



On The UFOS

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responsibility for ethical matters, alleging they lie outside the Society's constitutionally defined concerns. Previously the Council had recommended consideration of the matter to AAAS.

The foregoing does not constitute very drastic or effective response to the ethical challenges to the scientific community, but history and tradition may not warrant more than we have seen. Researchers have probably always been haunted by fears of encroachment on their freedom and independence. While laws and rules have always been the objects of scientific research, scientists probably tend to see social laws and rules in quite a different light—as being restrictive and obstructive “legalisms” rather than as instruments of increasing importance to order, predictability, and progress in a world of complex social interactions. The effective stimulus to responsible self-regulation has usually been the graver consequences of avoiding that responsibility.

At the moment it seems doubtful that the scientific community will prove more forehanded or prudent than those other groups in our society, including Congress itself, whose final steps toward effective self-control were in fact an undignified scramble in response to scandal and public outcry.

ON THE UFOS

The UFO articles (*June Bulletin*) by Dr. Margolis and Dr. Sagan are welcome displays of reason and rationality. Several points, however, need much more discussion.

Dr. Margolis writes that there is a complete lack of any credible evidence consistent with the extraterrestrial hypothesis. This is an opinion, not a fact; as an opinion it should have been accompanied by a list of the criteria involved. Growing numbers of scientists are interested in UFOs precisely because they believe there is evidence for the extraterrestrial hypothesis.

Dr. Sagan writes that visual and photographic observations of UFOs have never been made by professional astronomers. This is not true. The *Flying Saucer Review* (21 Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, London, W.C. 2, England) of January-February 1967 contains a photograph of UFOs silhouetted against the moon taken December 1, 1965, at the Adhara Ob-

servatory at San Miguel in the Province of Buenos Aires, Argentina. The *UFO Evidence*, published in 1964 by the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP, 1536 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.), lists nine professional astronomers whose UFO reports are on file at NICAP. E. J. Ruppelt, former head of the United States Air Force Project Blue Book (September 1951 to September 1953), wrote in *The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects* (Ace Books, Inc., G-537, 1956, page 284) that in 1952 he informally obtained opinions on UFOs from 45 recognized astronomical authorities. Of the 45, five had seen UFOs. We could add many amateur astronomers to this list. The *Aerial Phenomena Research Organization Bulletin* (APRO, 3910 East Kleindale Road, Tucson, Arizona) of November-December 1966 contains a photograph of puzzling curved and dashed trails against a star background. It was taken by a photographer-astronomer with 20 years experience in photographing the sky, John T. Hopf, on December 13, 1966, as he was photographing the Geminid meteor shower.

Dr. Sagan claims that the Central Intelligence Agency Robertson Panel, which met in 1953, concluded after a thorough study that UFOs “all were probably natural phenomena wrongly interpreted.” This claim simplifies the work of the panel to the point of distortion. Here is a more complete version of what happened. Ruppelt (pages 275-296) says that the Robertson Panel heard evidence for five days, and wrote a conclusion in two. Seven days seems hardly enough time to make a thorough study of UFOs. Contrast seven days with the fifteen months allowed the current University of Colorado project, and the fact that the Colorado investigators recently requested an additional five months.

Ruppelt presented to the Robertson Panel the Project Blue Book findings from 1947 through 1952—of 1,593 reports analyzed, 18 per cent were identified as balloons, 12 per cent aircraft, 14 per cent astronomical bodies, four per cent “other” (searchlights, birds, etc.), two per cent were hoaxes, 23 per cent were unidentified because of insufficient data, and 27 per cent were described as “unknowns.” Associates

of Ruppelt presented a special analysis of motions of UFOs from rigorously investigated reports, which concluded that those UFOs were intelligently controlled.

The Robertson Panel viewed the famous Tremonton, Utah, motion picture films taken in July 1952. NICAP, in the *UFO Investigator* of October-November 1966, discusses the fact that the Robertson Panel was presented an analysis of the films which had been carried out by the United States Navy Photo Interpretation Laboratory (PIL). The PIL, after two months of study, concluded that the objects sighted “were not birds, balloons, or aircraft, were not reflections, because there was no blinking while passing through 60 degrees of arc, and were, therefore, ‘self-luminous.’” Ruppelt says that the Air Force military photo laboratory at Wright Field reported “we don't know what they are but they aren't airplanes or balloons, and we don't think they are birds.” The Robertson Panel rejected the PIL analysis because one member of the panel thought that the Navy people had incorrectly used a photodensitometer in their analysis. The panel did not consider the story by the man who took the films, a Navy Chief Photographer with 2,000 hours of flying time as an aerial photographer. When he and his wife first sighted the objects, they were closer than when photographed, and they looked like “two pie pans, one inverted on the top of the other.” The photographer's impressions, although subjective, corroborated the Navy and Air Force conclusions.

Ruppelt says that the members of the panel in their conclusions pointed out how serious was their responsibility. They chose the view that the evidence supporting the extraterrestrial hypothesis was only circumstantial, and to accept the hypothesis would therefore be a grave mistake, considering the ramifications of such a decision. But, rather than dismissing UFOs, they recommended that Project Blue Book be expanded, and that the American public be told every detail of the UFO investigation.

