

# Saturday Review

September 3, 1966 35¢

## REPORT FROM GENEVA

By Norman Cousins



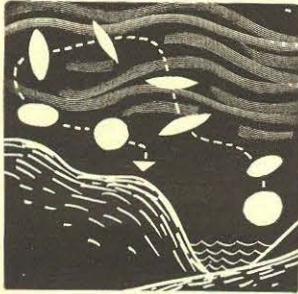
"The Peaceable Kingdom," by Edward Hicks (see page 20)



### THE DISPUTED CIA DOCUMENT ON UFOs

By J...

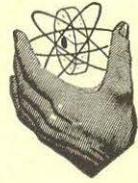
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—Doug Anderson.

# SR / Research

## SCIENCE & HUMANITY



**DEPARTMENTS:** Research in America • Letters to the Science Editor

**ARTICLE:** The Computer, the Eye, the Soul

### RESEARCH IN AMERICA

## THE DISPUTED CIA DOCUMENT ON UFOs

**I**N this space last month, there appeared a report on the twenty-year-old argument over whether planet earth is being clandestinely explored by intelligently guided vehicles from planets of stars other than earth's sun. The report began by pointing out that the Darwinian theory of evolution has encouraged modern astronomers to accept the idea that the skies must hold hundreds if not thousands of planets on which living creatures have evolved to a level of intelligence equal or superior to the intelligence of earthmen. Next, the report recited scientific speculations concerning possible visits to earth by interstellar excursionists in years gone by. Finally, the report made clear that if such visits in fact occurred, the visitors left behind them no unequivocal relics or other signs of their presence.

To believe in the possibility of intelligent life elsewhere than on earth is one thing. To believe that some of the harder specimens of that life have survived passage through many light-years of space (a light-year is 5,880 billion miles long, and the star nearest to the sun is 4.25 light-years away) and landed on earth without wrecking any of their ships or leaving instruments or tools or articles of clothing or even footprints behind is quite another. Consider, for comparative purposes, the amount of debris earthmen already have scattered over the moon preparatory to landing themselves on the moon, which orbits only 221,593 to 252,948 miles out from earth.

The United States Air Force since 1948 (the year after Idaho businessman Kenneth Arnold said he saw, while piloting his own plane over the Pacific coast of this country, "a chainlike formation of disc-shaped objects" performing spectacular maneuvers around Mount

Rainier in the Cascades [see LETTERS, page 50]) has been hunting some fragment of hardware of a "flying saucer." SR's science editor believes that the search has netted absolutely nothing. He so believes because he has read through all but one of the once-secret dossiers the Air Force has kept on UFOs (unidentified flying objects). He cannot be certain, however, because the one exception—the minutes of a meeting of a panel of eminent scientists headed by H. P. Robertson of the California Institute of Technology—is still classified in the secret category thirteen years after issuance of the panel's report in 1953.



At SR's request, during the period when last month's UFO report was being prepared, Major Hector Quintanilla, Jr., of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base at Dayton, Ohio, director of the Blue Book Project under which UFO sightings are shepherded, formally asked declassification of the Robertson panel minutes. Power to remove the secret label from this particular text rested with the Central Intelligence Agency because CIA had summoned the panel. Since publication of SR's report last month, CIA has given Major Quintanilla a "sanitized" [officialese word meaning "edited"] version of those minutes, and the Major has given a copy of the version to SR through the Air Force Office of Information in Washington.

The edited copy fills twenty-three standard-sized typescript pages. Nowhere in the script is there an indication of how many lines or pages of the original minutes were deleted, or what was the nature of the deletions, or why any deletion was necessary to protect the nation from its enemies.

**C**IA'S insistence on editing in the face of an Air Force request for unequivocal declassification of a thirteen-year-old document is unfortunate. The very exercise of censorship suggests that vital information of long-range significance may be withheld for strategic reasons. That CIA, not the Air Force, is the censor is susceptible to interpretation as a sign that whatever data is missing has clandestine implications—precisely the claim that UFO fans have been making for years.

The questions raised by the CIA editing of the Robertson panel minutes are further complicated by a comparative reading of the censored version alongside the one-page report that bears the signatures of the Robertson panelists. The report's full text, with the names of its signers, was published in SR last month under the mistaken designation of a summary. The primary conclusion stated in the document was "that the evidence presented on Unidentified Flying Objects shows no indication that these phenomena constitute a direct physical threat to national security . . . and that there is no residuum of cases which indicates phenomena which are attributable to foreign artifacts capable of hostile acts. . . ." "In the light of this conclusion," the panel recommended "that the national security agencies take immediate steps to strip the Unidentified Flying Objects of the special status they have been given and the



aura of mystery they have unfortunately acquired . . . [and that] an integrated program [should be] designed to reassure the public of the total lack of evidence of inimical forces behind the phenomena."

