

The Robert Kennedy UFO Story



Thanks to the efforts of History Channel and John Greenwald a clear picture of the UFO beliefs of Robert Kennedy has finally emerged. Robert, who was the Attorney General in his brother's administration, has often been written up in UFO lore as being a key student of Ufology.

Over the years letters related to UFOs have circulated with purported Kennedy signatures. The letters claimed that Kennedy had anything from a slight interest in the subject, to one letter where Kennedy supposedly stated that he was a card-carrying member of the Amalgamated Flying Saucers Association.

In the summer of 2005 John Greenwald, the webmaster of www.blackvault.com (a web site that specializes in government documents connected to the UFO subject), visited the Kennedy presidential library and returned to his home in California with over two dozen Kennedy UFO letters.

These letters, recovered mostly from the Kennedy Outer Space files, do indeed show an interest by Robert Kennedy in the UFO story as it was being portrayed in the media in the mid 1960s. "I am keeping myself abreast of information developed on this subject."^[1] Without exception, however, the Kennedy letters show a man who has concluded there is no cover-up and UFOs are not

extraterrestrial.

Most of the letters were answered with a couple different form letters with small variations. In many cases Kennedy handwrites part or in one case the entire reply. This is very usual as most high-ranking government officials used secretaries or assistants to answer mail – especially UFO mail.

In many of the letters Kennedy quoted astronomer Dr. Harlow Shapley at the Harvard Observatory that “there is a high probability that there must be other beings in the universe.” However, Kennedy made it clear that he did not believe that that ET life had arrived on earth.

“From the evidence to date,” Kennedy told many letter writers, “I do not believe that UFO phenomena are caused by vehicles of extraterrestrial origin.”^[ii] Furthermore, Kennedy agreed with the material the Air Force was putting out on UFOs, “I have looked into the matter and do not believe that the Air Force is censoring any information of interest to the public of so-called ‘Unidentified flying objects.’”^[iii]

Some writers pushed Kennedy to back a congressional hearing into the accumulated UFO evidence. Kennedy agreed that if needed the hearing should be open to the public. “If it were desirable to hold congressional hearings on the question of unidentified flying objects, I would certainly agree that they should be open to the public.”^[iv]

Kennedy however, was skeptical of the need for any such congressional actions. “Based on the information available to me from NASA and the Air Force, I do not believe that Congressional hearings on this subject would serve a useful purpose at this time.”^[v]

^[i] Robert Kennedy to Robert Barrow, October 2, 1965

^[ii] Robert Kennedy to Ralph Rankow, February 23, 1965

^[iii] Robert Kennedy to Bob Barrow October 2, 1965

^[iv] Kennedy to Ralph Rankow, August 15, 1965

[v] Robert Kennedy to Ralph Rankow, August 30, 1965

Sci.

Space &
aeronautics
UFO's

December 1, 1965

Mr. James M. Reed, Jr.
77 Fayette Avenue
Kenmore, New York 14223

Dear Mr. Reed:

Thank you for writing to me about your
interest in UFO's.

I have received several letters from other
members of your group and I am keeping myself
abreast of information developed on this subject.

I appreciate your thoughtfulness in writing
to me on this matter.

Sincerely,

Robert F. Kennedy

OFFICE OF
SENATOR
ROBERT F. KENNEDY
WASH. D.C.

JUL 21 4 17 PM '65

July 19, 1965

Robert E. Barrow
4167 Cleveland Rd.
Syracuse, New York 13215

Senator Robert F. Kennedy
United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Kennedy,
I have received your July 15 letter concerning the unidentified flying object phenomena, for which I thank you.

You stated that, from the evidence available to date, you do not believe that UFO phenomena are caused by vehicles of extraterrestrial origin.

The truth is, that there is not enough evidence made public by the U.S. Air Force. The Air Force is censoring all important UFO information. I know that is an old story, but the organization of which I am a member, the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP), has collected a great deal of evidence proving Air Force censorship. Late in 1964, NICAP compiled a 186-page, 200,000 word, illustrated report, which was submitted to Congress ("UFO EVIDENCE"). I am happy to report that the document, which contains many authenticated sightings, has brought response from many Congressmen and Senators. The overall response is one of surprise, and most of the Congressmen have promised their support in UFO hearings.

Allow me to site a very recent example of Air Force cover-ups. Vice President Humphrey wrote to the Air Force on behalf of a U.S. citizen, and requested to know how many UFO sightings remain unidentified in AF files. He promptly received a letter with the answer. He (Mr. Humphrey) immediately passed the letter on to the citizen, quite unaware that the answer was untrue! The letter Mr. Humphrey received from the AF Congressional Inquiry Division was that all sightings had been identified. But, at this very same time, the Air Force had released its annual Project Bluebook report, which stated that 663 sightings are still unidentified! To mislead the Vice President seems unwise.