Dr. James McDonald of the Department of Meteorology at the University of Arizona said in October 1966 that the CIA was worried at the time over

the clogging of military intelligence channels by UFO reports. It consequently made a request, for which McDonald discovered evidence in Project Blue Book files, that military authorities were to debunk UFO reports and discourage public interest in UFOs. This request obviously thwarted the recommendations of the Robertson Panel. The effect of the order seems to have persisted even to the present.

Dr. Sagan states that many radar sightings of UFOs have been explained as weather phenomena and the like. It is much more important that many radar sightings cannot be so explained. Ruppelt (pages 207-227) wrote that the simultaneous radar and visual sightings in the vicinity of Washington, D.C., on several nights in July 1952, remained unexplained after investigation. Radar phenomena caused by inversion layers and radar images caused by UFOs were seen simultaneously and distinguished by the radar operators at the time; in addition, F-94 jet interceptors vectored in by ground radar were several times able to obtain simultaneous visual and radar lock-ons for brief periods, from seconds to minutes.

Speculation, although fascinating, is not relevant to answering the question of what UFOs are. The answer requires only a study of the UFO reports themselves and comparison with possibilities allowed by physical and biological fact. A stimulating contribution in this direction has recently been made by Dr. Markowitz of the Department of Physics of Marquette University (*Science*, 157, 1274, 1967). His argument is that physical laws demand certain characteristics of the landing and lift-off of extraterrestrial craft, which are not observed in the UFOs. His generalization from reports of UFO landings to all UFO reports is, however, arbitrary. Also, the possibility that landed UFOs are scouting craft from larger ships is not mentioned. Our plans for a moon landing involve a lunar excursion module dispatched from a larger orbiting ship. In addition, Markowitz assumes that extraterrestrial craft would display at lift-off an initial upward acceleration of 1 g, and that the exhaust speed of the mass expelled would be the velocity of light. These characteristics are

in no way proven necessary for lift-off. In fact, they were introduced in his discussion of propulsion systems suggested for use by our own spacecraft after they have been removed from the earth by chemical rockets. Despite these serious flaws, the article is timely because it warns us of the stringent limitations imposed on extraterrestrial flight by physical laws, and thus its apparent unlikelihood. (Markowitz probably meant interstellar rather than extraterrestrial flight.) However, we must be cautious, lest the unlikelihood of interstellar travel cause us to ignore new evidence. The danger is in saying, "Since the hypothesis is so unlikely, new evidence cannot make it true." This attitude prevailed with respect to meteorites not more than two hundred years ago, when after investigating a meteorite fall at Lucé, France, the well-known chemist, Lavoisier, and two other members of the Paris Academy of Sciences signed a memorandum stating that "the falling of stones from the sky is physically impossible" (*Journal de physique*, juillet 1772).

In trying to understand UFOs I am learning that the short and simple study from the easy chair at home will not suffice. The UFO phenomenon is too complex. We require independent and exhaustive studies; the University of Colorado study now in progress is an excellent first step. We must eventually consider the persistent accumulation of unexplained reports year after year, by Project Blue Book, APRO, and NICAP, and many other groups around the world. We must consider the obvious fact that recently the rate of sightings has been increasing. In addition, we must give serious attention to the hundreds of reports of objects seen below tree-top level, objects seen on the ground, and occupants of such objects (see *Flying Saucer Occupants*, Coral and Jim Lorenzen (APRO), *Signet T 3205*, 1967, and "The Humanoids," a special issue of the *Flying Saucer Review*, October-November 1966). Finally, we must utilize the wisdom of those who have given long study for many years to the problem, including Dr. J. Allen Hynek, Dr. Jacques Vallee, Mr. and Mrs. J. Lorenzen, Mr. Charles Bowen, and many others, all of various opinions.

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A RECONSIDERATION OF THE CRITERIA FOR DETERRENCE

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The United States faces a number of questions affecting the future structure of deterrence. In deciding whether or not to deploy ballistic missile defense, stability based on assured destruction must be weighed against the damage-limiting value of defense. Missile targeting against missiles must be weighed against missile targeting against cities. The extension of deterrence to Asia must be faced at the same time that control of the deterrence structure in Europe is becoming difficult. Deterrence and its conceptual cousin escalation, now being attempted against North Vietnam, appear relatively ineffective there. Consequently, it is time to reconsider how deterrence works and what force relationships must be maintained to insure that it continues to work.

Deterrence consists of the ability to inflict unacceptable destruction on the opponent should it strike at us with nuclear weapons. There is little question that, at least until now, deterrence has worked. The fact of strategic peace between the United States and the USSR is clear evidence of this.

The dangers in deterrence have been elaborated many times and quite effectively. Only certain of them will concern us here. The important long-run danger is that a deterrence-based arms race is one that proceeds by its own dynamic and is not responsive to the changes in the Cold War. It can easily lose contact with realities of international politics. Serious questions also arise in the short run. There is a profound moral question concealed in the adage that if the deterrent is ever used, it has failed. Consider the dilemma of a policymaker in a nation that has just been struck: there is now little value in sending off the reply strike, and it is, in effect, murder. Recognition of this dilemma does not aid deterrence in dissuading a potential aggressor. There are also the problems of accidental war and of the irra-