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## UFO UpDates Mailing List

### Summary of 12/17/66 Hynek Post Article

From: Jerry Cohen <[rjcohen@li.net](mailto:rjcohen@li.net)>  
Date: Mon, 14 Dec 1998 21:57:31 -0400  
Fwd Date: Tue, 15 Dec 1998 14:19:22 -0500  
Subject: Summary of 12/17/66 Hynek Post Article

The 12/17/66 Hynek Saturday Evening Post article is a paper Dr. J. Allen Hynek wrote summing his approximately 18 years tenure (at that point) as civilian scientific consultant to the Air Force concerning UFOs. It was written with hope for the newly formed Colorado (Condon) Study, which I believe began in October of that year.

Most of the points Hynek makes therein are summarized below:

- 1) He agrees with the Air Force for the most part but there were cases he could not solve.
- 2) The quality of the witnesses was high.
- 3) He is hopeful concerning the new Air Force study. (J.C. i.e. The Colorado [Condon] Study)
- 4) Nearly all his scientific colleagues have scoffed at the reports of UFOs.
- 5) The question of UFOs has developed into a battle of faiths. Something of this importance should be decided scientifically.
- 6) The Air Force made up its own mind about each case and did not always take his recommendations.
- 7) The Air Force had a tendency to upgrade its cases from "possible aircraft" to "probable aircraft" (without proper scientific review, he felt)
- 8) "The Air Force has never really devoted enough money or attention to the problem of UFO's to get to the bottom of the puzzling cases."
- 9) Blue Book was headed by a captain and consisted of two officers and a sergeant. Its value to the Air Force is plainly demonstrated by observing the low ranks of its assigned officers and observing their place in the Air Force's organizational hierarchy.
- 10) In 1952 Hynek wrote a paper saying that UFOs deserved more study.
- 11) His paper spurred the formation of the Robertson Panel in 1953.
- 12) The panel studied 15 cases out of several hundreds and

made its decision in a very short period of time.

- 13) Hynek was only an observer at the hearings, but if he had been asked to sign the results of the panel decision, he would have refused.
- 14) Hynek mentions APRO and NICAP as vigilante groups formed in response to the Air Force's lack of in-depth study. "These groups were often the recipients of intriguing reports that never came to the official attention of Project Blue Book."
- 15) Hynek gradually began to accumulate cases "...that I really couldn't explain, cases reported by reliable, sincere people whom I often interviewed in person."
- 16) He found "...that the persons making these reports were often not acquainted with UFO's before their experience, which baffled and thoroughly frightened them."
- 17) They were often reluctant to report their sightings.
- 18) In the public eye he was becoming known as a debunker yet privately he was becoming concerned about good reports from reputable people.
- 19) \*\*\* "I feel it is my responsibility to point out that enough puzzling sightings have been reported by intelligent and often technically competent people to warrant closer attention than Project Blue Book can possibly encompass at the present time." \*\*\*
- 20) Hynek explains, in detail, what happened with the "Swamp Gas" Michigan case. (and shows us how the Condon Study came into being.)
- 21) He gives 4 possible explanations for UFOs.
  - a. Nonsense, Hoaxes, Hallucinations? Enough evidence has accumulated to prove they are not all utter nonsense, the result of hoaxes or hallucinations
  - b. military weapons? They are usually tested in very limited geographical areas. Why would anyone test them in scores of nations? You couldn't prevent a security leak.
  - c. Outer space? He agrees with the Air Force but feels we should keep an open mind. If other beings have a greater life span than humans, travel these vast distances might be possible.
  - d. Some kind of natural phenomenon we have yet to understand? This is another reason for studying this more carefully.
- 21) Hynek wanted to computerize the reports from all over the world.
- 22) Hynek wanted "good" photographs of UFOs
- 23) He concludes by saying he doesn't think the Pentagon thinks they are anything novel, and it still doesn't. (J.C. This was his view in December 1966)

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However, his opinion changed after that as will be seen in several upcoming postings. Next, I'll present the complete text of the above 1966 Saturday Evening Post article which will also include links to events that occurred later on.

Respectfully,  
Jerry Cohen

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