I have a copy of an Air Force document which has recently been classified. This document, Air Force Regulation 200-2, is the official order for reporting UFO sightings. Why is this document classified? Because NICAP, in a recent issue of its "UFO Investigator"; sited the contradictions between AFR 200-2 and official Air Force censorship denials! I have checked my copy of AFR 200-2 and have found that it does indeed contain these con-

traditions.

NICAP has over 5000 members in all 50 states and 30 foreign countries. It has operated since 1956, carrying on an honest investigations into the UFO phenomena---and Air Force censorship.

NICAP's clear record has gained the trust of military men and scientists all over the world. UFO reports are investigated by trained persons with open minds. NICAP discards almost half of the reports it receives, due to flaws which make the report sketchy in information, or because the reports are obviously from crackpots who have overactive imaginations or desires for publicity.

NICAP's main offices are located in Washington, D.C., at 1536 Connecticut Avenue, N.W. You may, if you wish, examine our files, which are full of documented information.

In the meantime, I hope to obtain our "UFO EVIDENCE" report for you, and possibly some other material. I had intended to write a much shorter letter, but I wanted to point out certain facts which, I believe, you should know.

One thing is true about the UFO subject: The USAF is censoring all important information on the subject. Air Force men can receive strict punishment for discussing UFO reports in public. For a start, I suggest that you obtain AFR 200-2. When you receive it, please let me know.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,



Robert E. Barrow
Member, NICAP

Robert Barrow
4167 Cleveland Rd.
Syracuse, New York 13215

August 26, 1965

Senator Robert F. Kennedy
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Kennedy,
I am very much interested in obtaining a "UFO EVIDENCE REPORT" for you (published and submitted to Congress by the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena in late 1964). I know that the report will help to show you the importance of the unidentified flying object phenomena and the dangers of unwarranted Air Force censorship.

However, in order to obtain a report for you, it is necessary that I have a letter from you requesting one. The report contains 186 pages, over 200,000 words, and is illustrated.

I would appreciate hearing from you on your desire to obtain this documented report. Thank you.

Sincerely yours,



Robert Barrow
Member,
National Investigations
Committee on Aerial
Phenomena (NICAP)

Dear Mr. Barrow,

Thank you for offering to
obtain a copy of the UFO
Evidence ^{Report} for me.

I have a however, see to
~~copy~~ of this publication
and do not need an additional
~~copy~~ of this.

I appreciate your thoughtfulness
in writing to me on this
matter.

Sincerely,
RFK

AUG 30 7 04 PM '65

ROBERT F. KENNEDY

Sci-
Space
Aeronautics
UFO'S

October 2, 1965

Mr. Robert E. Barrow
4167 Cleveland Road
Syracuse, New York 13215

Dear Mr. Barrow:

Thank you for your letter concerning the censorship of unidentified flying object information by the Air Force.

I have looked into this matter in detail and I do not believe that the Air Force is censoring any information of interest to the public of so-called "Unidentified Flying Objects."

However, I will look forward to reading any other information you may have concerning this matter.

Sincerely,

Robert F. Kennedy

WHP:par

SCI

Space
Aeronautics

UFO'S

October 26, 1965

Mr. Charles J. Quagliana
141 Davison Road
Lockport, New York 14094

Dear Mr. Quagliana:

Thank you for letting me know of your concern about sightings of "unidentified flying objects".

WPK
I have enclosed a copy of a report on this matter that I received from the Department of the Air Force.

I might add that I have investigated this matter in the past and concluded that the Air Force is not suppressing information on this subject. I also, on the basis of information available to date, do not believe that so-called "unidentified flying objects" are from other planets or solar systems.

I hope you will write again on matters of mutual interest.

Sincerely,

Robert F. Kennedy

WP/mjk

141 Davison Road
Lockport, New York 14094
August 17, 1965

SENATOR ROBERT KENNEDY
SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Sir:

The sightings of Unidentified Flying Objects in the southwestern United States in the past weeks bring to mind a topic that has been on my mind for the last two or three years: namely, the censorship and hush-hush attitude of the Department of Defense and the United States Air Force in regard to their method of explaining away all sightings by claiming "illusions" and that "they were looking at stars" and other shoddy and meaningless explanations. Also, the Air Force might explain why pilots chasing these "nonexistent" UFO's have more often than not never reported in or returned to their bases with something besides "crashed in wild country and body not recovered."

In short sir, myself and thousands of other citizens not only in the State of New York, but throughout the country would convey the spirit of this letter to the Department of Defense: that the public is tired of the obtuse "official" explanations of UFO's and would like the truth. Please do as much as you can for us, sir. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Charles J. Quagliana
Charles J. Quagliana

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

SECRETARY

SEP 27 1965

Dear Senator Kennedy:

In your recent referral to the Department of Defense you requested a report in behalf of Mr. Charles J. Quagliana relative to unidentified flying objects (UFO's).