Details of the proposed "integrated program" of public reassurance could not, of course, be spelled out in a single page. They must be looked for in the text of the minutes. As long as the only available version of the minutes is an edited one, the intentions of the panelists are bound to be disputed because the editing process has left in the minutes internal evidence of what appears to be a shift in emphasis by the panelists. Instead of the text signed by the panelists and quoted immediately above, the version of the panel report as edited by CIA concludes as follows:

In order most effectively to strengthen the national facilities for the timely recognition and the appropriate handling of true indications of hostile action, and to minimize the concomitant dangers alluded to above, the panel recommends:

That the national security agencies take immediate steps to strip the Unidentified Flying Objects of the special status they have been given and the aura of mystery they have unfortunately acquired. We suggest that this aim may be achieved by an integrated program designed to reassure the public of the total lack of evidence of inimical forces behind the phenomena, to train personnel to recognize and reject false indications quickly and effectively, and to strengthen regular channels for the evaluation of and prompt reaction to true indications of hostile measures.

**O**NLY a semantic quibble may be involved here, but if that is so no arbitrary piece of censorship should be allowed to serve as a magnifying glass. For there is added evidence, in the edited version of the minutes supporting the report itself, of at least a momentary difference of opinion of an unstated degree among the panelists. That evidence reads:

It was interesting to note that none of the members of the panel were [*sic*] loath to accept that this earth might be visited by extraterrestrial intelligence [*sic*] beings of some sort, some day. What they did not find was any evidence that related the objects sighted to space travelers. One of the panel members, in his presentation, showed how he had eliminated each of the known and probable causes of sightings, leaving him [*sic*] "extraterrestrial" as the only one remaining in many

cases. His background as an aeronautical engineer and technical intelligence officer could not be slighted. However, the panel could not accept any of the cases cited by him because they were raw, unevaluated reports. Terrestrial explanations of the sightings were suggested in some cases, and in others the time of sighting was so short as to cause suspicion of visual impressions. It was noted by others of the panel members that extraterrestrial artifacts, if they did exist, are no cause for alarm; rather, they are in the realm of natural phenomena subject to scientific study, just as cosmic rays were at the time of their discovery twenty to thirty years ago. This was an attitude in which another of the panel members did not concur, as he felt that such artifacts would be of immediate and great concern not only to the U.S. but to all countries. (Nothing like a common threat to unite peoples!) It was noted that present astronomical knowledge of the solar system makes the existence of intelligence [*sic*] beings (as we know the term) elsewhere than on the earth extremely unlikely, and the concentration of their attention by any controllable means confined to any one continent of the earth quite preposterous.

Comparison of the texts of the signed report, the CIA version of the report, and the CIA version of the minutes behind the report leaves no room whatever for doubt that the panel as a whole could not bring itself to accept the thesis that UFOs are interstellar vehicles. The minutes contained one especially pointed observation:

Attention should be directed to the requirement among scientists that a new phenomenon, to be accepted, must be completely and convincingly documented.

In other words, the burden of proof is on the sighter, not the explainer.

**T**HE real issue that is held open by the CIA's editing is whether the "integrated program" of public reassurance proposed in the Robertson panel's signed report was intended to determine whether UFOs might be interstellar vehicles after all or whether the purpose of the proposal was to convince the public to be skeptical of flying saucer propaganda.

The issue has been a simmering one for the last ten years because of an unauthorized summary of the Robertson panel's deliberations, published in a book authored by the late Air Force Captain Edward J. Ruppelt after Captain Ruppelt left his post as chief of Project Blue Book. Ruppelt's volume, titled *The Report on Unidentified Flying*

*Objects*, is still in print as an Ace paperback. Its chapter sixteen, headed "The Hierarchy Ponders," gives the wording of the opening paragraph of the Robertson panel report as follows:

We as a group do not believe that it is impossible for some other celestial body to be inhabited by intelligent creatures. Nor is it impossible that these creatures could have reached such a state of development that they could visit the earth. However, there is nothing in all of the so-called "flying saucer" reports that we have read that would indicate that this is taking place.

**A**FTER reviewing his own efforts as an Air Force officer to persuade the panel that UFOs might be interstellar vehicles, Ruppelt wrote:

Each of the fifty of our best sightings that we gave the scientists to study had some kind of a loophole. In many cases the loopholes were extremely small, but scientific evaluation has no room for even the smallest of loopholes and we had asked for a scientific evaluation.

When they had finished commenting on the reports, the scientists pointed out the seriousness of the decision they had been asked to make. They said that they had tried hard to be objective and not to be picayunish, but actually all we had was circumstantial evidence. Good circumstantial evidence, to be sure, but we had nothing concrete, no hardware, no photos showing any detail of a UFO, no measured speeds, altitudes, or sizes—nothing in the way of good, hard, cold, scientific facts. . . .

