

HARRY S TRUMAN
INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI

August 5, 1970

Dear Mrs. Freeman:

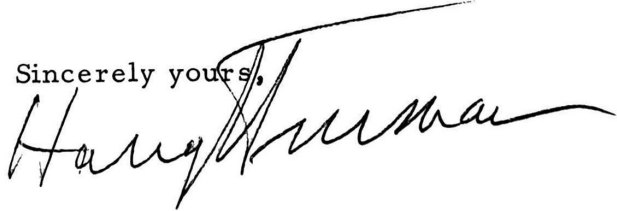
Thank you for your letter of July 24th, which I read with interest. Your thoughtfulness in writing and your kind and generous comments are most highly appreciated.

I regret that it will not be possible to arrange the appointment you desire. I am not keeping regular office hours at the library at the present time and I have no facilities for seeing visitors at my home. I know you will understand.

I hope you will have an opportunity to visit the library however. It is open to visitors every day of the week and you will always be welcome. A brochure is enclosed for your convenience.

With every good wish,

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Harry S. Truman". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "Harry S. Truman".

Mrs. Samuel Freeman
2603 Bonnie View Drive
Huntsville, Alabama 35810

4
AVERY
PV119

NATIONAL INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE

ON AERIAL PHENOMENA

WASHINGTON 6, D. C.

February 3, 1959

TELEPHONE: NORTH 7-9434

CABLE ADDRESS:
SKYLIGHT

MAJOR DONALD E. KEYHOE
USMC (RET.) DIRECTOR

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES:
1536 CONNECTICUT AVE., N. W.

The Honorable Harry S. Truman
Independence, Missouri



My dear Mr. Truman:

At the suggestion of several members of our Board of Governors I am writing to you in regard to the subject of unidentified flying objects.

We have been informed through Mr. Arthur H. Campbell of Kansas City that you expressed interest in this subject and in the work of our National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena.

I know that you are personally acquainted with Vice Admiral R. H. Hillenkoetter, USN (Ret.), who was formerly director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Admiral Hillenkoetter is one of our Board members. Others include Rear Admiral Herbert B. Knowles, USN (Ret.); Colonel R. B. Emerson, USAR; Major Dewey Fournet, USAFR, who was formerly the Pentagon monitor for the Air Force "flying Saucer" project; Mr. J. B. Hartranft, president of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association; Doctor Marcus Bach, State University of Iowa; and other distinguished Americans in various fields.

NICAP's membership includes persons from all 49 States; our members include Congressmen, Government officials, members of all the Armed Forces, airport tower operators, guided missiles trackers, scientists, and engineers, and men and women in almost every recognized profession and trade.

As opposed to the so-called crackpots who have invaded UFO investigation, often for personal gain or glorification, NICAP is a serious organization making a factual evaluation of verified evidence. One of our aims is to expose frauds; another is to convince the press and public that this is a serious problem despite the ridicule with which it is often treated -- ridicule in part caused by the official debunking policy, which is now used to obscure the concerned and intensive investigation of Air Force and other agencies.

A privately-supported fact-finding body serving the national public interest

We should greatly appreciate having your opinions on this subject, particularly as regarding official censorship and of course any assistance you could give us in presenting the facts to the public.

I did not mean to suggest that you should indicate any opinion or conclusion as to the reality of UFOs. Of course, we should be glad to have any statement you cared to make on that point.

But we should particularly value your ideas on the official policy of keeping the public in the dark about the facts. We know that millions of Americans would respect your views.

The censorship is established by Air Force Regulation 200-2, which prohibits all Air Force personnel from releasing or discussing UFO information and confines this to Air Force Headquarters. In turn, Air Force Headquarters refuses to release any detailed reports, making only general statements, and releasing statistics which our Committee has determined to be completely unfounded. The Joint Chiefs of Staff document JANAP 146 invokes the espionage laws regarding UFO reports made on official communication channels. The Commandant of the Coast Guard has informed us that the Coast Guard also is bound by JANAP 146. So is the Civil Aeronautics Administration. I have been informed personally by Armed Forces pilots, airline pilots, CAA airport tower and radar operators that they have been warned not to discuss the subject publicly.

The net effect of the official Air Force attitude (which I believe is dictated at a higher level) is to encourage ridicule by the press and our broadcasters, who are misled by official statements into believing all the UFO reports are nonsense.

To prove they are serious I am enclosing a sheet from one of our publications with a partial list of witnesses, including many trained observers. I am also enclosing a blue sheet with quotations by observers and others who are firmly convinced by UFO reality.

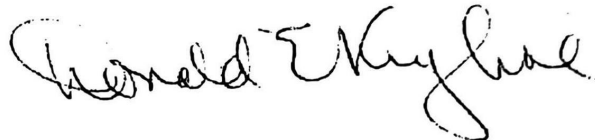
There is a mass of evidence supporting our claims as to UFO reality and official censorship, which I shall not burden you with now. But I should greatly welcome the opportunity to present any further information you may wish to have and answer any questions regarding UFOs and NICAP aims. As Admiral Hillenkoetter told me some time ago, the only way to break the secrecy is by means of open hearings on Capitol Hill. Acting for the Board, I have offered Senator Lyndon Johnson information proving UFO reality and official censorship. I understand that chairmen of other committees also are considering hearings, later on in the session.

We should greatly appreciate your advice as to approaching such Committees or individual Congressmen or Senators in order to present an honest picture not only to the Congress but to the American Public.

I realize you are extremely busy, but if you would care to glance at some of the official information contained in my book "Flying Saucers from Outer Space" and the later book "The Flying Saucer Conspiracy" I should be glad to send you copies with the official material marked.

With sincere thanks for your consideration of the questions involved, I remain

Respectfully yours,



DONALD E. KEYHOE, Major USMC (Ret.)
Director of NICAP

DEK:k

COPY

The People Who See "Flying Saucers"

As discussed elsewhere in this issue, Dr. James C. Bartlett, the noted Baltimore astronomer, has courageously revealed his series of dramatic UFO sightings.

Undoubtedly many UFO witnesses who have kept silent for fear of ridicule will be encouraged by Dr. Bartlett's stand and will now reveal hidden sightings.

NICAP has already noted a change in the general attitude. Hundreds of its members have agreed to have their names listed publicly. These include a steadily increasing number who have heretofore kept silent about sighting of Unidentified Flying Objects.

