

K243.6012-24

10 Jul - 1 Aug 1963

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Maxwell AFB, Ala 36112

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support to President Kennedy during the final hours. The principal claims of these organizations are that unidentified flying objects are interplanetary space craft and that the Air Force is withholding the information.


The most active and influential of these organizations is the National Investigation Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP). This organization is headed by Major Donald E. Keyhoe, U.S. Marine Corps (Ret).

NICAP, through its publication the "UFO Investigator," has made constant appeals to its members to write to their congressman requesting a hearing to investigate the Air Force's handling of the UFO program. It is our opinion that this appeal prompted Mr. Speights' letter to you.

Mr. Speights, a youth of about 19, has written to us on two previous occasions and has received an answer to each of his two letters. From comparison of the language in his previous letters with that in the letter to you it is obvious that Mr. Speights has had assistance with the majority of the information contained in this most recent letter. It is probable that he copied it from some NICAP publication.

Following are some observations regarding statements in Mr. Speights' letter.

The Air Force has no record of the number of attempts which have been made by our pilots to intercept UFO's; however, such action is not unusual nor does it prove that these objects/phe-



nomena are anything other than as claimed by the Air Force. The Air Force attempts to intercept any object which is unidentified and has prescribed performance parameters.

In many instances the pilot, upon returning to the ground, realizes that he has been attempting to close on some common object such as a planet. The Ryan case which occurred in the state of New York on 8 April 1956 was due to the misidentification of the planet Venus. Our records reveal that Captain Ryan was not directed by the Air Force to investigate the object and that, according to his own statement, he did not deviate from course for this or any other purpose. The fact that Captain Ryan arrived at Schenectady, his destination, on schedule tends to substantiate the claim that he did not deviate from course.

Scientists and engineers, though expert in their own field, can temporarily misidentify some object or phenomena thus reporting it as an unidentified flying object. It is, in fact, possible for a scientist to be fooled by an occurrence closely associated with his specialized field as evidenced by the experience of Dr. Donald H. Menzel of Harvard, a noted astronomer. Dr. Menzel was fooled for a time by the refracted image of the star Sirius. This experience is related in Chapter IV, page 60 of his forthcoming book, THE WORLD OF FLYING SAUCERS, published by Doubleday.

There are sightings in the Air Force files which indicate ball lightning or some similar electromagnetic phenomena as the probable cause. Due to the infrequent occurrence and the transient nature

of ball lightning, it is impossible to have good documented reports on this phenomena. In most of these cases, witnesses have reported interference with vehicle ignition, lights, radio, etc. Such interference, if actually occurring, could be due to the presence of the lightning or to the fact that the witness in his excitement may accidentally stall the car. Because ball lightning usually occurs immediately following a severe thunder storm, such factors as wet ignition, atmospheric static, etc., may be the cause for the reported trouble.

The Air Force has taken geiger counter readings immediately after sightings but has yet to find any readings which vary significantly from the normal background of the area tested.

Radar sightings are often supported by visual sightings because the same atmospheric conditions which produce visual anomalies may also effect radar.

It is Air Force policy to provide news media with information regarding UFO sightings which reach national prominence and to provide information to individuals in response to their specific requests. Further, the next edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica will carry an article on unidentified flying objects. This article, approved by the Air Force, was prepared by Dr. J. Allen Hynek, Chairman of the Department of Astronomy at Northwestern University, who has served as Air Force consultant to the UFO program since 1948.

In order that the public be provided with as much information as possible, every effort is made to keep UFO sightings unclassified.

Supporting information indicates the classification of a sighting and not the sighting itself. Since 1959, 184 cases of 2167 are classified and only 4 of the 53 unidentified cases for this period are classified.

The number of foreign reports that have come to our attention do not differ measurably from those originating in the U.S. neither in the presentation of the data nor in the determined probable cause.

The Air Force has no knowledge of a 1948 document by ATIC which states that UFO's are interplanetary space ships. One of the original documents establishing the project states that an objective would be to determine if any evidence from sightings suggests that UFO's are of interplanetary origin. It is possible that the meaning of this document was misinterpreted. The Air Force's open minded attitude still persists, and investigators and analysts have no preconceived notion as to the cause for a sighting but rather form their conclusions from the evidence. To date no evidence has been found to lead us to even suspect that these objects are interplanetary space ships.

Unidentified aerial phenomena constitute only a part of the noise which our defense detection systems must take into account in preventing accidental war. Scientific studies too extensive to be discussed here, are being conducted to determine the extent and nature of this noise for integration into our defensive network.

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It is hoped that this information answers all of your questions regarding the Air Force's Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Program. We stand ready to give you any further cooperation which you deem necessary.

✓

*Speights*

OFFICIAL FILE COPY

TDEW

Request for UFO Information(John P. Speights)

1 August 1963

Hq USAF SAF-OI 3b (Mrs. Wells)  
Wash 25 DC

1. Reference the attached letter from Pvt John P. Speights requesting information on unidentified flying objects. This letter is forwarded to your office for whatever action you deem necessary.
2. The unidentified flying objects in the photographs taken at Salem, Massachusetts on July 16, 1952 have been evaluated as light reflections on the window through which the photos were taken.

FOR THE COMMANDER

*Lt Col Robert J. Friend, 1 Aug 63*

ERIC T. de JONCKHEERE  
Colonel, USAF  
Deputy for Technology and Subsystems

1 Atch  
Ltr fm Pvt J.P.  
Speights, dtd  
8 Jul 63.

OFFICIAL FILE COPY

A Btry Hq Bn Special Troops  
USAAACEN  
Fort Bliss, Texas  
July 3, 1963

Major Carl R. Hart  
Office of Public Information, USAF  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Major Hart:

Has the Air Force examined the photograph of four UFOs taken July 16, 1952 at Salem, Mass. by a Coast Guardsman? If so, what were the Air Force's findings regarding this photograph? Could the photograph have been faked?