In their conclusions they touched upon the possibility that the UFOs might be some type of new or as yet undiscovered natural phenomenon. They explained that they hadn't given this too much credence; however, if the UFOs were a new natural phenomenon, the reports of their general appearance should follow a definite pattern—the UFO reports didn't.

This ended the section of the panel's report that covered their conclusions. The next section was entitled, "Recommendations." I fully expected that they would recommend that we at least reduce the activities of Project Blue Book if not cancel it entirely. . . .

The panel didn't recommend that the activities of Blue Book be cut back, and they didn't recommend that it be dropped. They recommended that it be expanded. Too many of the reports had been made by credible observers, the report said, people who should know what they're looking at—people who think things out care-



fully. Data that was out of the circumstantial-evidence class was badly needed. And the panel must have been at least partially convinced that an expanded effort would prove something interesting because the expansion they recommended would require a considerable sum of money. The investigative force of Project Blue Book should be quadrupled in size, they wrote, and it should be staffed by specially trained experts in the fields of electronics, meteorology, photography, physics, and other fields of science pertinent to UFO investigations. Every effort should be made to set up instruments in locations where UFO sightings are frequent, so that data could be measured and recorded during a sighting. In other locations around the country military and civilian scientists should be alerted and instructed to use every piece of available equipment that could be used to track UFOs.

And lastly, they said that the American public should be told every detail of every phase of the UFO investigation—the details of the sightings, the official conclusions, and why the conclusions were made. This would serve a double purpose; it would dispel any of the mystery that security breeds and it would keep the Air Force on the ball—sloppy investigations and analyses would never occur.

**T**HE CIA-edited version of the minutes of the Robertson panel meetings confirms Captain Ruppelt's recitation of his efforts to obtain greater official attention for UFOs. Among other things, he projected motion pictures of UFOs taken at Great Falls, Montana, on August 15, 1950 by Nick Mariana, a baseball team manager, and at Tremonton, Utah, on July 2, 1952 by a Navy Chief Photographer, Warrant Officer Delbert C. Newhouse. (Curiously, no one seems to have noticed that Ruppelt himself later told of watching sunlight glinting from the wings of sea gulls banking high in the air; the "bright white flash . . . [was] much larger than one would expect from sea gulls," he wrote. "There was a strong resemblance to the UFOs in the Tremonton movie.") However, there is little recognizable relationship between the Captain's statement about the Robertson panel's conclusions and the story of those conclusions as told in the CIA-edited minutes. Witness these excerpts from the latter:

The panel members were impressed with the lack of sound data in the great majority of [UFO] case histories.

It was the panel's opinion that some of the Air Force concern over UFOs

(notwithstanding Air Defense Command anxiety over fast radar tracks) was probably caused by public pressure. The result today is that the Air Force has instituted a fine channel for receiving reports of nearly anything anyone sees in the sky and fails to understand. This has been particularly encouraged in popular articles on this and other subjects, such as space travel and science fiction. The result is the mass receipt of low-grade reports which tend to overload channels of communication with material quite irrelevant to hostile objects that might some day appear. The panel agreed generally that this mass of poor-quality reports containing little, if any, scientific data was of no value.

The panel noted that the cost in technical manpower effort required to follow up and explain every one of the thousand or more reports received through channels each year (1,900 in 1952) could not be justified. It was felt that there will always be sightings, for which complete data is lacking, that can only be explained with disproportionate effort and with a long time delay, if at all.

It was agreed by the panel that no government-sponsored program of optical nation-wide sky patrol is worthwhile at the present time.

A broad educational program integrating efforts of all concerned agencies . . . should have two major aims: training and "debunking."

The training aim would result in proper recognition of unusually illuminated objects (e.g., balloons, aircraft reflections) as well as natural phenomena (meteors, fireballs, mirages, noctilucent clouds). Both visual and radar recognition are concerned. There would be many levels in such education from enlisted personnel to command and research personnel. Relative emphasis and degree of explanation of different programs would correspond to the categories of duty (e.g., radar operators; pilots; control tower operators; Ground Observer Corps personnel; and officers and enlisted men in other categories). This training should result in a marked reduction in reports caused by misidentification and resultant confusion.

The "debunking" aim would result in reduction in public interest in "flying saucers" which today evokes a strong psychological reaction. This education could be accomplished by mass media such as television, motion pictures, and popular articles. Basis of such education would be actual case histories which had been puzzling at first but later explained. As in the case of conjuring tricks, there is much less stimulation if the "secret" is known. Such a program should tend to reduce the cur-

rent gullibility of the public and consequently their susceptibility to clever hostile propaganda.

Members of the panel had various suggestions related to the planning of such an educational program. It was felt strongly that psychologists familiar with mass psychology should advise on the nature and extent of the program. Also, someone familiar with mass communication techniques, perhaps an advertising expert, would be helpful. The teaching techniques used for aircraft identification during the past war were cited as an example of a similar educational task. The amateur astronomers in the U.S. might be a potential source of enthusiastic talent "to spread the gospel." It was believed that business clubs, high schools, colleges, and television stations would all be pleased to cooperate in the showing of documentary type motion pictures if prepared in an interesting manner. The use of true cases showing first the "mystery" and then the "explanations" would be forceful.