There are still some who feel that such publicity may seriously affect their business or private lives. Unfortunately, their fears are not without solid foundation. But the ridicule is decreasing, mainly because of the many reputable citizens who have come forward and added their reports to the mass of UFO evidence.

In the belief that it may encourage others who are debating such a step, we are listing some of the names of UFO witnesses who have "stood up and been counted." This is only a small percentage of those publicly reporting UFOs. All the names would fill many pages, if not this entire issue of the UFO INVESTIGATOR.

We also suggest that this list be used in presenting the UFO evidence to newcomers to the subject. It is an effective answer to persons who claim that all those who report flying saucers are hoaxers, publicity seekers or crackpots.

Capt. Jack Adams, pilot Chicago and Southern Airlines.

Capt. Richard Adickes, pilot TWA (Trans World Airways).

Capt. Jack Adriance, pilot PAA (Pan American World Airways).

George Allen, navigator BOAC (British Overseas Aircraft Corporation).

Lt. E. J. Ambrose, U.S. Marine Corps.

G. W. Anderson, flight officer Chicago and Southern Airlines.

Capt. E. J. Arnold, pilot EAL (Eastern Airlines).

Kenneth Arnold, private pilot and businessman who coined "flying saucer" phrase.

James F. Bachmeier, former Navy pilot, pilot Mid Continent Airlines.

Capt. John Baldwin, pilot Conner Airlines.

Capt. Douglas Barker, Australian pilot.

Harry Barnes, traffic controller CAA (Civil Aeronautics Administration).

William Blackwell, chemical company employee.

Col. Donald J. Blakeslee, commanding officer Fighter Wing, U. S. Air Force.

Louis P. Bluver, chief observer GOC (Ground Observer Corps).

Dudley Bolger, private pilot.

Dean Bourland, engineer Boeing Aircraft.

Lee Boyd, first officer BOAC.

Lt. David C. Brigham, U.S. Air Force.

Capt. Kenneth G. Brosdal, pilot PAA.

Capt. W. M. Bruen, pilot National Airlines.

Capt. William Call, Jr., pilot EAL.

Capt. Paul Carpenter, pilot AA (American Airlines).

Capt. Richard Case, pilot AA.

Capt. Francois Cavasse, pilot Air France.

Capt. Dario Celis, Venezuelan airline pilot.

Capt. Clarence S. Chiles, EAL pilot.

Capt. Olf Christernsson, Swedish pilot.

Michel Clement, Air France co-pilot.

Pierre Closterman, French air ace.

Howard Cocklin, CAA tower operator.

Lt. H. G. Combs, U.S. Air Force.

James Copeland, CAA radar operator.

B. J. Cores, Venezuelan airline flight officer.

Robert Corshaw, sheriff's deputy, Ventura County, California.

Mrs. George Dittmar, high school teacher.

G. P. Drury, deputy regional director

Civil Aviation, New Guinea.

W. Dryland, New Zealand storekeeper.

Joseph Eaton, airport operator.

Capt. Giovanni Ercola, Brazilian airline pilot.

D. L. Falwasser and F. Ferrier, agricultural pilots, New Zealand.

Charles Fisher, civil engineer.

E. J. Fitzgerald, vice president metal equipment firm, Chicago.

G. Duncan Fletcher, vice president Kenya astronomical association.

Capt. Peter Fletcher, BOAC pilot.

Donald Freestone, PAA master mechanic.

Frank Garosl, GOC observer.

Florian Giabowski, police constable, Ontario, Canada.

Daniel Godfrey, BOAC flight engineer.

Lt. George F. Gorman, Air National Guard pilot, North Dakota.

Jack A. Green, ex-AF jet pilot; flight test analysis, Northrop Aviation.

J. C. Gregory, executive secretary of Winnebago County CD Council, Illinois.

M. Greze, former fighter pilot.

Capt. Victor Hancock, pilot Tennessee gas transmission company.

Reg Harrington, Cortland, New York businessman.

D. Hawke, ex-pilot WW2, New Zealand.

Capt. Walter W. Hawkins, TWA pilot.

Lt. Donald J. Hemer, USAF F-86 pilot.

Dr. Seymour Hess, astronomer Florida State University, President ALPO and editor "Strolling Astronomer."

Gloria Hinchaw, TWA DC-3 hostess.

Capt. Don Holland, U. S. Marine Corps jet pilot squadron commander.

A. Hollander, official of Israeli National Aviation Company.

Capt. James Howard, Royal Air Force veteran, BOAC pilot.

Dr. Craig Hunter, director medical supply company.

C. H. Jenkins, engineer Boeing Aircraft.

L. D. Jensen, traffic controller, Fargo.

T. S. Johnson, RAF pilot.

1st Lt. Roy L. Jones, B-29 pilot.

A. Kabli, physicist, Israel.

Dr. J. J. Kalizkewski, formerly chief engineer, General Mills; Navy cosmic ray project.

Capt. Charles J. Kratovil, TWA pilot.

Dr. Lincoln LaPaz, director New Mexico Institute of Meteoritics.

William Lear, Jr., president Lear, Inc. Winner 1950 Collier trophy.

R. L. Lemon, BOAC flight officer.

CPO Charles Lewis, U.S. Navy.

Clare Booth Luce, former Ambassador to Italy.

Ewart McDiarmid, RNZAF, WW2 pilot and businessman.

Dick McKendry, sheriff's deputy Ventura County, California.

Capt. Robert B. McLaughlin, U.S. Navy.

Capt. Robert Manning, TWA DC-3 pilot.

Nicholas Marlanos, businessman and ball club manager.

Don Martin, chemical company superintendent.

Lt. Col. Lee Merkel, pilot commander Kentucky National Guard.

Col. Frank Milani, director CD, Baltimore.

Guy Miller, pilot Tennessee gas transmission company.

S. N. Miller, manager jewelry store St. Paul, Minnesota.

R. Moon, New Zealand farmer.

Marty Morrow, United Airlines hostess.

Robert Mueller, PAA flight engineer.

Capt. Ned Muller, PAA pilot.

John Murphy, sheriff's deputy Ventura County, California.

Peter J. Naughton, sheriff Point Townsend, Washington.

CWO Delbert C. Newhouse, U. S. Navy photographer.

Jerry Noosnow, PAA flight engineer.

Robert O'Connor, GOC observer.

