in a bottle marked cyanide...well, I'm sure you see what I mean.:

"And you're saying that this sort of thing actually happens?"

Danningham shook his head. "No, I'm not saying that at all. I'm merely telling you what is possible. Men in my field have the knowledge required to make those things happen but I cannot visualize anyone actually using that knowledge..."

Maybe Dr. Danningham was right. Maybe, at that time, the men behind Alternative 3 had not used somnambulistic suicide as a method of murder. However, we spent weeks researching newspaper archives in America and Britain and we discovered three cases which, to say the least, appear to merit a question mark.