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Dr. Lloyd V. Berkner
President
Associated Universities, Incorporated
Room 6920
350 Fifth Avenue
New York 1, New York

Dear Lloyd:

You will recall in January 1953, we constituted a Scientific Advisory Panel on Unidentified Flying Objects with Drs. H. P. Robertson as Chairman, Samuel Goudsmit, Luis W. Alvarez, Thornton Page, and yourself as members. After its deliberation, the Panel reached two conclusions and made two recommendations which were included as Tab A of the report. Very recently, the Air Force has requested that the conclusions of this report be declassified so that they may be used in the press. A copy of the report is enclosed herewith for your information.

I have discussed this matter with Dr. Robertson and Dr. Goudsmit who agree that the conclusion contained in paragraph 2 and the recommendation contained in paragraph 4a can be declassified. But, they, as well as this Agency, will not agree to a declassification of the conclusion in paragraph 3 or the recommendation in paragraph 4b. It is our feeling that

and that the final six lines of paragraph 4 can stand as written.

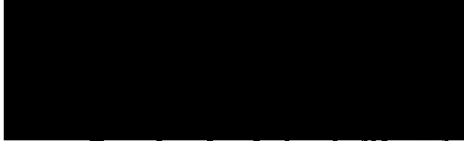
I have queried the Air Force as to whether the names of the Panel members would be used. They have replied that names would be used only within official circles and would not be given to the press. But, as such information has a tendency at times to filter out, it should be recognized that, if approval is given for use of the names, they may well become common knowledge.

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It would be very much appreciated if you could let me know as soon as possible what your reaction is to the Air Force declassification proposal; whether you agree with Dr. Robertson, Dr. Goudsmit and myself on limiting any declassification; and whether you would approve or disapprove the use of your name, granted that Agency connection with the Panel is withheld.

Very best regards.

Sincerely,



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Deputy Assistant Director

Enclosure
UFO Report (Secret)

C-257-58

file UFO chron 0146

C O P Y

NEWS RELEASE

PLEASE NOTE DATE

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AIR FORCE'S 10 YEAR
STUDY OF UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS

In response to queries as to results of previous investigation of Unidentified Flying Object reports, the Air Force said today that after 10 years of investigation and evaluation of UFO's, no evidence has been discovered to confirm the existence of so-called "Flying Saucers".

Reporting, investigation, analysis and evaluation procedures have improved considerably since the first sighting of a "flying saucer" was made on 27 June 1947. The study and analysis of reported sightings of UFO's is conducted by a selected scientific group under the supervision of the Air Force.

Dr. J. Allen Hynek, Professor of Astrophysics and Astronomy at Ohio State University, is the Chief Scientific Consultant to the Air Force on the subject of Unidentified Flying Objects.

The selected, qualified scientists, engineers, and other personnel involved in these analyses are completely objective and open minded on the subject of "flying saucers". They apply scientific methods of examination to all cases in reaching their conclusions. The attempted identification of the phenomenon observed is generally derived from human impressions and interpretations and not from scientific devices or measurements. The data in the sightings reported are almost invariably subjective in nature. However, no report is considered unsuitable for study and categorization and no lack of valid evidence of physical matter in the case studies is assumed to be "prima facie" evidence that so-called "flying saucers" or interplanetary vehicles do not exist.

General categories of identification are balloons, aircraft, astronomical, other, insufficient data and unknowns.

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every day. There are two general types of balloons: weather balloons and upper-air research balloons. Balloons will vary from small types 4 feet in diameter to large types 200 feet in diameter. The majority released at night carry running lights which often contribute to weird or unusual appearances when observed at night. This also holds true when observed near dawn or sunset because of the effect of the slant rays of the sun upon the balloon surfaces. The large balloons, if caught in jet streams, may assume a near horizontal position when partially inflated, and move with speeds of over 200 MPH. Large types may be observed flattened on top. The effect of the latter two conditions can be startling even to experienced pilots.

Many modern aircraft, particularly swept and delta wing types, under adverse weather and sighting conditions are reported as unusual objects and "flying saucers". When observed at high altitudes, reflecting sunlight off their surfaces, or when only their jet exhausts are visible at night, aircraft can have appearances ranging from disc to rocket in shape. Single jet bombers having multi-jet pods under their swept-back wings have been reported as UFOs or "saucers" in "V" formation. Vapor trails will often appear to glow with fiery red or orange streaks when reflecting sunlight. Afterburners are frequently reported as UFOs.