Tord Olsson, Swedish photographer.

Lt. William L. Patterson, U. S. Air Force jet pilot.

D. W. Paul, New Zealand businessman.

Saul Pett, Associated Press writer.

Capt. Casey S. Pierman, Capital Airlines.

Capt. W. T. Rainbow, New Zealand pilot.

Allen R. Roberts, GOC observer.

Continued on next page

FLYING SAUCERS, from p. 23

Jim Roddy, GOC and news reporter.
 Lt. Harry L. Roe, Jr., Ohio Air National Guard.
 Flight Lt. J. R. Salandín, Royal Air Force jet pilot.
 Capt. Francis Salomanzino, Ecuadorian Air Force pilot.
 Maj. Charles Scarborough, U. S. Marine Corps Reserve jet commander.
 Douglas Scott, BOAC radio officer.
 Don Sheehan, PAA flight engineer.
 Capt. D. Shrum, PAA pilot.
 Capt. E. J. Smith, United Airlines pilot.
 Maj. James B. Smith, U. S. Air Force F-86 pilot.
 Richard Smith, PAA flight engineer.
 C. H. Smythe, RAF pilot.
 Capt. Willis Sperry, American Airlines pilot.
 Capt. Charles Stanton, USMCR.
 Capt. Ralph Stevens, United Airlines pilot.
 William Stewart, BOAC flight engineer.
 First Lt. D. C. Swinley, USAF.
 First Officer Dion W. Taylor, PAA co-pilot.
 Dr. Clyde W. Tombaugh, astronomer and discoverer of planet Pluto.
 S. G. Trounce, First Officer New Zealand National Airlines.
 A. R. Tuckett, air traffic officer and pilot, New Zealand.
 Maj. E. J. van Nierkerk, radar instructor African Air Force.
 Capt. Matthew A. Van Winkle, RAF pilot.
 M. Veillot, control tower operator Le Bourget, France.
 Rev. Ross Vermillion, former B-29 pilot.
 Capt. Lawrence W. Vintner, Mid-Continent Airlines pilot.
 Adolph Wagner, deputy CB coordinator Baltimore, Maryland.
 Rodney Warrick, high school principal Marysville, Ohio.
 John Washuta, PAA flight engineer.
 Wells Alan Webb, chemist, author and physicist.
 Daphne Webster, BOAC stewardess.
 Maj. E. C. White, U. S. Marine Corps Reserve pilot.
 John B. Whitted, EAL flight officer.
 W. P. Whitworth, RAF wing commander.
 Dr. H. Percy Wilkins, noted British astronomer, world-famous lunar expert, President International Lunar Society.
 John Williams, CAA tower operator.
 Lt. R. R. Wilson, U. S. Air Force F-89 pilot.
 Capt. Robert Wyland, PAA pilot.
 Joseph Zacko, CAA radar operator.
 John Zimmerman, geologist.

C. L. Montesquieu in Persian Letters, 1721
 All scientific men were formerly accused of practicing magic. And no wonder, for each said to himself: "I have captured human intelligence as far as it will go, and yet So-and-So has gone further than I. Ergo, he has taken to sorcery."

No Official Press Censorship on UFOs, Says ESI President

The charge that there is an officially imposed press censorship on UFOs is a mistake, according to John DuBarry, the president of Civilian Space Intelligence, New York City, and formerly associate editor of TRUE Magazine. Such claims can retard serious UFO investigations. Mr. DuBarry told NICAP, in commenting on the recently improved press coverage.

NICAP agrees that there is no evidence of any official order to the press. In the past few years some Air Force public information officers have tried to persuade newsmen and editors not to print UFO stories. This policy has had a decided effect in reducing press coverage of saucer reports and in some cases it has caused a tongue-in-cheek treatment of the subject. But despite this, wire services and many newspapers have shown a more serious approach in recent months. We are therefore reprinting a former statement by Mr. DuBarry, with the hope that members will follow this veteran newsmen's advice, as summed up in the last paragraph.

UFO censorship is presumed to operate in two areas—in the government and in the press. Before considering its causes and effects, let's define the term. By censorship I assume we mean deliberate interference with or suppression of communication for reasons of policy. Such censorship has indeed taken place in the government, as Donald Keyhoe and Edward Ruppelt have showed us.

Though the policy here is still unclear—whether it's fear, stubborn disbelief, or simple bafflement, we don't know—there has been a more or less successful squelching of good UFO cases.

In the press, however, the situation is different. No central command exists, as in the government, that can compel silence. From experience on both newspaper and magazine staffs, I know that most publishers and editors would react against any attempt to shut them up about UFOs. I am sure that the government has not tried directly to do so.

A few publications, I don't doubt, have adopted a self-imposed censorship as a matter of policy. (They don't believe in saucers, or they don't want to encourage public concern about them.) Most publications just don't know what to think and consequently accept Air Force pronouncements. If they're silent, we can blame them for being negligent or glib, but not for being censored.

As a matter of fact, local newspapers report a fair number of UFO sightings, and news clippings are the mainstay of our UFO files.

Therefore, let's capitalize on this LACK of censorship in the press. If UFO investi-

THE UFO INVESTIGATOR

RETIRED ARMY GENERAL WARNS OF "SECOND RATE" AMERICA

The United States is dangerously close to becoming a second-rate power, according to Brig. Gen. Bonner Fellers, U. S. Army, Retired.

"The meaning of our drift into second place militarily—and that is precisely where we are drifting—is terrifying," General Fellers stated in the October 12 issue of HUMAN EVENTS. "The Soviet satellite, as it encircles the globe has founded our last warning. But there is yet time to prevent disaster if we act intelligently now."

General Fellers blamed inter-service rivalry rather than lack of funds for United States failure to lead in satellite operations. Though he denounced "hysterical spending" General Fellers called for a two billion dollar budget increase to accelerate our missile and space operations programs.

RADAR ABSORBING MATERIAL MAY CREATE SERIOUS PROBLEM

A short time ago a British firm, the Plessey Company, stated it had produced a new material which absorbs radar impulses so that no energy is reflected back to the receiver. It was claimed that this new material which radar cannot detect might provide new standards of navigational safety for aircraft and shipping by eliminating unwanted radar reflections.

If such a material has been produced it could eventually upset all present systems of radar detection of enemy aircraft and possibly missiles. Until more details are forthcoming from the company it is difficult to see how aircraft could be created entirely of nonreflective material.