Yours truly,

(Pvt.) John P. Speights,  
RA 14797414



OFFICIAL FILE COPY

TDEW

22 July 1963

Unidentified Flying Objects

Hq USAF SAF-OI 3b (Mrs. Wells)  
Wash 25 DC

1. Congressman Carl Vinson requested information from the USAF regarding the Unidentified Flying Objects program. Attached is a copy of the proposed reply to Congressman Vinson which we forwarded to AFNIN for passing to SAFLL.
2. Mr. Vinson's letter was prompted by an appeal for a Congressional hearing which was made to him by John Peurifoy Speights of 2811 Bedford Avenue, Raleigh, North Carolina. Mr. Speights requested information on UFO's from the Air Force on two previous occasions and was promptly answered each time.
3. Apparently Major Keyhoe's appeal to the members of NICAP, through the organization bulletin "UFO Investigator," to write to their Congressman requesting hearings has at least one response. We believe that the SAFLL staff should be appraised of this and previous attempts by Major Keyhoe to discredit the USAF and bring about Congressional hearings on the UFO program.

FOR THE COMMANDER

ERIC T. de JONCKHEERE  
Colonel, USAF  
Deputy for Technology and Subsystems

1 Atch  
Cy ltr fm FTD(TDG) to  
AFNIN(Lt/Col Dessert)  
dtd 18 Jul 63, Subj:  
UFO, w/atch 3 only.

OFFICIAL FILE COPY

✓

TDEW

Unidentified Flying Objects

22 July 1963

AFSC(SCFA)  
Andrews AFB, Md.

1. Attached is a copy of our proposed response to a request for information on the USAF Unidentified Flying Objects program from Congressman Carl Vinson. This proposed reply was sent to AFNIN for forwarding to SAFLL.

2. Partly due to the efforts of private UFO organizations there have been two briefings on the UFO program for Congressional sub-committees. One was held in the summer of 1958; the other, during the week of 10 July 1960. A hearing was averted during the summer of 1961 when we briefed Mr. Richard P. Hines of the House Space and Astronautics Committee during his visit to FTD. Mr. Hines was gathering background information for Congressman Joseph Karth a member of the committee. As a result of Mr. Hines' report, Congressman Karth recommended there be no hearings. A copy of Mr. Karth's letter to Major Keyhoe of the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena, a private UFO organization, stating the Congressman's position regarding a hearing is attached.

3. Also attached is a copy of an article which will appear in the next edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. The article was written by the consultant of the UFO program, Dr. J. Allen Hynek of Northwestern University, and approved by the Air Force. Dr. Hynek has been consultant to the UFO program since 1948. We have suggested that a copy of this article accompany the letter to Congressman Vinson.

FOR THE COMMANDER

*R.J.F. 22 July 63*

for ERIC T. de JONCKHEERE  
Colonel, USAF  
Deputy for Technology and Subsystems

3 Atch  
1. Cy proposed reply to  
Congressman Carl Vinson.  
2. Cy ltr Rep Karth to  
Maj Keyhoe, 28 Aug 61.  
3. Cy excerpt fm next ed  
Encyclopaedia Britannica.

OFFICIAL FILE COPY

TMD

Unidentified Flying Objects

AFNIR (Lt Col Dessert)

1. Attached is a proposed reply to Congressman Carl Vinson's request for information on the U.S. Air Force Unidentified Flying Objects program. This action is in response to your letter to me on the UFO subject, dated 10 July 1963.

2. Strenuous efforts by Major Keyhoe, a self-styled UFO investigator, and others like him to discredit the Air Force's handling of the UFO program have resulted in two Congressional briefings and numerous queries for information from the members of Congress. The first briefing was in the summer of 1958 and the second took place during the week of 10 July 1960. The latter briefing was given to members of the Senate Preparedness Sub-Committee, the House Armed Services Sub-Committee, the House Space and Astronautics Sub-Committee, CIA, and representatives from the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force.

3. A later effort of Major Keyhoe's to instigate a hearing on UFO's by the House Space and Astronautic Committee during the summer of 1961 was unsuccessful. Congressman Joseph Karth of this committee sent Mr. Richard P. Hines, a staff consultant to FID to collect background information regarding the Air Force's handling of the program. From Mr. Hines' report, Mr. Karth determined that the Air Force's approach to the program was proper and that Major Keyhoe's charges of mishandling were without grounds. A copy of Congressman Karth's letter to Major Keyhoe is attached.

4. Since it is apparent from Mr. Speights' letter that Major Keyhoe and others are attempting to force further Congressional hearings on the UFO program, it is my opinion that this rather long letter to Mr. Vinson is justified.

EXTRA COPIES

ACTION

BACKGROUND MATERIAL

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FOREIGN TECHNOLOGY DIVISION  
COMMAND SECTION  
CORRESPONDENCE ACTION FOLDER

5. I suggest that a copy of the UFO article by Dr. J. Allen Hynek which is to appear in the next edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica be attached to Congressman Vinson's letter.

5 Atch

1. Ltr Carl Vinson, 8 Jul 63.
2. Ltr J.P. Speights, 2 Jul 63.
3. Proposed reply to C. Vinson.
4. 3 cy ltr Rep Karth to Maj Keyhoe, 28 Aug 61.
5. 3 cy excerpt from Encyclopaedia Britannica.

COORDINATION:

TDE	<u>Col Eric T. de Jonckheere</u>	Date _____
TDEW	<u>Mr. Fred P. Van Dame</u>	Date <u>1 July 63</u>
TDEW	<u>Lt Col Robert J. Friend</u>	Date <u>18 July 63</u>

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I refer to your letter of 8 July 1963 requesting the latest Air Force position on unidentified aerial phenomena.

