

and cons of the UFO project. The memo read in part:

The trick would be, I think, to describe the project so that, to the public, it would appear a totally objective study but, to the scientific community, would present the image of a group of nonbelievers trying their best to be objective but having an almost zero expectation of finding a saucer.

Needless to say, Low obviously was not thinking public relations when he wrote his memo. The above passage can be interpreted to mean that the University of Colorado, in Low's opinion, should run a study based on hypocrisy with a predetermined result. That was exactly how the memo was interpreted by *Look* in a 14 May 1968 article by John G. Fuller entitled, "Flying Saucer Fiasco." Fuller had obtained a copy of Low's memo from a couple of disillusioned Condon Committee staff members who had stolen it from Low's personal files. The *Look* article caused a minor flap on the Pentagon's "E" Ring, complete with frantic phone calls between Secretary Brown and Condon. The result, according to the David Shea dissertation, was a statement by Low claiming that "the Suggestion that I was engaged, along with Deans Archer and Manning, in a plot to produce a negative result is the most outrageous, ridiculous and absurd thing I ever heard of." Low said that his "concern in writing the memo was the University of Colorado and its standing in the university world..." Low was concerned with the "attitudes that the scientific community would have toward the University if it undertook the study." He said that the memo had "nothing to do with my own personal outlook on the UFO question."

Secretary Brown then appointed a task force, chaired by then Air Force General Counsel John Steadman and including Maj. Gen. William Garland, Director of Information, to keep a close eye on the project.

Condon's investigative phase ended on 1 June 1968, and the task of preparing a final report started. In December 1968, the voluminous 1465-page report was finally finished. To achieve the ultimate air of impartiality, the Air Force delegated its decision on the report's technical acceptability to the National Academy of Science (NAS). On 8 January 1969 the NAS panel, chaired by Yale University's Gerald M. Clemence, gave its official blessing to the Condon report and the Air Force almost tripped over itself in glee as it released the report to the public the next day.

Condon made it relatively easy for the press. The "meat" of his report is contained in Section I, "Conclusions and

Recommendations," and Section II, "Summary of the Study"—69 pages out of 1465.

At the risk of oversimplifying, these are Condon's main points:

There is no scientific or military justification for further study of UFOs.

There is no reason to disagree with official findings that "the whole class of UFO reports so far considered" pose no threat to the national security.

There is no evidence of secrecy concerning UFO reports. (Condon based this conclusion on the relatively open UFO information policy in effect during the course of his study. The early Air Force-UFO history, as has been shown, is another matter.)

The continuance of Project BLUE BOOK is of dubious value.

No direct evidence of a convincing nature now exists for the claim that any UFO represents spacecraft visiting Earth from another civilization.

This was surely the "kiss of death" to any further investigation in the name of the quest for knowledge. However, if one reads further one finds within the bowels of the report a remaining mystery: the Condon group had been unable to furnish adequate explanations for more than a quarter of the cases examined.

The Condon study was roundly criticized in the scientific world, even before it was finished. Dr. Hynek remarks in his book that "the report covered little that was new" and was a "loose compilation of partially related subjects, each by a different author." Hynek said that the report gave almost "as good an argument for the study of the UFO phenomenon as could have been made in a short time, and by a group of specialists in their individual disciplines having no prior knowledge of the subject."

One of the severest critics of the Condon report is Dr. David R. Saunders, whose book *UFOs? Yes!* constitutes as thorough a rebuttal to the conclusions of the Colorado study as one could imagine. A former member of the Manhattan Project, Saunders earned his undergraduate degree in chemistry and physics from Harvard and followed with a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Illinois. His national reputation in the field of psychology led to his designation as Co-Principal Investigator of the Condon study and was its "number two" scientist until he awoke one morning without a job, branded by Condon as an incompetent.

Things had begun smoothly enough; Saunders' approach was to gather all available data and put it into machine-readable form so that electronic computers could be used in data analysis.

Saunders had begun to "computerize" the data available, and at the time of his firing from the project he had several thousand cases on magnetic tape. (Hynek estimates that there were about 25,000 different sightings in Air Force, APRO, and NICAP files at that time). No one questioned the value of this, and Saunders was proceeding smoothly when he got crosswise with Condon over the hypotheses to be tested against the computerized data. Saunders espoused that the "extraterrestrial intelligence" hypothesis was the most logical one to explore. Condon insisted that to go along with popular opinion and seriously consider space visitors was an "unscientific" approach and dismissed Saunders, publicly labeling him a "nut." Needless to say, in his book about the Colorado study, Saunders takes the study and Condon to task most vigorously.

Even to the casual observer, it is hard to accept the sweeping title of the Condon report: *Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects*. Several additional members of the Colorado study have spoken out against the conclusions framed by Condon in the two-chapter summary he alone prepared. But the Air Force had its study. It had cost a half million dollars, but to many it was worth it just to get the one sentence on page two: "Careful consideration of the record, as it is available to us, leads us to conclude that further extensive study of UFOs probably cannot be justified in the expectation that science will be advanced thereby."

BLUE BOOK is Closed

Quickly grasping the opportunity to escape from the UFO morass, the Air Force wasted little time in closing down BLUE BOOK. Maj. David J. Shea, the SAFOL representative, wrote in his book of a Pentagon meeting in early March 1969 where "from the moment the meeting opened, there was no doubt that Project BLUE BOOK was finished." Shea said there was much debate, however, "on such details as obtaining the Secretary and Chief of Staff's approval of the decision, and where to store Project BLUE BOOK's records and files." He said there was concern about what people should do when they observe a UFO. "After all," he said, "for more than 20 years, we had been conditioning the public to report a sighting to the nearest air base. If the Air Force was no longer interested, who was?"

The question regarding the final resting place for the more than 20 years of Air Force UFO records was resolved in favor of the Air Force Archives at Maxwell AFB. According to Shea, "The key was to find a