However, the possibility of producing such material might possibly be a factor in explaining some peculiar UFO reports. There have been cases where objects were seen visually but radar was reported to have detected no solid object. Assuming that the radar reports were genuine, it is theoretically possible that certain types of UFOs—particularly small observation units—might be constructed of a material which would absorb rather than reflect radar impulses.

When further details are received from the Plessey company, they will be submitted to NICAP's advisors on radar for their conclusions.

igators and groups will take it as a major duty to give calm, reasoned, intelligent comments on observable phenomena in letters to editors, radio newscasters, etc. We'll get a hearing and we'll help to keep press channels open until conclusive proof is at hand.

NATIONAL INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE ON AERIAL PHENOMENA
A Non-Profit Organization

1536 Connecticut Avenue, Washington 6, D.C.

Published Statements On Unidentified Flying Objects

Sen. Barry Goldwater, a jet-flying AF Reserve Colonel: "Flying saucers -- unidentified flying objects -- or whatever you call them, are real."

William Lear, winner of Collier Aviation Trophy, President Lear, Inc. (Aircraft and electronics equipment) who has sighted a UFO: "I believe the flying saucers come from outer space, piloted by beings of superior intelligence."

Rear Adm. D.S. Fahrney, Ret., former Navy missile chief: "Reliable reports indicate there are objects coming into our atmosphere at very high speeds. The way they change position would indicate their motion is directed."

Clare Booth Luce, former Ambassador to Italy, who with many others sighted a UFO at Rome: "I did see an object; I don't know what it was."

Capt. W.B. Nash, Pan American Airways, who with his co-pilot saw eight huge discs maneuver below their airliner: "I believe they were controlled machines from outer space."

Maj. L.F. Baker, USAP, who with other AF witnesses saw six UFO's: "They were circular, shiny like spun aluminum. They changed course instantaneously."

Capt. Jas. Howard, British trans-Atlantic pilot, who with crew and 12 passengers saw a huge UFO and six small ones: "It must have been a space ship."

Hermann Oberth, noted rocket and space-travel authority: "I believe the flying saucers come from other worlds."

Capt. Robert Adickes, TWA pilot, who with crew and seven passengers saw a glowing UFO pace their airliner: "Before then, I wasn't convinced. Now I know they (flying saucers) do exist."

Dr. Clyde W. Tombaugh, discoverer of the planet Pluto, chief of the armed services search for natural satellites, who has sighted UFO's: "These things, which do appear to be directed, are unlike any other phenomena I ever observed. . . Other stars in our galaxy may have hundreds of thousands of inhabitable worlds. Races on these worlds may have been able to utilize the tremendous amounts of power required to bridge the space between the stars."

Flight Lt. J.R. Salandin, RAF, whose jet almost collided with a disc-shaped, turreted object: "It looked metallic. It was travelling at tremendous speed."

Dr. J.C. Bartlett, Jr., noted Baltimore astronomer who has sighted both disc-shaped and rocket-shaped UFO's: "It is not impossible they come from another planet."

Cdr. R.W. Peray, USNR, Ret., electronics engineer for the FCC: "I personally believe UFO's are spaceships from other, more advanced planets."

Dr. Carl G. Jung, famed psychologist, in writing NICAP Director Donald E. Keyhoe: "I am a NICAP subscriber. I am grateful for all the courageous things you have done in elucidating the thorny problem of UFO reality. I do not possess sufficient evidence which would enable me to draw definite

(Please turn to other side)

conclusions. The evidence available, however, is convincing enough to arouse a continuous and fervent interest. If it is true the AAF (American Air Force) withholds telltelling facts then one can only say this is the most unpsychological and stupid policy one could invent... The public ought to be told the truth."

Col. Frank Milani, Director, Baltimore Civil Defense, who has sighted UFO's: "It is a calculated risk to assume the so-called saucers do not constitute a threat to the welfare and security of our citizens. We are given to believe they are not hostile but information on UFO's is classified."

Capt. Richard Case, American Airlines, who with other pilots and thousands of citizens saw a large UFO over Indianapolis: "It was a controlled craft going three times faster than we were."

Albert M. Chop, former AF official handling UFO information: "One thing is absolutely certain. We're being watched by beings from outer space."

Rep. William H. Ayres, Ohio: "Congressional investigations are being held on the problem of UFO's. Most of the material is classified; hearings are never printed."

Statement by NICAP Board Members Vice Adm. R.H. Hillenkoetter, Ret., former Director, Central Intelligence Agency; Maj. Dewey Fournet, USAF Reserve, former Pentagon monitor of the UFO project; Rev. Albert Baller, Greenfield, Mass.; Frank Edwards, noted newscaster; Dr. Marcus Bach, Univ. of Iowa; Rear Adm. H.B. Knowles, ret.; Col. R.B. Emerson, US Army Reserve; and Prof. Charles A. Maney, DePauw University: "From evidence in NICAP's possession, it is clear the Air Force is still withholding information, including sighting reports, on UFO's."

Published Statements On The Question Of Other Worlds

Dr. Harlow Shapley, former Director, Harvard Observatory: "We must now accept it as inevitable -- there are other worlds with thinking beings."

Dr. Harold C. Urey, member, Mars Committee, former commissioner of the Atomic Energy Commission: "It is exceedingly probable there is other life in the universe more intelligent than ours."

Typical Witnesses In UFO Sightings

Col. D.J. Blakeslee, USAF Wing Commander; USAF pilots, Maj. J.B. Smith, Lieuts. D.J. Hemer, Roy L. Jones, D.C. Brigham, Wm. Patterson, D.A. Swimley, H.G. Combs; TWA Capts. W.W. Hawkins, Chas. Kratoch, Robt. Manning, Irving Kravitz; Eastern Airlines Capts. E.J. Arnold, C.S. Chiles, J.B. Whitted, Truman Gile, Jr.; American Airlines Capts. Paul Carpenter, Willis Sperry; Pan-American Capts. Jas. King, Jack Adriance; Capt. Casey Pierman, Capital Airlines; Capt. W.M. Bruen, National Airlines; United Airlines Capts. E.J. Smith, Ralph Stevens; Lt. Richard Spender, Navy pilot; Warrant Officer D.C. Newhouse, Naval Aviation photographer who filmed a UFO formation; Capt. R.B. McLaughlin, Navy missile expert; Lt. Donald Schaefer, Ensign Wayne Schotley, US Coast Guard; Capt. Dario Colla, Venezuelan airline.