To plan and execute such a program, the panel believed was no mean task. The current investigatory group at ATIC [Air Technical Intelligence Command, responsible for Project Blue Book] would, of necessity, have to be closely integrated for support with respect to not only the historical cases but the current ones. Recent cases are probably much more susceptible to explanation than older ones; first, because of ATIC's experience and, secondly, their knowledge of most plausible explanations. The panel believed that some expansion of the ATIC effort would certainly be required to support such a program. It was believed inappropriate to state exactly how large a Table of Organization would be required.

The panel believed that, with ATIC's support, the educational program of "training and debunking" outlined above might be required for a minimum of one-and-one-half to two years. At the end of this time, the dangers related to "flying saucers" should have been greatly reduced if not eliminated.

**T**HE passages just quoted may in fact be verbatim reproductions of the original Robertson panel minutes. But the knowledge that they come from an edited version introduces a gaping doubt because of a set of circumstances which will be described below.

As was reported here last month, the Air Force Scientific Advisory Board in February 1966 assigned an *ad hoc* committee to re-examine the UFO controversy. The committee reported last March. The report stated that "in order to bring themselves up to date, the members of the committee initially



reviewed the findings of previous scientific panels charged with looking into the UFO problem. Particular attention was given to the report of the Robertson panel which was rendered in January 1953." Although no explicit statement to such effect appears in the record, it can be assumed as certain that the Robertson panel minutes read by the 1966 AFSAB committee were the unedited originals.

**T**HE 1966 committee report included the following observations:

Although about 6 per cent (646) of all sightings (10,147) in the years 1947 through 1965 are listed by the Air Force as 'unidentified,' it appears to the committee that most of the cases so listed are simply those in which the information available does not provide an adequate basis for analysis. In this connection it is important also to note that no unidentified objects other than those of an astronomical nature have been observed during routine astronomical studies, in spite of the large number of observing hours which have been devoted to the sky. . . .

The committee concluded that in the nineteen years since the first UFO was sighted there has been no evidence that unidentified flying objects are a threat to our national security. Having arrived at this conclusion, the committee then turned its attention to considering how the Air Force should handle the scientific aspects of the UFO problem. Unavoidably these are also related to Air Force public relations, a subject on which the committee is not expert. . . .

It is the opinion of the committee that the present Air Force program dealing with UFO sightings has been well organized, although the resources assigned to it (only one officer, a sergeant, and secretary) have been quite limited. In nineteen years and more than 10,000 sightings recorded and classified, there appears to be no verified and fully satisfactory evidence of any case that is clearly outside the framework of presently known science and technology. Nevertheless, there is always the possibility that analysis of new sightings may provide some additions to scientific knowledge of value to the Air Force. Moreover, some of the case records which the committee looked at that were listed as 'identified' were sightings where the evidence collected was too meager or too indefinite to permit positive listing in the identified category. Because of this the committee recommends that the present program be strengthened to provide opportunity for scientific investigation of selected sightings in more detail and depth than has been possible to date.

Thus, after declaring particular heed to the work of the Robertson panel, the 1966 committee edged toward the sort of recommendations Captain Ruppelt said had been made by the Robertson panel. A simple coincidence? Or did the original Robertson minutes tell the 1966 committee something that CIA for some reason preferred to delete from the version released to SR?

The question (which, it should be emphasized, is a question only because of the CIA editing) grows more insistent as the 1966 committee recommendations, summarized in SR last month and reproduced in their entirety immediately below, are detailed:

A. Contracts be negotiated with a few selected universities to provide scientific teams to investigate promptly and in depth certain selected sightings of UFOs. Each team should include at least one psychologist, preferably one interested in clinical psychology, and at least one physical scientist, preferably an astronomer or geophysicist familiar with atmospheric physics. The universities should be chosen to provide good geographical distribution, and should be within convenient distance of a base of the Air Force Systems Command (AFSC).

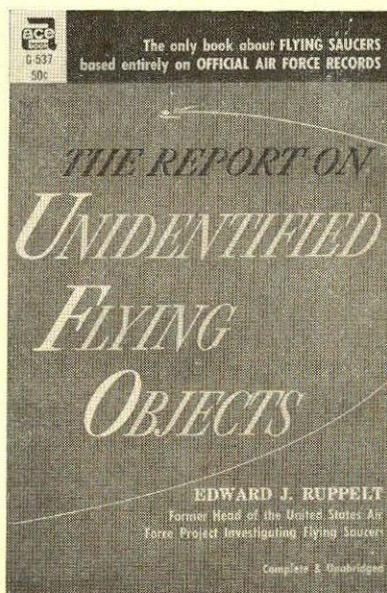
B. At each AFSC base an officer skilled in investigation (but not necessarily with scientific training) should be designated to work with the corresponding university team for that geographical section. The local representative of the Air Force Office of Special

Investigations (OSI) might be a logical choice for this.