The Air Force does not withhold or censor any information on UFO's. The investigations have always been made available to bona fide news representatives and scientific researchers. Press releases are issued as warranted, and an annual report on the project is available to the public. A copy of this report is attached for your information.

In 18 years of investigating over 9,000 reports of UFO's, the evidence has proved almost conclusively that reported aerial phenomena have been objects either created and sent aloft by man, generated by atmospheric conditions, or caused by celestial bodies or the residue of meteoric activity.

The Air Force has lost one aircraft and pilot in connection with a UFO incident. Captain Mantell was asked to identify a UFO while on an aircraft ferrying mission in 1952 over Godman Field in Kentucky. Because his aircraft was not outfitted with the necessary oxygen equipment for a high altitude flight, Captain Mantell died of oxygen starvation while attempting to identify the object, and his aircraft consequently crashed. A copy of the Air Force evaluation of this case is also attached for your further information.

Another incident which is often mistakenly identified as a UFO case involved an F-89 aircraft which was scrambled to intercept an unidentified aircraft which was successfully accomplished and identified as a Dakota (Canadian C-47). It is presumed by the Air Force that the pilot suffered vertigo while returning to his base and crashed into Lake Michigan. This case is carried in Air Force aircraft accident records (see attached resume).

We are pleased to be of service in providing you this report.

Sincerely,



L. CONQUEST
Colonel, USAF
Chief, Congressional Inquiry
Division
Office of Legislative Liaison

4 Attachments

Honorable Robert F. Kennedy

United States Senate

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20330

SECRETARY

NOV 17 1966

Dear Senator Kennedy:

This is in reply to your inquiry in behalf of Mr. Raymond G. Konley regarding unidentified flying objects (UFOs).

Literature about UFOs written by Captain Ruppelt, Major Keyhoe and Mr. Edwards is not reviewed, indorsed, sponsored, or sanctioned in any way by the Air Force.

Air Force Regulation 200-2, Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs), (which has been superseded by Air Force Regulation 80-17, Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs)) did not order the "shooting down of a UFO." It reads, in part, as follows: "The UFO Program provides for the prompt reporting and rapid identification needed for successful 'identification,' which is the second of the four phases of air defense -- detection, identification, interception, and destruction." Apparently the sentence has been misconstrued and the word "destruction" has been translated to "shoot down" UFOs. However, we point out that the UFO program provides only for the "identification" aspect of air defense.

Inclosed is a copy of the news release of October 7, 1966 regarding the selection of the University of Colorado to conduct independent investigations of UFO reports. The investigating team will be permitted to release and publish its findings.

Contrary to Mr. Konley's belief, the Air Force has never attempted to cover up UFO information. The possible existence of extraterrestrial life within the universe

has never been denied; however, the Air Force has no tangible proof that there is extraterrestrial life nor do we have any proof that UFOs are interplanetary space vehicles.

A letter similar to this one is being sent to the Honorable William Proxmire, United States Senate, in response to his inquiry.

It is a pleasure to be of service in clarifying the Air Force position regarding UFOs.

Sincerely,



JOHN E. LINGO, Colonel, USAF
Congressional Inquiry Division
Office of Legislative Liaison

2 Attachments

Honorable Robert F. Kennedy

United States Senate

Unidentified Flying Objects
DR. FRANK E. STRANGES, CHAIRMAN

5907 W. Pico Blvd.
Los Angeles, Calif. 90035

WE 8-2101
WE 8-2102



18 November 1966

Hon. Robert F. Kennedy
United States Senator
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Kennedy:

Warmest Greetings.

I have just concluded a brief tour with our new Color Documentary motion picture dealing with Unidentified Flying Objects. The performance this evening will conclude our tour of this part of the United States. The results, public interest, etc, have been very encouraging ..to say the least.

The purpose of this letter is to attempt to determine what your personal feelings are relative to the UFO subject. I have followed your entire political career with great interest. I believe that you are one of the few men in American Politics who has maintained a most respected and honored position, even under great pressure.

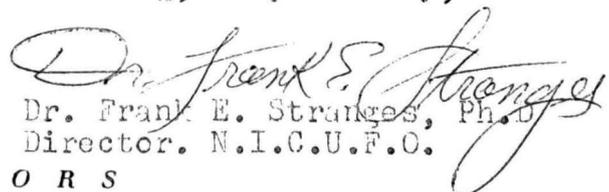
In times past, I have written, unsuccessfully, to the White House regarding UFOs only to have them referred to the USAF whom seem to delight in sending out form letters in place of direct replies.