The National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena collects, evaluates and presents reliable UFO evidence to Congress, and to NICAP members in all 49 States and most non-Communist countries. Membership, at \$5, includes alternating 4-page bulletins and an 8-page magazine (one a month) with latest sightings and important developments. Address: NICAP, 1536 Connecticut Avenue, Washington 6, D.C.



Written by the Users
Edited by the Readers

-Politics-

Date
2/28/01

Readers
11

C

UFOletters to the Presiden Began with Truman

by Larry W. Bryant

[AUTHOR's Note: A number of citizens concerned about the "UFO problem" when it surfaced in the forties chose to express their views to their own president — Harry S. Truman. You can visit SOME of that correspondence on file at the Truman Library in Independence, Mo. But if you're unable to get to the library, try the following compilation and analysis, which I originally posted some time ago upon the website of <http://www.ufocity.com>. (The essay's length requires multipart posting here.)]

Harry S. Truman's UFO Americana (By Larry W. Bryant)

If you can judge by the various letters written to him by citizens during his terms in office, President Harry S. Truman truly was "The People's President." And nowhere is this judgment more apropos than when you consider the letters sent his way by persons convinced that the subject of "flying saucers" deserved his direct, serious attention.

*It may have been
issue that is absent in
executive files*

The collected letters -- or at least that portion that somehow escaped referral to the Department of Defense for reply -- now reside at the Truman Library in Independence, Mo. There, they share the shelves with such missives as (1) citizens' requests that Truman lift the embargo on arms shipments to Palestine; (2) a women's group's telegram seeking a personal interview with Truman to discuss the status of proposed legislation aimed at setting up a U.S. Customs Border Patrol so as to improve the enforcement of antismuggling laws in relation to narcotics; and (3) parents' pleas that their sons be released from military prison so they can rejoin their families.

Amidst that potpourri of issues and concerns major and minor to a president who united the nation during wartime transition, what's so special about the correspondence on things that go swish in the night? For one thing, Truman might have been the only president ever to have received a formal briefing on the "UFO problem" from Air Force

intelligence experts -- if you can accept that revelation as voiced in a 1956 book by former USAF "Project Blue Book" chief Edward J. Ruppelt. For another thing, Truman resided in the White House during the famous UFO-sighting "flap" near Washington, D.C., back in 1952. Third, it was Truman who was instrumental in establishing the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, which to this day insists on denying public access to some 57 of the UFO-related documents that surfaced some years ago via litigation under the U.S. Freedom of Information Act.

Then there are the letters themselves -- a cross-section of views, concerns, suggestions, and explanations about a problem so touchy (and sometimes zany) that only a few citizens dared confide in their president. Lucky for them (and him), in retrospect, that this man Truman was so attuned to the American psyche that he was able to weather the growth of UFO interest with just the right mix of detachment and solicitude. (Maybe his approach has served ever since as the model for presidential response to the UFO problem.)

Although most of the letters wound up being referred to the Defense Department (Air Force) for direct reply to the writer, a few did remain in the White House files. Apparently, each of them underwent indexing upon arrival -- under the writer's name, address, and date. A White House staffer synopsised each letter in a cross-reference log. Here are some excerpts quoted from the log; for most entries, I've added a commentary from my perspective as an historian of the "politics of UFOlogy":

Pioneers Petition the President

Kenneth Arnold of Boise, Idaho (4/6/48): In a telegram, the man whose UFO encounter of June 24, 1947, sparked the coinage of "flying saucers" as a household word had this advice for Truman: "Your Honor, I understand there is enough evidence on hand by our intelligence and the people of your great country to announce that flying disks, flying saucers and other reported strange missiles that are being seen by reliable people throughout the world daily are aircraft from outer space. You know we are not making or flying these aircraft and the United States is the most scientific nation on earth. Why should not America be at least the first to announce this great discovery?"

Although the White House never acknowledged the telegram, Arnold felt obliged to communicate once more: on Dec. 13, 1951, he sent a copy of his booklet "The Flying Saucer as I Saw It." At the time of the telegram, he was 31 years old. He died in January 1984 -- never to see the resolution of a public issue that rages on throughout the world.

* * *

Meade Layne of San Diego, Calif. (4/7/50): Writing as the founding director of Borderland Sciences Research Associates, this True Believer in extraterrestrialism announces: "It is our earnest hope that, as a matter of public interest and policy, you will find time to examine the enclosed booklet. It is not necessary to point out to your Excellency that an extremely difficult situation may develop at any hour, in connection with the phenomena referred to in this booklet.

"Allow us to assure you that we serve no selfish interests in this matter, and stand ready to comply with any request for information or

service which may be in our power to give."

The 38-page booklet, which remains part of the Truman papers, is titled "Flying Discs -- The Ether Ship Mystery and Its Solution." This hodge-podge of metaphysical discussion and interpretation on the origin, purpose, and scope of the reported flying saucers ended up being referred to the National Academy of Sciences. On May 1, 1950, the Academy's executive secretary wrote back to Truman's secretary, stating that Layne's organization apparently deals with phenomena outside the field of the Academy, and suggesting that if Layne's communication "is to be given serious consideration it be referred to some philosophical organization." With that, Truman's secretary, then William D. Hassett, sent this reply to Layne: "Your interest in making available to him [Truman] the enclosures which accompanied your letter is very much appreciated and you may be sure they will be given careful attention."

Leon Davidson of Arlington, Va. (9/7/52): This tenacious, indefatigable prober-polemicist requested, as described by the correspondence log, "a list of the official statements or press releases made by the President, or the White House, on the subject of Flying Saucers since 1947. States if the statements are long, a mere reference to the date of issue would be sufficient." In later years, Davidson won fame for his persistence in prying loose from the Air Force a copy of its Project Blue Book Special Report No. 14, which he reprinted for wider distribution in a never-ending campaign to prove that most of the "saucers" were man-made, experimental devices. His persistence in going after CIA UFO documentation gave that agency heartburn long before its current headaches over the power of the Freedom of Information Act.

Robert Spencer Carr of Clearwater, Fla. (7/31/52): From the log: "Writer encloses miscellaneous material relative to 'flying saucers' -- suggestions for contact. Respectfully referred to the Department of the Air Force for appropriate handling."