The astronomical category includes bright stars, planets, meteors, comets, and other celestial bodies. When observed through haze, light fog, or moving clouds, the planets Venus, Mars, and Jupiter have often been reported as unconventional, moving objects. Attempts to observe astronomical bodies through hand-held binoculars under adverse sky conditions has been a source of many UFO reports.

The "other" category includes reflections, searchlights, birds, kites, blimps, clouds, sun-dogs, spurious radar indications, hoaxes, firework displays, flares, fireballs, ice crystals, bolides, etc., as examples: Large Canadian geese flying low over a city at night, with street lights reflecting off their bodies; searchlights playing on scattered clouds, appearing as moving disc-like shapes.

The insufficient data category include all sightings where essential or pertinent items of information are missing, making it impossible to form a valid conclusion. These include description of the size, shape or color of the object; direction and altitude; exact time and location; wind weater conditions, etc. This category is not used as a convenient way to get rid of what might be referred to as "unknowns". However, if the data received is insufficient or unrelated, the analysts must then place that particular report in this category. The Air Force needs complete information to reach a valid conclusion. Air Force officials stressed the fact that an observer should send a complete report of a bona fide sighting to the nearest Air Force activity. There the report will be promptly forwarded to the proper office for analysis and evaluation.

A sighting is considered as "unknown" when a report contains all pertinent data necessary to normally suggest at least one valid hypothesis on the cause or explanation of the sighting but when the description of the object and its maneuvers cannot be correlated with any known object or phenomenon. In its Project Blue Book Special Report #14, released in October, 1955, the Air Force showed that evaluated sightings in the "unknown" category had been reduced to 3% at that time.

Previously "unknown" sightings had been 9% in 1953 and 1954 and in the previous years "flying saucer" sightings had run as high as 20% "unknowns". Project Blue Book Special Report #14, covered "flying saucer" investigations from June 1947 to May 1955. Latest Air Force statistics show the number of unknowns has since been reduced to less than 2%.

The following table presents the results of the evaluation of all reports received by the Air Force from the time that Project Blue Book, Special Report #14 was completed through June 1957. The table gives the percentage of all the reports received by the Air Force during each time period.

	1955 June thru December	1956	1957 January thru June
Balloons	27.4%	26.0%	26.4%
Aircraft	29.3%	24.6%	28.8%
Astronomical	20.1%	26.3%	24.4%
Other (Hoax, search- light, birds, etc)	12.3%	6.8%	6.4%
Insufficient Information	8.8%	14.1%	12.1%
Unknown	2.1%	2.2%	1.9%
TOTAL NUMBER OF SIGHTINGS	273	778	250

Air Force conclusions for the ten years of UFO sightings involving approximately 5,700 reports were: First, there is no evidence that the "unknowns" were inimical or hostile; second, there is no evidence that these "unknowns" were interplanetary space ships; third, there is no evidence that these "unknowns" represented technological developments or principles outside the range of our present day scientific knowledge; fourth, there is no evidence that these "unknowns" were a threat to the security of the country; and finally there was no physical or material evidence, not even a minute fragment, of a so-called "flying saucer" was ever found.

The Air Force emphasized the belief that if more immediate detailed objective observational data could have been obtained on the "unknowns" these too would have been satisfactorily explained.

A critical examination of the reports revealed that a high percentage of them were submitted by serious people, mystified by what they had seen and motivated by patriotic responsibility.

Reports of UFOs have aroused much interest on this subject throughout the country and a number of civilian clubs, committees and organizations have been formed to study or investigate air phenomena. These private organizations are not governmental agencies and do not reflect official opinion with respect to their theories or beliefs based upon observed phenomena or illusions.

No books, motion pictures, pamphlets, or other informational material on the subject of unidentified flying objects have been cleared, sponsored, or otherwise coordinated by the U. S. Air Force, with the exception of the official press releases issued by Headquarters, USAF, in Washington.

The Air Force, assigned the responsibility for the Air Defense of the United States, will continue to investigate, through the Air Defense Command, all reports of unusual aerial objects over the U. S. including objects that may become labeled Unidentified Flying Objects. The services of qualified scientists and technicians will continue to be utilized to investigate and analyze these reports, and periodic public statements will be made as warranted.

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