The Air Force's principal interest in these objects/phenomena is in determining if they are in any way a threat to our national security or if they are a source of new scientific or technical information. Further, the Air Force attempts to determine the cause of each sighting in order to allay public anxiety resulting from an incident involving unidentified aerial phenomena.

Better than 90 per cent of the more than 7500 cases investigated since 1947 have been attributed to the misidentification of such familiar objects as balloons, aircraft, and satellites, and such unfamiliar phenomena as parhelia and mirages. A small percentage of cases remains unidentified due, for the most part, to the limited nature of the report. To date there has been no evidence from any case to indicate that these objects/phenomena are any type of space craft other than earth satellites or space probes of the Soviet Union or of the United States.

In the United States there are more than fifty private unidentified flying object (UFO) organizations. Collectively, these organizations boast more than 500,000 members. During the 1960 Presidential election, the members of these organizations actually nominated their own candidate who allegedly threw his

support to President Kennedy during the final hours. The principal claims of these organizations are that unidentified flying objects are interplanetary space craft and that the Air Force is withholding the information.

The most active and influential of these organizations is the National Investigation Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP). This organization is headed by Major Donald W. Keyhoe, U.S. Marine Corps (Ret).

NICAP, through its publication the "UFO Investigator," has made constant appeals to its members to write to their congressman requesting a hearing to investigate the Air Force's handling of the UFO program. It is our opinion that this appeal prompted Mr. Speights' letter to you.

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It is hoped that this information answers all of your questions regarding the Air Force's Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Program. We stand ready to give you any further cooperation which you deem necessary.

Joseph E. Karth  
4th District, Minnesota

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Washington, D. C.

Committee on  
Science and Astronautics

August 28, 1961

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y

Major Donald E. Keyhoe  
U.S.M.C. (Ret.)  
Director, NICAP  
1526 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

I have read with interest the copy of your letter to Chairman Overton Brooks including suggested "hearing plans."

Perhaps I have been misled in this whole business of UFO. However, it was my belief that you, your organization and others like it, actually had proof that UFO's did in fact exist and that you would be prepared to prove this during the course of the hearing. And further that UFO's were not merely the result of space or atmospheric phenomena, but actually were craft (of sorts) from other planets.

I was sadly disappointed as I read your proposed plan, suggestions and viewpoints. I cannot help but feel after so reading, that your primary if not sole objective, is to 'be-little', 'defame', 'ridicule' (with the least possible publicity, you say) and thereby cause the U.S. Air Force embarrassment unless they bare to you and others, all information you seek, including such information that may well involve our Nation's security. I too am opposed to unnecessary secrecy. However, unnecessary or unwarranted secrecy is nothing more than a matter of opinion. And so even though you and I are opposed to such, we may well disagree on extent and content. As a former military officer, you in your judgment and knowing all the facts, in all probability withheld from the public, knowledge I would not have considered "secret." I repeat - I have opposed and will continue to oppose unwarranted secrecy. At the same time I will not support a proposition smelling of sour grapes in disguise.

Your letter to Chairman Brooks (including your proposed plan) concerned itself almost totally, in my opinion, with evident dislike and malicious intent toward a great branch of the military. In fact it sounded to me like nothing more than cheap service rivalry. Now I hasten to add that I could be wrong, but I have read many plans and proposals in my day and must say I recognize a little prejudice and/or dislike when I see it. If you are not in a position to "make a good case" that UFO's are some kind of foreign craft, I'm not even interested in holding hearings. This I thought to be your purpose. Certainly I'm

not interested in listening to headline making accusations (prompted it seems by past gripes) in open debate between you and the Air Force.

It was my every intention to have the Air Force and organizations of good repute, testify on different days so as to get all the facts. This is the custom and the protocol of Congressional hearings. And I might say - I'm not worried about public alarm - I'm much more concerned about grandstand acts of a rabble rousing nature where accusations may be made THAT COULDN' BE ANSWERED BY ANYONE - the Air Force or NICAP. It's apropos to point out that under your plan you wouldn't be answering many questions if any - you'd just be asking them. Anyone can make someone else look bad under these conditions, and I am not a captive of the Air Force, I assure you.

As I have said, I suffered extreme disappointment as I read your plan. Talk about secrecy! In paragraph A of your letter to Chairman Brooks you propose "the Air Force representatives will be directed by the subcommittee to answer all of NICAP officials' questions in regard to specific UFO sighting, reports and to all phases of the Air Force investigation."

However, in paragraph B of the same letter you propose "...and the NICAP representatives will answer full, except for revealing names and certain details of a few reports given to NICAP confidentially." (Emphasis added). What kind of honesty, forthrightness and fairness is that? You demand that a military service of this nation is to divulge everything to you, BUT YOU IN TURN cannot give "certain details" because it is confidential (secret)? Oh, yes, I have also read paragraph C of your proposals ("It is also agreed that the Air Force may withhold names similarly, where witnesses insisted on this, and also, such minor items as classified radar techniques, aircraft speeds and other relatively unimportant points not bearing on this main questions at issue.") (Emphasis added).

Personally I don't feel I need to elaborate on the generosity equivocated by your language in paragraph C. However, no one interested in justice could refrain completely. First of all, what witness honestly interested in the security of his nation, is going to insist to the Air Force he remain anonymous? (Or to your organization for that matter). Secondly, you generously grant the Air Force the privilege of withholding "relatively unimportant points not hearing on the main questions at issue." Very generous, indeed. If you have information which the Air Force is keeping secret, but does not involve national security, I suggest you release it to the newspapers. They'll love it.

Honestly and sincerely, I make this confession; before I had received copies of your letter (and terms) to Chairman Brooks, I was vitally concerned and interested in what positive and factual information you had on UFO's and the assistance you might give to the Committee. You dispelled any hopes I had relative thereto in the language heretofore

cited. I also could not overlook your language on page three: "The chief concern of NICAP Board members and officials is the increasing secrecy dangers - NOT, at this time, final conclusions about the UFO's. Undoubtedly, I have been misinformed on the purpose of NICAP. I was erroneously led to believe you had factual evidence of some kind about UFO's

If I have anything to say about it, your terms, conditions and suggestions will not be accepted.