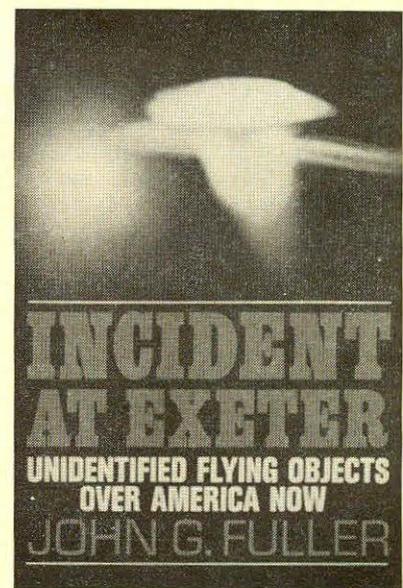
C. One university or one not-for-profit organization should be selected to coordinate the work of the teams mentioned under A above, and also to make certain of very close communication and coordination with the office of Project Blue Book.

It is thought that perhaps 100 sightings a year might be subjected to this close study, and that possibly an average of ten man days might be required per sighting so studied. The information provided by such a program might bring to light new facts of scientific value, and would almost certainly provide a far better basis than we have today for decision on a long-term UFO program.

**T**HE confusing consequences of CIA's editing job are most obvious in the concluding paragraphs of the 1966 committee report, which loudly echo Captain Ruppelt's words. The 1966 committee urged that scientific reports on the UFO sightings selected for intensive study by the independent university teams be printed in full and made available on request, that suitable abstracts or condensed versions of these reports be included in or printed as supplements to the published reports of Project Blue Book, and that the reports of Project Blue Book then "be given wide unsolicited circulation among prominent members of the Congress and other pub-



—Ace Books, Inc.



—G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Two books written by laymen ten years apart argue from UFO sightings that possibility of extraterrestrial visitations is credible.



lic persons as a further aid to public understanding of the scientific approach being taken by the Air Force in attacking the UFO problem."

The public reassurance aspect of the AFSAB 1966 *ad hoc* committee report is well understood within the academic community, so much so that many competent scientists at first-class universities are reluctant to join in the proposed intensification of UFO research. "It isn't science," these men complain. "What is going to happen to our reputations if we take part in it just to show people that the Air Force isn't holding out on them?" To get around this formidable obstacle, officers attached to the Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Research and Development have solicited testimonial letters from such august institutions as the National Academy of Sciences confirming the importance of adequate understanding of UFOs as a matter of public policy.

It had been hoped that by September 1, 1966, some school of significant stature would have accepted responsibility for guiding the UFO hunt and choosing perhaps five other schools to share the burden. As of this writing, negotiations have been begun with a prospective leader, but announcement of the outcome may now be delayed until October.

The UFO team at the bellwether school will, by Air Force stipulation, include no scientist who has publicly expressed an opinion about UFOs, one way or another. But the lead-school's

choice of cooperating schools will be unrestricted; even the wildest UFO enthusiast may belong to the hunting party if his scientific peers consider him professionally competent.

Under Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara's rule that participants in military contracts must share costs of administering the contracts, whichever schools take part in the UFO research will pay expenses involved in answering questions from the public about UFOs. If the experience of SR's science editor following his UFO report of last month is an acceptable criterion, the answering system will have to be endowed with incredible patience. For some UFO *aficionados* write a dozen letters on the same subject when one would suffice. Others insist that no finding about a UFO is unbiased if it does not consider all possibilities including "inconceivable" ones. Others demand that the UFO hunt encompass investigation of undescribed means whereby flying saucers can plunge straight down through the atmosphere without making a sound, go underwater and follow a river system submerged, and finally rise into the sky again like a Polaris missile—all without detection. Other UFO believers object to application of such earthly limitations as the law of gravity. Others categorically reject any statement whatever that is made by the Air Force—unless it can be turned against the Air Force. Even if all claims of UFO sightings are passed unchallenged (as was done in last month's report in SR), there are many who will persist in the view that absence of doubt about observers' veracity is not enough; these people hold that such qualifying questions as "What was seen?" amount to a confession of the questioner's subservience to "the Establishment."

Probably the most difficult hurdle the UFO research teams at the universities will have to clear is the presence of other independent UFO hunters, already entrenched in groups like the National Investigating Committee for Aerial Phenomena (NICAP) and the Aerial Phenomena Research Organization (APRO). The two are equally aggressive, with NICAP perhaps the more influential. The pronouncements of both are accepted as gospel by their members in contradiction to the most thoroughly documented Air Force observations.