It was Carr who, back in the early seventies, traveled the lecture circuit and radio talk-show route in a short-lived effort to convince the public that the government has all the information it needs about the saucers -- based on the USAF retrieval of crash-landed discs and some of their crew members. That contention thrives in some UFO-research circles today, of course.

[See next part for continuation.]



[Back](#)

[I want to comment](#)

[Bookmark in traffic room](#)

[Send to a friend](#)

Associate
Newsletter

JPT
3518 Martha Custis Drive
Alexandria, VA 22302
Home Ph: (703) 931-3341

Harry S. Truman's UFO Americana

By
Larry W. Bryant *

If you can judge by the various letters written to him by citizens during his terms in office, President Harry S. Truman truly was "The People's President." And nowhere is this judgment more apropos than when you consider the letters sent his way by persons convinced that the subject of "flying saucers" deserved his direct, serious attention.

The collected letters -- or at least that portion that somehow escaped referral to the Department of Defense for reply -- now reside at the Truman Library in Independence, Mo. There, they share the shelves with such missives as (1) citizens' requests that Truman lift the embargo on arms shipments to Palestine; (2) a women's group's telegram seeking a personal interview with Truman to discuss the status of proposed legislation aimed at setting up a U. S. Customs Border Patrol so as to improve the enforcement of antismuggling laws in relation to narcotics; and (3) parents' pleas that their sons be released from military prison so they can rejoin their families.

Amidst that potpourri of issues and concerns major and minor to a president who united the nation during wartime transition, what's so special about the correspondence on things that go swish in the night? For one thing, Truman might have been the only president ever to have received a formal briefing on the "UFO problem" from Air Force intelligence experts -- if you can accept that revelation as voiced in a 1956 book by former USAF "Project Blue Book" chief

Edward J. Ruppelt. For another thing, Truman resided in the White House during the famous UFO-sighting "flap" near Washington, D.C., back in 1952. Third, it was Truman who was instrumental in establishing the U. S. Central Intelligence Agency, which to this day insists on denying public access to some 57 of the UFO-related documents that surfaced a few years ago via litigation under the U. S. Freedom of Information Act.

Then there are the letters themselves -- a cross-section of views, concerns, suggestions, and explanations about a problem so touchy (and sometimes zany) that only a few citizens dared confide in their president. Lucky for them (and him), in retrospect, that this man Truman was so attuned to the American psyche that he was able to weather the growth of UFO interest with just the right mix of detachment and solicitude. (Maybe his approach has served ever since as the model for presidential response to the UFO problem.)

Although most of the letters wound up being referred to the Defense Department (Air Force) for direct reply to the writer, a few did remain in the White House files. Apparently, each of them underwent indexing upon arrival -- under the writer's name, address, and date. A White House staffer synopsized each letter in a cross-reference log. Here are some excerpts quoted from the log; for most entries, I've added a commentary from my perspective as an historian of the "politics of UFOlogy":

PIONEERS PETITION THE PRESIDENT

Kenneth Arnold of Boise, Idaho (4/6/48): In a telegram, the man whose UFO encounter of June 24, 1947, sparked the coinage of "flying saucer" as a household word had this advice for Truman: "Your Honor, I understand there is enough evidence on hand by our intelligence and the people of your great country to announce that

flying disks, flying saucers and other reported strange missiles that are being seen by reliable people throughout the world daily are aircraft from outer space. You know we are not making or flying these aircraft and the United States is the most scientific nation on earth. Why should not America be at least the first to announce this great discovery?"

Although the White House never acknowledged the telegram, Arnold felt obliged to communicate once more: on Dec. 13, 1951, he sent a copy of his booklet The Flying Saucer as I Saw It. At the time of the telegram, he was 31 years old. He died in January 1984 -- never to see the resolution of a public issue that rages on throughout the world.

* * *

Meade Layne of San Diego, Calif. (4/7/50): Writing as the founding director of Borderland Sciences Research Associates, this True Believer in extraterrestrialism announces: "It is our earnest hope that, as a matter of public interest and policy, you will find time to examine the enclosed booklet. It is not necessary to point out to your Excellency that an extremely difficult situation may develop at any hour, in connection with the phenomena referred to in this booklet.

"Allow us to assure you that we serve no selfish interests in this matter, and stand ready to comply with any request for information or service which may be in our power to give."

The 38-page booklet, which remains part of the Truman papers, is entitled Flying Discs - The Ether Ship Mystery and Its Solution. This hodge-podge of metaphysical discussion and interpretation on the origin, purpose, and scope of the reported flying saucers ended up being referred to the National Academy of Sciences. On May 1, 1950, the Academy's executive secretary wrote back to Truman's secretary, stating that Layne's organization apparently deals with phenomena outside the field

of the Academy, and suggesting that if Layne's communication "is to be given serious consideration it be referred to some philosophical organization." With that, Truman's secretary, then William D. Hassett, sent this reply to Layne: "Your interest in making available to him [Truman] the enclosures which accompanied your letter is very much appreciated and you may be sure they will be given careful attention."

* * *

Leon Davidson of Arlington, Va. (9/7/52): This tenacious, indefatigable prober-polemicist requested, as described by the correspondence log, "a list of the official statements or press releases made by the President, or the White House, on the subject of Flying Saucers since 1947. States if the statements are long, a mere reference to the date of issue would be sufficient." In later years, Davidson won fame for his persistence in prying loose from the Air Force a copy of its Project Blue Book Special Report No. 14, which he reprinted for wider distribution in a never-ending campaign to prove that most of the "saucers" were man-made, experimental devices. His persistence in going after CIA UFO documentation gave that agency heartburn long before its current headaches over the power of the Freedom of Information Act.

* * *

Robert Spencer Carr of Clearwater, Fla. (7/31/52): From the log: "Writer encloses miscellaneous material relative to 'flying saucers' -- suggestions for contact. Respectfully referred to the Department of the Air Force for appropriate handling."

It was Carr who, back in the early seventies, traveled the lecture circuit and radio talk-show route in a short-lived effort to convince the public that the government has all the information it needs about the saucers -- based on the USAF retrieval of crash-landed discs and some of their crew members. That

contention thrives in some UFO-research circles today -- and is expected to become a matter of renewed litigation this summer, as the public-interest group Citizens Against UFO Secrecy pursues FOIA release of the official records that pertain to the retrieved discs.