Because of your position in Government, in times past as well as at the present, I would be interested in learning whether or not you believe that a private organization, such as ours, would be of any assistance to our Government in attempting to reach a satisfactory conclusion to the UFO mystery. The careless evaluations of many UFO sightings has caused many serious Americans to (take lightly) the opinions expressed by Air Force spokesmen.

Knowing full well that your schedule would not permit a lengthy reply, I would, nevertheless appreciate hearing from you in this matter.

Meanwhile, Our Prayers and Best Wishes are with you, always.

Remaining, Respectfully,


Dr. Frank E. Stranges, Ph.D.
Director. N.I.C.U.F.O.

FES/s
encl.

D I R E C T O R S

Chan Thomas, Scientist
Lt. Col. James McNamora
United States Army, Ret.
Merle Gould, Newsman
Editor of New Age World
Bernice C. Raab, Public Relations

Dr. Herman Keck
Bible College President
Col. Richard Tudor
United States Air Force
Alex Victor - Jack Strauss
Communications Management

August C. Roberts
Photograph Analyst Expert
William M. Caufield, Mgr. C. S.
Continental Air Lines, Inc.
Oliver Drake, Producer, Director
Lucky Brown, Movie Tech. Corp.

SENATOR ROBERT F. KENNEDY
OFFICE OF ORIGIN
 NEW YORK CITY
 SYRACUSE

December 1, 1966

Dr. Frank E. Stranges
Director
National Investigations Committee
5907 West Pico Boulevard
Los Angeles, California 90035

Dear Dr. Stranges:

Thank you for your thoughtful letter of November 18, and for your views on the subject of UFO's.

As you may know, the University of Colorado has been selected to conduct an independent study of unidentified flying objects, and the National Academy of Sciences has agreed to review the University's findings when the study is completed sometime in 1968. You may wish to contact Professor Edward U. Condon at the University who is head of the study.

I am sure that their findings will prove quite useful in settling the questions raised on both sides of this issue.

With best wishes.

Sincerely,

Robert F. Kennedy

mjk

Stalman, # 6 v. 1

Nov. 13, 1966

6:27 PM
Sen. Robert Kennedy, NY
Washington, D.C.

I have just read the best
selling "Flying Saucers - Serious
Business" and "Incident at Lytle"
and of course commenced before
reading these books that
UFO's are space ships from elsewhere.

Since the AF and all
branches of the U.S. govt. are
in the fire of the American
people, they have no right
to withhold the known
facts about UFO's. Years
ago the AF implied that
these space ships were
indeeds belonging to them,
"top secret". We now know
that this is not true, for from it

We would like to
know the facts about UFO's
even though they antagonize
the U.S. F. If we have
visitors from outer space
we want to know, it would
be wonderful news to hear that

we are being visited by
other (smaller) beings. We
need some intelligence before it's too late
ever from other planets. Sincerely,

Holly P. Green

SENATOR ROBERT F. KENNEDY
OFFICE OF ORIGIN
 NEW YORK CITY
 SYRACUSE

December 1, 1966

Miss Holly P. Green
Shalimar
Florida

Dear Miss Green:

Thank you for your letter concerning
unidentified flying objects.

As you will see from the enclosed release
from the Department of the Air Force, an independ-
ent study of UFO reports is now being conducted
at the University of Colorado.

I am sure that the findings from this study
will prove quite useful in determining the validity
of the reported sightings.

With best wishes.

Sincerely,

Robert F. Kennedy

SENATOR ROBERT F. KENNEDY
OFFICE OF ORIGIN
 NEW YORK CITY
 SYRACUSE

December 1, 1966

Mr. Joseph Hodor
2860 Pennsylvania Avenue
Weirton, West Virginia 26062

Dear Mr. Hodor:

Thank you for your letter concerning
unidentified flying objects.

As you will see from the enclosed press
release from the Department of the Air Force, an
independent study of UFO reports is now being
conducted at the University of Colorado.

I am sure that the findings from this study
will prove quite useful in determining the validity
of the reported sightings.

With best wishes.

Sincerely,

Robert F. Kennedy

ROBERT F. KENNEDY
NEW YORK

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C.

February 7, 1966

Mr. John A. Keel
330 East 33rd Street
New York 16, New York

Dear Mr. Keel:

Thank you for your thoughtful letter on so-called "unidentified flying objects".

Many reputable scientists agree that there must be other beings in the universe. Dr. Harlow Shapely, for one, has stated that there is a high probability that there is other life in the universe.

To believe that there is other life in the universe is not, however, to believe that "UFO's" are manned vehicles. One explanation of this phenomenon connects the lights that are seen with the gaseous tails of comets. A careful analysis of sightings to date has not given us any indication that "UFO's" are manned.

I appreciate hearing from you on this matter, and hope you will write again on matters of mutual interest.

Sincerely,



Robert F. Kennedy

LOREN E. GROSS
UFO COLLECTION

(15)