Very truly yours,

Joseph E. Karth

cc: Hon. Overton Brooks, Chairman  
Hon. John McCormack, Majority Leader  
Subcommittee members

JEK:eb

18 July 1963 Ltr to VINSON  
on current status of UFO Program



UNIDENTIFIED FLYING  
OBJECT (UFO)

by  
*J. Allen Hynek*

FROM

ENCYCLOPÆDIA  
BRITANNICA

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1963

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WILLIAM BENTON, *Publisher*



the large upper tusks almost suggest the earliest proboscidean types but the most remarkable peculiarity is found in the molar teeth, each of which consists of a closely packed cluster of cylindrical columns of circular cross-section.

**Perissodactyla.**—See PERISSODACTYLA.

**Artiodactyla.**—The Artiodactyla may be an offshoot of some forerunner of the mesonychid family of the creodonts, while the Perissodactyla may be related remotely to the Cretaceous ancestors of the condylarths.

Recent studies by Miss H. S. Pearson on the skull structure of the earliest artiodactyls have revealed that at a very early date the order was already subdivided into two series, one the amastoid series, in which the mastoid region of the periotic bone was completely covered by the squamosal and adjacent elements (as in the suines and their extinct relatives), and the other, the mastoid series, in which the mastoid was well exposed on the outer side, as in the Eocene Dichobunidae and all the ruminant artiodactyls. See also ARTIODACTYL.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY.**—W. H. Flower and R. Lydekker, *Mammals, Living and Extinct* (1891); H. F. Osborn, *The Age of Mammals* (1910); W. B. Scott, *History of the Land Mammals in the Western Hemisphere* (1937); W. K. Gregory, *Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.* (1910); G. G. Simpson, *Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.*, vol. 85 (1946).

(W. K. G.; X.)

**UNICORN**, a fabulous beast, usually having the head and body of a horse, the hind legs of an antelope, the tail of a lion (sometimes horse's tail), sometimes the beard of a goat, and as its chief feature a long, sharp, twisted horn, similar to the narwhal's tusk, set in the middle of its forehead. The earliest description is that of Ctesias, who states that there were in India white wild asses celebrated for their fleetness of foot, having on the forehead a horn a cubit and a half in length, coloured white, red and black; from the horn were made drinking cups which were a preventive of poisoning. Aristotle mentions two one-horned animals, the oryx, a kind of antelope, and "the so-called Indian ass." In Roman times Pliny mentions the oryx, the Indian ass, and an Indian ox as one-horned; Aelian, quoting Ctesias, adds that India produces also a one-horned horse and says that the *Monoceros* was sometimes called *Carcazonon*, possibly a form of the Arabic *Carcasin*, rhinoceros.

The medieval conception of the unicorn as possessing great strength and fierceness is perhaps due to the fact that in certain passages of the Old Testament the Hebrew word *R'em*, now translated in the Revised Version "wild ox," was translated in the Septuagint *monoceros*, in the Vulgate *unicornis* or *rhinoceros*, and in the Authorized Version "unicorn," though in Deut. xxiii, 17 it obviously refers to a two-horned animal. Isidore xii, 2, 12 tells how the unicorn had been known to worst the elephant in combat.

As a decoration on drinking cups, it symbolized the ancient belief in the efficacy of the unicorn's horn against poison, which in England remained, even in the time of Charles II, though Sir E. Ray Lankester mentions that a cup made of rhinoceros horn was then handed over to the Royal Society for experiment, with the result of entirely disproving the superstition.

In the court ceremonial of France as late as 1789 instruments of "unicorn's" horn were still used for testing the royal food for poison.

In heraldry the unicorn was sometimes used as a device (see HERALDRY), but oftener as a supporter, and subsists in modern times as the left-hand support of the royal arms. This position it assumed at the Union, the Scottish royal arms having been supported by two unicorns. When the unicorn became a supporter of the royal arms both of England and Scotland, a royal crown was added on the head of the unicorn, in addition to the crown with chain and ring round its neck, but this crown was removed after the Hanoverian succession. In England after the Union the unicorn became the left-hand supporter, but in Scotland, as late as 1766, it was still put on the right.

**UNICORN PLANT** (*Proboscidea jussieui*), a North American plant of the family Martyniaceae, called also proboscis flower and devil's-claw, native from Indiana to New Mexico and southward to Mexico, cultivated for its abundant foliage, peculiarly shaped flowers and oddly formed fruiting pods. It is a



ROCHE  
UNICORN PLANT (PROBOSCIDEA  
JUSSIÉUI) SHOWING FLOWERS,  
HORNLIKE FRUITING POD AND  
LEAVES

coarse, sticky-hairy, half-prostrate annual, with thick, rounded leaves; large violet or purple flowers, 1½ in. long; and hanging, hornlike, woody pods, with a thick body 3 in. to 4 in. long, ending in a curved beak of equal or greater length. When dry, the beak splits into two opposed hooklike or clawlike appendages.

**UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT (UFO)**, in military parlance, means any aerial object that fails to identify itself to, or to be identified by, trained ground or air-borne crews using visual or electronic detection methods. Since 1947, owing to a sequence of bizarre circumstances, UFO has become an om-

nibus term connoting any object or optical phenomenon, usually aerial, that the observer cannot readily explain. UFO frequently is used interchangeably with "flying saucer," a term coined in 1947 as a result of the reported sighting by a civilian pilot, Kenneth Arnold, of a series of disk-like objects over the mountain ridges in the vicinity of Mt. Rainier, Washington. As a result of the wide publicity given to this sighting, there followed a wave of reports of unidentified objects by observers in various parts of the U.S., as well as in other countries.