THE ROOTS OF OFFICIAL UFO SECRECY

Carr's fixation with retrieved saucers might have got its impetus from the notorious 1950 book by Hollywood columnist Frank Scully, Behind the Flying Saucers, which was cited by a man in New Orleans (11/19/51). From the log: "Requests President's comment re this. Threatens to publicize his letter if he does not receive an answer. Critical of the Pentagon. (Consideration and appropriate handling.)"

* * *

Then there's a fellow from Cleveland (8/9/52): "The writer relates a personal experience which happened in October, 1947, near Reno, Nevada, at which time he saw a formation of shining globular objects from which something, perhaps a parachutist, catapulted to the earth. He disapproves the theory of interterrestrial [sic.] bodies and advances his theory that the source of these objects is Eurasia and suggests that they are being used as a means of enemy infiltration. Whatever the source, the writer feels that as full a disclosure as possible should be made by official Washington since these saucers may present a serious military threat about which the American public deserves to know."

* * *

Someone (gender unknown) from Waurika, Okla. (8/26/52), enclosed clippings: "One article [was] by a Navy officer who said he knew the location of a saucer but was not permitted to tell where it is as the United States and Mexico hid it. Also refers to article about a man in Florida who claims his hair was singed by a flying saucer. Would like an explanation regarding these articles."

* * *

A man from Chicago (10/29/52) "refers to the Air Force report re flying saucers as well as article by Robert S. Allen on this subject dated Sept. 26. States he does not believe that such matters should have to be investigated by private citizens. He hopes the secrecy of the Air Force will be lifted, etc."

* * *

From Dinuba, Calif. (7/30/52), a man "urges that the Air Force inform the public as to the results of the investigation."

* * *

Then, a woman from Tucson (7/28/52) "opposes the secrecy in re to the Flying Saucers. Believes the public should be given a complete report."

* * *

Finally, from Baltimore (9/13/50), a man "refers to article entitled 'Flying Saucers' appearing in the October 1950 issue of Pageant Magazine, and feels the American people should be told the truth about the saucer reports. He asks if a cover-up attempt is being made on the part of the Air Force and Department of Defense."

ECHOES OF "THE ROSWELL INCIDENT"

One White House file-record sheet identifies letters from eight separate persons -- all written during the time frame July 5 -- 9, 1947, which coincides with the reported crash-landing of a disc(s) near Roswell, N.M. (as recounted in 1980 book The Roswell Incident, by William L. Moore -- Grosset & Dunlap, New York). Each of these letters was "respectfully referred to the War Department for consideration."

TO KILL OR NOT TO KILL

A woman (with others not named) from Los Angeles (7/29/52) requests "that

the Air Force not fire on the 'flying saucers,' as they have not attempted any harm upon any persons or properties."

* * *

Likewise, another woman, from Ocean Park, Calif. (8/1/52), "opposes the recent order from the War Department to fire upon the 'flying saucers.' Gives her views re the 'saucers' and offers suggestions re same."

* * *

From Albany, Ga. (7/28/52), a man "urges the Air Force to refrain from attacking the so-called 'flying saucers.' "

* * *

In her letter from Hollywood, Calif. (7/29/52), a woman "comments on reports of the so-called Flying Saucers and suggests they may contain highly intelligent humans and that an effort should be made to contact them in a friendly manner."

* * *

Echoing that sentiment was a man from Indio, Calif. (7/30/52): "Referring to the report that our armed planes have been ordered to shoot down a flying saucer for investigation, the writer suggests that we had better cultivate the friendship of the space visitors and perhaps save ourselves from annihilation. Says that a friendly gesture would be supplied if the President were to issue a proclamation ordering our military and all private citizens to welcome space visitors and treat them with the utmost consideration should they choose to land among us."

* * *

For his part, an irate New Yorker (7/29/52) "requests by what authority, orders to shoot down the so-called 'flying saucers' were given -- states that the makers and operators of these devices are vastly more powerful than the United States -- such orders would be equivalent to a declaration of war. Requests and urges

President to immediately countermand these orders. States further, that unless he is informed promptly, that such orders have been countermanded, his letter will be given to the Press."

* * *

A telegram from a man in Glen Ellyn, Ill. (7/29/52), "suggests that no offensive action be taken against the objects reported as unidentified, which have been sighted over the nation -- (Flying Saucers) -- offensive action might result in grave consequences - alieniating [sic.] US from beings of far superior powers -- suggests friendly contacts."

* * *

But then we have the sentiments of a resident in The Green Killaloe, Co Clare, Eire, Ireland (6/22/52): "Writer states she read about Flying Saucers seen over New York. 'Don't be too easy with them, bring them down, show no mercy.' Comments that to make airplanes noiseless, cover their engines with felt and rubber."

INVENTORS INVITE INVESTIGATION

A Philadelphia man (11/24/52 and 12/1/52) chose to register-mail his letters, stating: "I feel that it is my duty to submit my enclosed ideas to you. . . I think that their realization would help to strengthen extremely the military power of this country -- to a point that no aggressor could have any chances to win a war." His enclosed drawings included a flying saucer, a jet-glidership, a rocket ship, and a "shoot farther." Each drawing had a letter explaining how the device works. The President's secretary "respectfully referred [the inquiry] to the Department of Commerce (National Inventors Council) for consideration and appropriate handling."

* * *

Twice in the same month (8/11/52 and 8/16/52), a Korean radio announcer at

the United Nations headquarters in New York contacted the White House. The first time, he enclosed a copy of a letter to the Long Island Daily Press "stating that Flying Saucers are easily manufacturable. He further states that Flying Saucers are a very simple and inexpensive toy stuff compared with Atomic or Hydrogen Bombs, or even with Jet Planes or B-29s. He urges immediate action to be taken to manufacture them. Will reveal the basic principles only to high officials of the U. S. Government, with a guarantee of full protection. His second letter posed this bit of Asian logic: "I sincerely wish you could urge the Government to take the steps to solve this so-called 'FLYING SAUCER' mystery of a national menace by manufacturing them as immediately as possible."

* * *

A Mr. I. W. of England (7/20/52) wrote: "In 1942 I sent plans as the enclosed (DRAWINGS) to the Soviet Government (U.S.S.R.) -- they are now pursuing a course of which I disapprove -- are these plans the secret of the FLYING SAUCERS? I am forwarding the same for your consideration.