In the Socorro, New Mexico, sighting of a UFO in 1964 by policeman Lonnie Zamora, for example, NICAP and APRO members are convinced that Zamora witnessed brush burning in the gully where he said he saw a white, egg-shaped vehicle take off and zoom above the ground in a low trajectory. Yet Za-

mora's immediate superior on the Socorro police force, Sergeant Chavez, told FBI and Air Force investigators that he (the Sergeant) arrived in the gully in response to a radio call from Zamora three minutes after the egg-shaped object (which only Zamora saw) had disappeared; at that time, Chavez said, the burned vegetation in the gully was cold to the touch.

**I**NSTEAD of being content with an Air Force confirmation that examination of the Socorro site revealed four depressions in the ground where Zamora said the UFO had stood (this being the closest anyone has ever come to finding so tangible a thing as a UFO "imprint"), NICAP and APRO members deride the Air Force for refusing to identify as a spaceship whatever Zamora saw.

Copies of several different Air Force reports on the Socorro episode are in SR's possession. None of them casts doubt on policeman Zamora's story. One of them says "Zamora . . . is basically sincere, honest, and reliable. He would not be capable of contriving a complex hoax, nor would his temperament indicate that he would have the slightest interest in such. . . . His fright was genuine, and his feeling that he had seen something truly unusual is attested by the fact that he asked whether he should speak to the priest first before saying anything about it. Any question of hallucination seems clearly out. He is a non-drinking man. . . . I conclude, therefore, that Zamora saw a tangible, physical object, under good daylight illumination, and from fairly close range (at the closest, almost as little as 100 feet). It appears essential that we discover what the physical object actually was . . . [and] consider this one of the major UFO sightings in the history of the Air Force's consideration of this subject. . . . It will require, very possibly, the attention of the Secretary of the Air Force himself."

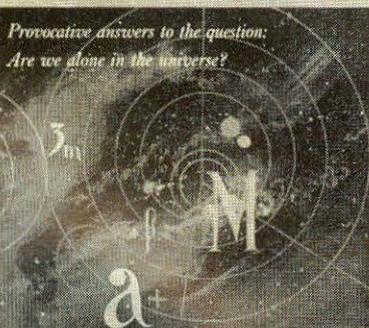
Certainly such phrasing is not the stuff of which conspiracies to silence discussion are hatched. Nor is any Air Force attempt to suppress scientific data likely to succeed without the help of the Air Force Cambridge Research Center in Massachusetts. Therefore, the following letter, critical of the interpretation given to a photograph published in illustration of last month's UFO report in this magazine, has a special meaning:

As SCIENTISTS involved in obtaining the radar-scope photograph which was used in your report "What are the Unidentified Aerial Objects?" [SR Aug. 6, p. 49], we must take strong exception to your interpretation of the

## Intelligence in the Universe

Roger A. MacGowan / Frederick I. Ordway, III

Illustrations by Arthur C. Clarke



—Prentice-Hall.

New book written by scientists downgrades "flying saucer opera."



data. You attribute the undulations which appeared on the radar-scope photograph as "... birds riding thermal currents in the air ..." and "... reflecting light in curious designs ..." and you speculate further that the undulations may somehow create the illusion of a UFO. Such is not the case. These undulations are not reflections from any type of particulate matter such as clouds, insects, or birds as stated in the report. Instead these echoes are due to scattering of the radar energy from fluctuations in temperature and moisture (or, to be precise, refractive index) which are occurring in the visually clear atmosphere. The echoes arise because of the special relationship between the radar wavelength and the size of the turbulent eddies within the atmosphere. A similar relationship does not exist for visible light, and therefore the patterns which appear in the radar-scope photograph could never be observed visually or reported as a UFO.

KENNETH R. HARDY,  
KENNETH M. GLOVER,  
Meteorology Laboratory,  
Air Force Cambridge  
Research Center.

Why was the picture caption misleading? For the same reason that has brought on much of the criticism the Air Force has suffered in connection with UFOs—poor communication and snap judgments under hurried circumstances. SR's science editor wrote the caption from information provided by an Air Force officer who gave him the picture. Ordinarily, that officer is a reliable informant. In this instance, however, to accommodate a press deadline, he spoke from memory, and the checking process he usually relies on did not operate. Similar inconsistencies have been normal to Air Force investigation of UFOs because the investigating process has ultimately depended on individual capabilities and temperaments of air base officers assigned on an individual basis by the base commanders with no central criteria for guidance. Standard criteria are now being established to smooth the performance, and new regulations, written with reassurance of the public in mind, had reached the last processing stage prior to printing as this issue of SR went to press.