First regarded by many as a bizarre, peculiarly American psychological phenomenon that would quickly fade away, the UFO instead showed an amazing tenacity over more than a dozen years, and the U.S. air force was officially charged with investigating the reports. Often several reports were made to the air force in one day, and reports came also from France, Great Britain and other countries. Indeed, account is taken of the smaller area of some of the countries and the greater percentage of cloudy weather they experience, the sightings "per square mile per day" often were more frequent there than in the U.S.

The UFO should not be regarded as something that came into being in 1947, even though the phenomenon burst suddenly upon the public consciousness in that year. History is full of references to strange sights in the sky. In ancient and medieval times a comet was a strange and terrifying sight, as was an aurora, and it would be impossible to say whether the pattern of sightings in those days was the same as in the 20th century. Certainly, in some respects it must have been different. There were no "sky-hook" research balloons, unusual types of aircraft or re-entering missiles or artificial satellites. A comet, though described in terms recognizable to us, was often regarded as a true visitation.

It is easy to imagine that there were many UFO's in those times, many stories of strange sightings in the sky; but since communication was poor and record-keeping almost nonexistent, such sightings became part of the underbrush of local folklore and old wives' tales. Certainly, in times when people believed that a woman could give birth to dogs and pigs, that witches could levitate and fly about, and when credulity ran high, it would be not at all surprising to find a similarly uncritical attitude toward ordinary—and today well-understood—aerial phenomena.

Reports since the birth of the "modern" UFO in 1947 generally occurred in waves, but on the average, during the period of the U.S. air force study, they numbered more than one a day. If consideration is taken of the fact that many reported sightings were not made through official channels, but to newspapers and to civilian groups interested in the phenomena, the rate of observations may have been as high as two or three a day in the U.S. over a period of a dozen years. France, Italy, England and a number of Latin American countries also experienced minor waves of UFO reports.

The steady stream of sightings became a cause for concern to the air force, and detailed investigations were made to discover

TABLE.—Reported Sightings,\* 1947-61

Year	Number	Year	Number
1947	79	1955	404
1948	143	1956	778
1949	186	1957	1,178
1950	169	1958	590
1951	121	1959	364
1952	1,501	1960	514
1953	425	1961	488
1954	429	Total	7,369

\*U.S. air force reported sightings during the 15-year period of the official study.

reasons for such reports. The objectives were to determine (1) whether the reported UFO's constituted a threat; (2) whether the phenomena had any intrinsic scientific value; and (3) what role UFO's might play as a factor in the sky surveillance program. It was concluded after the many years of investigation that (1) the phenomena bore no hostile purport and did not constitute a security threat; (2) there was no compelling reason to believe that the great majority of sightings arose from anything other than misidentification of natural objects and phenomena, and that the real cause of these sightings generally lay in the conditions under which an object or phenomenon was seen; and (3) the continued evaluation of UFO reports is of scientific value, especially in relation to the military sky surveillance problem.

It was established that many sightings arose from seeing startling natural objects for the first time; e.g., very bright meteors, high-altitude scientific balloons (which can attain high velocity when caught in the jet stream) and especially distant terrestrial or celestial objects seen under such unusual meteorological conditions as those that produce mirages, which can distort, displace and animate objects detected visually or by radar. Such meteorological conditions, some thoroughly understood (mirages) and some poorly understood (ball lightning), can easily cause even an experienced observer to ascribe what he sees to a tangible, nearby, self-propelled object.

Indeed, it is not at all surprising, with so many more people turning their attention skyward, that many (including the scientifically trained) are confronted with an aerial phenomenon they cannot readily explain.

Virtually all the reports received by the air force were highly subjective, lacking such verification as pictures, material fragments, spectroscopic analysis of lights seen or precise technical data on trajectories, distances, accelerations, etc. As the investigation progressed, it became clear that most reports could be correlated with the appearance of aircraft, birds, celestial objects, balloons, etc., under special conditions, and the number of unexplained cases fell from an early value of more than 10% to as little as 2% or 3%. It was readily admitted that this small residue—as reported—defied logical explanation. For none of the extraordinary "unknowns," however, were there scientific data on which to base valid, definitive investigations.

The early difficulties in coming to grips with the successive waves of sightings, coupled with concern that UFO reports, often made by pilots, might constitute a threat to military security (and the consequent, unfortunate air of secrecy imposed in the early years of UFO reports), had an electrifying effect on the imaginations and emotions of a surprisingly large number of people. It led to an inordinate interest in UFO's and a logical, albeit scientifically unsupported theory of UFO's, encouraged by the real possibility of life elsewhere in the universe, as well as by a strong, often unconscious, desire on the part of many people to believe in the probability of visitors from outer space.

This theory of UFO's, with its strong quasi-religious emotional appeal, holds it not only logical to assume that other intelligent beings exist in the natural universe, but that superior extraterrestrial civilizations might visit here periodically, as if to make periodic checks on a tribe of aborigines. The theory is seen to have support throughout history in accounts of strange apparitions in the sky, suggesting to some that the earth could have been visited many times in the past. Some believe such visits became more frequent as atomic and hydrogen bombs increased extraterrestrial concern.

In the face of continued lack of empirical evidence, persistent

attempts to link UFO reports with visitations from space merit socio-psychological study.

It is amply evident that UFO's and "flying saucers" exist as reports. This has led to the quip that UFO's are any aerial sightings that remain unexplained long enough for the preparation of written reports about them. It is the problem of the serious investigator to probe for stimuli that give rise to the reports.

U.S. air force investigators long recognized that most originators of UFO reports are sincere, interested in the welfare and security of their country and honestly puzzled by the sightings they report. Their frequent readiness to ascribe a UFO to extraterrestrial sources, their emotional attachment to this explanation and their reluctance to take into account the failure of continuous and extensive surveillance by trained observers to produce such sightings is surprising. It appears unreasonable that spacecraft should announce themselves to casual observers while craftily avoiding detection by trained observers.

Nonetheless, it must be recognized that knowledge of the universe and of the physics of our atmosphere is still imperfect. UFO sightings, as long as they continue, will merit serious study and may lead to advances not only in physical knowledge but in the area of human behaviour as well.

(J. A. H.)

UNIFIED FIELD THEORY attempts to extend the general theory of relativity (*g.v.*) to electromagnetic forces and the forces between nuclear particles. General relativity incorporates the gravitational field into the structure of four-dimensional space time, and in this sense gravitation becomes part of geometry. Unified field theory has attempted to extend this treatment to the other forces mentioned, and if this were achieved, all the fundamental fields of force would be described by the geometry of space time. It was also hoped that a unified field theory would overcome certain difficulties in electromagnetism and atomic theory; e.g., in classical electromagnetism there is no explanation of how elements of like charge, which must repel each other, can cohere to form an electron or other fundamental charged particle; and in atomic theory the occurrence of probability as a fundamental notion was thought unsatisfactory, especially by Albert Einstein and Erwin Schrödinger. There was also a more philosophical reason. Physical reality is supposed to consist of particles of matter and fields of force. Einstein believed that it should be possible to eliminate the notion of a particle and to represent the whole of physical reality by means of a field, so that matter becomes nothing more than a region of high field intensity.

General relativity is a highly developed field theory which still contains the idea of a particle because there are regions of space time where the field equations break down, and these "singular regions" must be supposed to represent particles. In an entirely successful field theory there would be no singular regions, and every physical situation would be completely described by the field alone.

Of the many unsuccessful unified field theories put forward there were three main types. The gauge-invariant geometry of Hermann Weyl (1918) extended the class of transformations to which the geometrical quantities characterizing space time must be invariant: he could thus introduce four quantities identifiable with the potentials in classical electromagnetism. This theory is unsuitable because it leads to field equations of the fourth differential order, whereas there is reason to believe that the correct equations are of the second order. The second important class of theories, stemming from work of T. Kaluza (1921), are those using five-dimensional spaces, and although they achieved a formal unification of the fields, they did not solve any outstanding physical problems nor lead to important new ideas of physical significance. The generalized theory of gravitation, or nonsymmetric unified field theory, was independently developed by Einstein (1945) and by Schrödinger (1943). In this the fundamental tensor  $g_{ik}$  of general relativity is allowed to be nonsymmetric, which introduces an antisymmetric tensor of the second rank presumably identifiable with the electromagnetic field variables. The investigations of the theory seem to show that it does not agree with experiment since it does not predict correctly the observed motion of charged particles in an electromagnetic field. However,

SAF-LIV/Lt Col Galligan/ceb/53346/SD-980/30 July 63/Revtn 31 July  
Revtn SAF-LL Lt Col Campbell/arc/74142

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This is in reply to your recent letter inquiring about unidentified flying objects (UFO's).

I am inclosing the Air Force position together with two allied attachments which refute Mr. John P. Speights' allegations. There has been no evidence uncovered to the contrary which would alter the original Air Force statements concerning UFO's.

I hope this information will clarify the Air Force position but if there should be further doubts concerning this subject, I would be pleased to arrange for an Air Force representative to discuss it with you personally at your convenience.

Sincerely,

FRANK M. ROBINSON, II <sup>COORD.</sup>  
Major General, USAF <sup>COMRACK</sup>  
Director, Legislative Liaison <sup>SAFLIV, L/C Galligan</sup>  
<sup>SAFOI</sup>  
<sup>AFHIN</sup>  
<sup>OSOLA, 3E-944</sup>

Attachments

Honorable Carl Vinson  
Chairman, Committee on  
Armed Services  
House of Representatives

### UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS

The Air Force's principal interest in these objects/phenomena is in determining if they are in any way a threat to our national security or if they are a source of new scientific or technical information. Further, the Air Force attempts to determine the cause of each sighting in order to allay public anxiety resulting from an incident involving unidentified aerial phenomena.

Better than 90 per cent of the more than 7,500 cases investigated since 1947 have been attributed to the misidentification of such familiar objects as balloons, aircraft, and satellites, and such unfamiliar phenomena as parhelia and mirages. A small percentage of cases remains unidentified due, for the most part, to the limited nature of the report. To date there has been no evidence from any case to indicate that these objects/phenomena are any type of space craft other than earth satellites or space probes of the Soviet Union or of the United States.

In the United States there are more than fifty private unidentified flying object (UFO) organizations. Collectively, these organizations boast more than 500,000 members. The principal claims of these organizations are that unidentified flying objects are interplanetary spacecraft and that the Air Force is withholding the information.

The most active and influential of these organizations is the National Investigation Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP). This organization is headed by Major Donald E. Keyhoe, U. S. Marine Corps (Ret.).

NICAP, through its publication the "UFO Investigator," has made constant appeals to its members to write to their Congressman requesting a hearing to investigate the Air Force's handling of the UFO program. It is our opinion that this appeal prompted Mr. Speights' letter to you.

Mr. Speights, a youth of about 19, has written to us on two previous occasions and has received an answer to each of his two letters. From comparison of the language in his previous letters with that in the letter to you, it is obvious that Mr. Speights has had assistance with the majority of the information contained in this most recent letter. It is probable that he copied it from some NICAP publication.

Following are some observations regarding statements in Mr. Speights' letter.

The Air Force has no record of the number of attempts which have been made by our pilots to intercept UFO's; however, such action is not unusual nor does it prove that these objects/phenomena are anything other than as claimed by the Air Force. The Air Force attempts to intercept any object which is unidentified and has prescribed performance parameters.