Since the 1966 *ad hoc* committee of the Air Force Scientific Advisory Board was exceedingly explicit in urging avoidance of any appearance of censorship on UFOs, it seems reasonable to suggest an official CIA acknowledgment that CIA's decision to edit the minutes of the Robertson panel's deliberations in 1953 was a mistake in judgment and that the unexpurgated original text of the minutes would now be open to immediate public inspection. Such an act would forestall argument over an obvious parallel. According to the edited minutes of the 1953 panel meeting, the eminent scientists who sat on that panel believed a disciplined approach could dispose of the UFO mystery within eighteen months to two years. The \$300,000 Air Force appropriation set aside for the 1966 independent university scientific study of UFOs is designed to last for eighteen months; supplementary monies will be available for another year if that much time is necessary to dissipate talk of interstellar invasion.

—JOHN LEAR,  
Science Editor.

## LETTERS TO THE SCIENCE EDITOR

### Ufoof

MARVELOUS INDEED is the power of modern science! If the opening paragraph of your fascinating article, "What Are the Unidentified Aerial Objects?" [SR, Aug. 6], is to be believed, science has accomplished what even the Ecumenical Movement could not: the canonization of a Protestant king! Page 41 says quite plainly, "The St. James translation of Ezekiel's words runs as follows. . . ." What follows is from the version of the *Bible* authorized by King James I in 1611.

S. BUTLER GRIMES.

Baltimore, Md.

IN REFERENCE TO your article on unidentified aerial objects, there is an incomprehensible error, especially for a man of learning, since no such thing as the "St. James" version of the *Bible* exists. The *Bible* contains the names of three James boys: James the son of Alphaeus, James the son of Zebedee, and James the son of Joseph, or the brother of Jesus, one of whom wrote a chapter, called a book, in the *New Testament*, but none of whom prepared a version of the English *Bible*. James V, King of Scotland, who became James I, King of England, etc., commissioned the translation of the *Bible* in 1610, which job was completed in 1611, and it became the version authorized to be read in the Anglican church. The British Crown still owns the copyright on it, and the roy-

alties comprise a tidy sum. However noble James I may have been, he was hardly a saint.

For the good of the magazine, I think you will want to print a suitable correction—if for nothing else, to spare the preachers another opportunity to make a malicious jab at science.

OTIS D. DUNCAN,  
Emeritus Professor of Sociology,  
Oklahoma State University,  
Stillwater, Okla.

ACCORDING TO my random number table, this is the 156th letter notifying you of the unidentified *Bible* translation cited by you in the second sentence of your August 6 article, "What Are the Unidentified Aerial Objects?"

King James I was no saint.

A science editor can be forgiven the slip. Not so, SR's proofreaders—nor SR itself.

This slip does not, of course, make Ezekiel's UFO report any less credible than those now current.

FRANK V. PAGE.  
Fairview Park, O.

I ENJOYED John Lear's "What Are The Unidentified Aerial Objects?", but the first part left me with a question concerning the Ezekiel references. These references, with the comments attributed to Mr. Jacques Vallee in the *Anatomy of a Phenomenon*, had a familiar sound. I refer to Mr. Lear's statement:

"Vallee . . . quoted from . . . modern 'books dealing with unidentified flying objects' which find some of Ezekiel's expres-

sions 'similar to those commonly used by witnesses of modern sightings of UFOs.'"

Because of the familiar sound, I searched until I found an article, "The Four Faced Visitors of Ezekiel," by Arthur W. Orton in *Analog Science Fact & Fiction* (March 1961, pp. 99-115). Mr. Orton said of the first chapter of Ezekiel:

"I am convinced that this chapter is the account of an actual happening; the landing of extraterrestrial beings, reported by a careful, truthful, and self-possessed observer."

He then interpreted Ezekiel in such a way as to demonstrate his thesis.

Was Orton's article one of the "books" Vallee quoted from?

FRANKLIN BRAINARD.  
New Brighton, Minn.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Jacques Vallee's footnotes attribute his Ezekiel quotations to "Doménica del Corriere" (May 27, 1962), and "Australian Flying Saucer Review No. 7" (November, 1962).

I FIND IT difficult to determine whether John Lear in "What Are the Unidentified Aerial Objects?" is a man of little faith or of great. On the one hand, he lacks certain knowledge about the sacred literature ("the St. James translation"); on the other, he is able to move a mountain ("Mount Rainier in the Rockies").

RALPH R. SUNDQUIST, JR.  
Hartford, Conn.

LATEST REPORTS SUGGEST that UFOs "cavorting in the sky around Mount Rainier in the Rockies" have moved the mountain

500 miles west, depositing it in the Cascade range southeast of Tacoma where it was recently observed by radar and by at least one visual sighting on a rare clear day.

DAVE CALHOUN,  
BOB STRONG.

Manson, Wash.

THE MOUNTAIN (local appellation) Rainier, whose Indian name, Tahoma (the mountain that was God), is visible from my front door. I assure you it is not in the Rockies but in the Cascade Range of Washington State, some 500 miles west of the Rockies. The Cascade Range starts at the Canadian border, with a width of 100 miles, narrows to approximately fifty miles, in the center to accommodate Puget Sound, and widens out again at the Oregon border to approximately 100 miles again. The Range proceeds south through Oregon to California, where it takes the name of the Sierra Nevada. Within the hourglass mid-section sits Rainier, 14,410 feet high, tallest peak in Washington State.