In many instances, the pilot, upon returning to the ground, realizes that he has been attempting to close in on some common object such as a planet. The Ryan case which occurred in the state of New York on April 8, 1956, was due to the misidentification of the planet Venus. Our records reveal that Captain Ryan was not directed by the Air Force to investigate the object and that, according to his own statement, he did not deviate from course for this or any other purpose. The fact that Captain Ryan arrived at Sahenectady, his destination, on schedule, tends to substantiate the claim that he did not deviate from course.

Scientists and engineers, though expert in their own field, can temporarily misidentify some object or phenomenon, thus reporting it as an unidentified flying object. It is, in fact, possible for a scientist to be fooled by an occurrence closely associated with his specialized field as evidenced by the experience of Dr. Donald H. Menzel of Harvard, a noted astronomer. Dr. Menzel was fooled for a time by the refracted image of the star Sirius. This experience is related in Chapter IV, page 60, of his forthcoming book, THE WORLD OF FLYING SAUCERS, published by Doubleday.

There are sightings in the Air Force files which indicate ball lightning or some similar electromagnetic phenomena as the probable cause. Due to the infrequent occurrence and the transient nature of ball lightning, it is impossible to have good documented reports on this phenomenon. In most of these cases, witnesses have reported interference with vehicle ignition, light, radio, etc. Such interference, if actually occurring, could be due to the presence of the lightning or to the fact that the witness in his excitement may accidentally stall the car. Because ball lightning usually occurs immediately following a severe thunderstorm, such factors as wet ignition, atmospheric static, etc., may be the cause for the reported trouble.

The Air Force has taken geiger counter readings immediately after sightings but has yet to find any readings which vary significantly from the normal background of the areas tested.

Radar sightings are often supported by visual sightings because the same atmospheric conditions which produce visual anomalies may also affect radar.

It is Air Force policy to provide news media with information regarding UFO sightings which reach national prominence and to provide information to individuals in response to their specific requests. A copy of the most recent summary of UFO data for the years 1958 through 1962 is attached. Further, the next edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica will carry an article on unidentified flying objects. This article, also attached, has been approved by the Air Force, and was prepared by Dr. J. Allen Hynek, Chairman of the Department of Astronomy at Northwestern University, who has served as Air Force consultant to the UFO program since 1943.

In order that the public be provided with as much information as possible, every effort is made to keep UFO sightings unclassified. Supporting information indicates the classification of a sighting and not the sighting itself. Since 1959, 104 cases of 2,167 are classified and only four of the 53 unidentified cases for this period are classified.

The number of foreign reports that have come to our attention do not differ measurably from those originating in the U. S. either in the presentation of the data or in the determined probable cause.

The Air Force has no knowledge of a 1948 document by AFIC which states that UFO's are interplanetary space ships. One of the original documents establishing the project states that an objective would be to determine if any evidence from sightings suggests that UFO's are of interplanetary origin. It is possible that the meaning of this document was misinterpreted. The Air Force's open minded attitude still persists, and investigators and analysts have no preconceived notion as to the cause for a sighting but rather form their conclusions from the evidence. To date no evidence has been found to lead us to even suspect that these objects are interplanetary space ships.

Unidentified aerial phenomena constitute only a part of the noise which our defense detection systems must take into account in preventing accidental war. Scientific studies too extensive to be discussed here, are being conducted to determine the extent and nature of this noise for integration into our defensive network.

**STAFF SUMMARY SHEET**

TO	ROUTE	DESIRED ACTION	SIGNATURE	DATE
TDG	1	Signature	ARTHUR J. PIERCE Brigadier General, USAF Commander 18 JUL 1963	18 July 1963
				OFFICE OF PREPARATION
				TDE
				GRADE - SURNAME
				PHONE
				Col
				de Jonckheere 72111

**SUBJECT** Congressional Correspondence on the U.S. Air Force UFO Program, Congressman Carl Vinson

**SUMMARY**

1. Congressional correspondence on UFO's received by this Deputy is routine; however, I believe that this letter to AFNIN from Congressman Carl Vinson requires your personal attention since it suggests the possibility of a Congressional hearing.
2. There have been two Congressional briefings on the program, one in the summer of 1958 and the other in the summer of 1960. During the summer of 1961, we were successful in preventing a hearing by briefing Mr. Richard P. Hines, a staff member of the House Space and Astronautics Committee, on our method of handling the program and our findings. Mr. Hines was visiting FTD to gather background information on the program for Congressman Joseph Karth, a member of the committee. As a result of Mr. Hines' report, Mr. Karth recommended to Chairman Overton Brooks that there be no hearings.
3. Earlier this year an article on unidentified flying objects was prepared for the Encyclopaedia Britannica by Dr. J. Allen Hynek of Northwestern University, consultant to our UFO program, and Lt Col Robert J. Friend. Mr. A. Francis Arcier made many suggestions and approved the final article which is to appear in the next edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica. Mr. Arcier decided that the article should be prepared by Dr. Hynek to prevent unnecessary publicity for FTD and to gain the prestige which Dr. Hynek's name carries. I suggested to AFNIN that a copy of this article be attached to the letter to Mr. Vinson.
4. If you approve my proposed reply to Congressman Vinson, I will send information copies to SAFOI and to AFSC(SCFA).
5. The background section of this folder contains the following:
  - a. AFNIN letter to FTD
  - b. Copies of the documents which established the UFO project
  - c. Documents related to Mr. Hines' visit to FTD
  - d. Congressman Karth's letter to Major Keyhoe
  - e. UFO article which will appear in Encyclopaedia Britannica
6. If you desire any further information, Lt Col Friend and I will be available.

Do not forward to Command Section until this block has been signed and dated by the appropriate OPI. This block, when signed, signifies completed coordination and that the OPI is aware of concurrence, non-concurrence and either resolution of difference or why the non-concurrence should be overridden.

Signature Nicholas Fint Date 7/18/63 ✓

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON 25, D.C.



REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: AFNIN

SUBJECT: Unidentified Flying Objects

10 JUL 1963

TO: Commander  
FTD  
Wright-Patterson AFB Ohio

1. The attached correspondence is forwarded for the preparation of a draft of a proposed reply to Honorable Carl Vinson.
2. Also attached for your investigation and analysis is a letter from John P. Speights relative to unidentified flying objects.
3. The suspense to AFNIN must be by 21 July 1963.

FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Donald M. Dessert", is positioned above the typed name.

DONALD M. DESSERT  
LTCOL, USAF  
Office, Assistant Chief of Staff  
Intelligence

2 Atch

1. Ltr Carl Vinson, July 8
2. Ltr John P. Speights, July 2

Copy furnished:  
AFSC (SCF) Andrews AFB



HEADQUARTERS  
FOREIGN TECHNOLOGY DIVISION  
AIR FORCE SYSTEMS COMMAND  
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, OHIO



REPLY TO  
ATTN OF: TD-E

SUBJECT: Congressional Investigation of the UFO Program

14 July 1961

TO: TDG (General Pierce)

1. An article appeared in the 3 July 1961 issue of Newsweek, stating the possibility of a congressional investigation of the USAF UFO Program. Contact with the Secretary of Air Force, Legislative Liaison Office (SAFLL) revealed that there was no official information concerning such an investigation. However, SAFLL pointed out that unofficially there were indications that such an investigation would take place.
2. Unofficial sources (SAFLL) have it that Congressman Joseph E. Karth, Minnesota, of the House Science and Astronautics Committee (Congressman Overton Brook, Los Angeles Chairman) would head the investigating team. The investigation to be directed toward determining generally how the USAF is handling the UFO Program and specifically the capabilities of FTD in the analysis and investigation areas.
3. SAFLL's present efforts are directed toward heading off the investigation or, if it is to occur, having it take place in Washington D. C. with Dr. J. Allen Hynek, Consultant to the UFO Program and Major Robert J. Firend, Aerial Phenomena Branch TD-E in attendance.
4. If the investigation is carried out at FTD I intend to handle it within the Deputy unless otherwise directed.

EDWARD H. WYNN  
Colonel, USAF  
Deputy for Science and Components

*Good  
af*

OFFICIAL FILE COPY

TDG

Unidentified Flying Objects

18 JUL 1963

AFNIN (Lt Col Dessert)

1. Attached is a proposed reply to Congressman Carl Vinson's request for information on the U.S. Air Force Unidentified Flying Objects program. This action is in response to your letter to me on the UFO subject, dated 10 July 1963.

2. Strenuous efforts by Major Keyhoe, a self-styled UFO investigator, and others like him to discredit the Air Force's handling of the UFO program have resulted in two Congressional briefings and numerous queries for information from the members of Congress. The first briefing was in the summer of 1958 and the second took place during the week of 10 July 1960. The latter briefing was given to members of the Senate Preparedness Sub-Committee, the House Armed Services Sub-Committee, the House Space and Astronautics Sub-Committee, CIA, and representatives from the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force.

3. A later effort of Major Keyhoe's to instigate a hearing on UFO's by the House Space and Astronautic Committee during the summer of 1961 was unsuccessful. Congressman Joseph Karth of this committee sent Mr. Richard P. Hines, a staff consultant to FTD to collect background information regarding the Air Force's handling of the program. From Mr. Hines' report, Mr. Karth determined that the Air Force's approach to the program was proper and that Major Keyhoe's charges of mishandling were without grounds. A copy of Congressman Karth's letter to Major Keyhoe is attached.

4. Since it is apparent from Mr. Speights' letter that Major Keyhoe and others are attempting to force further Congressional hearings on the UFO program, it is my opinion that this rather long letter to Mr. Vinson is justified.

OFFICIAL FILE COPY

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5. I suggest that a copy of the UFO article by Dr. J. Allen Hynek which is to appear in the next edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica be attached to Congressman Vinson's letter.

ARTHUR J. PIERCE  
Brigadier General, USAF  
Commander

5 Atch

1. Ltr Carl Vinson, 8 Jul 63.
2. Ltr J.P. Speights, 2 Jul 63.
3. Proposed reply to C. Vinson.
4. 2 cy ltr Rep Karth to Maj Keyhoe, 28 Aug 61.
5. 2 cy exerpt fm Encyclopaedia Britannica.

COORDINATION:

TDE	<u><i>Eric T. de Jonckheere</i></u> Col. Eric T. de Jonckheere	Date <u>7/18/63</u>
TDEW	<u><i>Fred P. Van Dame</i></u> Mr. Fred P. Van Dame	Date <u>18 July '63</u>
TDEW	<u><i>Robert J. Friend</i></u> Lt Col Robert J. Friend	Date <u>18 July 63</u>

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I refer to your letter of 8 July 1963 requesting the latest Air Force position on unidentified aerial phenomena.

The Air Force's principal interest in these objects/phenomena is in determining if they are in any way a threat to our national security or if they are a source of new scientific or technical information. Further, the Air Force attempts to determine the cause of each sighting in order to allay public anxiety resulting from an incident involving unidentified aerial phenomena.

Better than 90 per cent of the more than 7500 cases investigated since 1947 have been attributed to the misidentification of such familiar objects as balloons, aircraft, and satellites, and such unfamiliar phenomena as parhelia and mirages. A small percentage of cases remains unidentified due, for the most part, to the limited nature of the report. To date there has been no evidence from any case to indicate that these objects/phenomena are any type of space craft other than earth satellites or space probes of the Soviet Union or of the United States.

In the United States there are more than fifty private unidentified flying object (UFO) organizations. Collectively, these organizations boast more than 500,000 members. During the 1960 Presidential election, the members of these organizations actually nominated their own candidate who allegedly threw his