VIRGINIA MAKELA.

Tacoma, Wash.

WHEN IT COMES to UFOs, I'm afraid you're about as "scientific" as Walter Cronkite. If you can reread your August 6 article and not be as appalled as I was at your outrageous substitutes for inductive logic, then there is a lot more editor in you than scientist. The NICAP photo "looks like a straw hat." *That is scientific analysis of evidence?* And your attitude towards the Air Force reminds me of the Warren Commission investigating the FBI by means of the FBI.

B. W. BROWNE.

Tujunga, Calif.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The NICAP representative who sent the supposed UFO photo to SR's science editor volunteered the suggestion that the shape of the pictured object resembled the shape of a straw hat. So far as the Warren Commission is concerned: Its assignment was to investigate the death of the late President John F. Kennedy, who was guarded by the Secret Service, a branch of the U.S. Treasury.*

THE UFO shown in the photograph [SR, Aug. 6, page 48] appears to be kicking up a cloud of dust. How could Rex Hellin create a cloud of dust while snapping the UFO from his vehicle?

KENNETH LARSON.

Los Angeles, Calif.

CARL SAGAN's article, "The Saucerian Cult" [SR, Aug. 6], briefly discussed the psychological impact of UFOs. For a fuller study—sociological as well as psychological—of a cult based on flying saucers, may I recommend *When Prophecy Fails*, by Festinger, Riecken, and Schachter? The book is available in paperback (Harper Torchbooks, TB 1132). The price is \$1.60—and well worth it, for the book is a fascinating report on a modern Messianic cult. (The study was made on the spot by a group of researchers who actually joined the movement.)

MARTIN CROSS.

New York, N.Y.

YOUR FASCINATING presentation of UFOs leaves one question: Are the astronomers who cannot see UFOs the same ones who could see canals on Mars?

MARGARET HALSEY.

Philadelphia, Pa.

THANKS for an objective investigation of the UFO controversy. The subject so lends itself to use by persons of bad repute that it has acquired the aura of the ludicrous. The tendency to discredit all reports without attention to the reliability of the source is certainly an ignorant attitude. I was pleased to see SR approach the subject with an open mind.

DAVID MARCELLO.

Thibodaux, La.

### Medical Ethics (continued)

I READ with great interest the series entitled "Experiments on Humans—The Growing Debate" [SR, July 2], and want to express my thanks to you on this thought-provoking series. I feel that you have performed a valuable public service in keeping this issue before your audience. I particularly found it valuable, for I, as a medical student, have been troubled by the issue. Not a month goes by that I do not find something in the medical journals to make me question the ethical wisdom of my superiors. The debate that is now going on and the one to which you have contributed significantly is assisting me in preparing for the time when I shall take on the responsibilities of a physician.

CARL H. SLATER.

Denver, Colo.

CONCERNING experiments on people [SR, Oct. 6, 1962; Feb. 5, 1966; July 2, 1966], I believe some reference to a study concerning disclosure to patients now being conducted by the University of Pittsburgh Health Law Center and its possible implications for experimental procedures may be of interest.

We are attempting to determine whether there is an objective standard for disclosure of information to patients concerning the

nature of contemplated procedures, and the risks and consequences of the procedures, prior to obtaining consent. A consent form has been devised for use in the study to provide proof of the disclosures made. The form also serves as a checklist so that the elements of information necessary to make the patient's consent meaningful are covered in the surgeon-patient discussion.

I believe that there is, at present, an objective standard for disclosure, but that the process of informing patients has been viewed by most people as one based on subjective determinations by the physicians only. In a sense, we are attempting to find a format for the disclosure process and see whether most surgeons provide the same items of information when a specific surgical procedure is discussed with patients. If there is consistency in the information provided by most surgeons, then a standard against which a particular physician's disclosure can be measured exists. (I would hasten to add that where good medical practice requires deviation from the standard, the need should be documented to allay any question of the surgeon's good faith in deciding to deviate from the standard disclosure practice.)

The facets of the experimental undertaking that make recognition or establishment of an objective standard more difficult are that the risks and consequences of an experimental procedure or agent may not be as well-documented or as clear as those associated with long-accepted, therapeutic procedures and agents, and that in some instances the experimental design, by its very nature, precludes providing information that some may feel must be disclosed to the subject. If a recognized authority took Dr. Henry Beecher's fifty studies and tentatively formulated the disclosure he believes would have been appropriate for the studies, and then received the views of other qualified persons concerning these disclosures, and some consensus were achieved concerning the minimum disclosure that should have been made, a body of precedent for disclosure that could be referred to when new experiments were being planned would then exist. Hopefully, this



"What I like about golf is you can get something to drink at the ninth hole."