* * *

Next, an 11-year-old boy from Battle Creek, Mich. (1/3/52), had his say, enclosing "a plan for a FLYING SAUCER for the Air Force, which he thinks will work. Enclosures: 4 sketches of the Flying Saucer and 1 PHOTOGRAPH."

* * *

A male student at Mexico City College (5/12/50) submitted "a PLAN for a 'FLYING SAUCER' to be used as a defense of our cities. Goes into details as to how this can be accomplished. Respectfully referred to the National Security Resources Board for consideration and acknowledgment."

* * *

An unacknowledged telegram from a man in Portland, Ore. (7/7/47) stated

"that he is the Juggling Marine who did the time stop at the Hotel Statler Press Photographers Banquet sometime ago. States that Juggling is his livelihood and explains his Flying Disc (Flying Saucers) mystery which did not turn out very successful."

* * *

Finally, we have a letter from an aeronautical engineer at Homestead, Fla. (4/9/50), who, in an article entitled "Flying Saucers?" for the Miami Sunday News Magazine (April 9, 1950), presents his proposal for a "magnetic air car," based on his esoteric interpretation of electricity and magnetism. Rather than seeking the President's autograph, this man presents Truman an autographed copy of the article.

(Note: One wonders whether the ill-fated, multi-million-dollar "AVROcar" the U. S. military produced in the late fifties derived any inspiration from such suggestions as the foregoing.)

UFO CURIOS

A "memo for files" (7/18/47) records that "Newsome and Company, Inc., Boston, Mass., sent under this date 12 flying saucers which they manufactured. There was no card in this box and Mr. Connelly /Truman's secretary at the time/ thought we shouldn't acknowledge." An addendum bears this intriguing statement: "Flying saucers sent to the House, 7/24/47." The White House or the U. S. House of Representatives?

* * *

A citizen of Lisbon, Portugal (1/5/53), "sends a wax recording of music entitled 'FLYING DISK' (no accompanying letter)."

THE THEORY FILE

From St. Petersburg, Fla. (7/28/52), comes a man's "Comments on the effect of Radio and TV waves in determining atmospheric conditions and suggests that such waves are responsible for the sight of flying saucers."

* * *

Along the same lines, a man from Baskerville, Va. (8/2/52) "comments on the 'flying saucers'; suggests there is a possibility that they are of stellar or celestial phenomena due to the converging of energy lines, force lines of Nature. These could well assume the proportions of the saucers."

* * *

A man from Taft, Calif., chose to send his letter via registered mail (7/31/52): "Writer forwards his ideas re the Flying Saucers and offers his services."

* * *

A Houston woman (7/30-52) "offers suggestion to President that flying saucers may be balloons full of germs from Stalin."

* * *

In trying to, in his words, "make a case for planetary 'saucers'," a man from Iliff School of Theology at the University of Denver (4/8/52) "encloses a copy of letter addressed to Life magazine, challenging the suggestions made by their April 7 issue on the 'interplanetary Saucers.' He is interested in putting a stop to scare rumors of interplanetary invasion." His letter explains: "These rumors could be stopped best by stating the plain facts of what can be done with a radio beam, and by publicizing the fact that flying saucers are created and controlled by American (I suppose) scientists."

* * *

An undated letter (circa Jan. 1952) from Flagstaff, Ariz., "states he has

uncovered some amazing facts which he is prepared to prove. Feels that they are of the utmost significance. Apparently would like to discuss this subject with the President."

* * *

Two fellows from Salt Lake City (7/7/50) "firmly believe that the Flying Saucers are real. They wish to volunteer for duty or ask for employment pertaining to the operation of said objects."

* * *

A man from Youngstown, Ohio (4/17/50), "describes the appearance of a flying saucer, as it looked while flying over Youngstown, Ohio. He submits a diagram to illustrate its appearance."

* * *

In a registered letter from a woman in Portland, Ore. (7/6/47), the writer "warns the United States to be constantly alert to dangers we may suffer at the hands of Russia. Fears Russia may be dropping parachutists by means of the flying disks or saucers."

WANTED: UFO PEN PALS

A male graduate student in journalism at the University of California (Los Angeles) (4/5/50) wrote this inquiry to Truman's secretary, Charles G. Ross:

"I am currently engaged in research for a graduate dissertation which will attempt to analyze the sociological and psychological implications of the flying saucer phenomenon.

"In the light of the forceful radio commentary by Henry J. Taylor and the article which appeared in the 'United States News and World Report,' both of which declared or implied the saucers are aircraft of unusual design

developed in the United States, I was interested to learn the reactions of Mr. Truman to the reports.

"I understand that the Navy and the Air Force have issued qualified denials to the reports. Does the White House feel such reports are baseless?

"I wish to thank you in advance for your interest and help. You may be assured that I will appreciate any information you may be able to give me."

Ross's reply of April 11th contains what turns out to be form-letter phraseology from the Truman White House: "The President has expressed no opinions concerning these reports other than that he has no information of any kind about flying saucers."

* * *

A 16-year-old boy from Brooklyn (8/14/52) also asked for the President's "opinion of the 'Flying Saucers.' Would also like President's autograph." Connelly's response: "Because of the tremendous pressure upon the President's time he simply cannot respond to the many requests for opinions on various subjects. I am sure that you will understand."

* * *

Then, from Oneonta, N. Y. (9/22/52), a man "requests the latest news regarding the flying saucers."

* * *

A resident, gender unknown, of Farmington, Wash. (9/25/52), "requests the names and addresses of a person, or persons, to whom he could write and express his ideas in re FLYING SAUCERS."

* * *

A New Zealand couple (5/19/51) "writes that they are interested in what they have heard re 'Flying Saucers.' They wish to know if anyone has actually

seen a Flying Saucer."

* * *

Some students of every generation, like the girl from Miami, Fla. (5/2/50), feel compelled to write to officialdom for, in her case, "information for her English Class on flying saucers."

* * *

Another child from Miami (3/22/50) "requests information about the flying saucer which he states landed in Brazil." His letter was "Respectfully referred to the Department of State, 3/29/50."

* * *

An unacknowledged letter (7/12/47) from an unnamed citizen of Villa Maria, Argentina, refers to "the flying plates which are drawing interest of the whole world."

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM THE CHILDREN

A nine-year-old girl from Buffalo, N. Y. (12/2/52), "expresses her belief that flying saucers are a "reflction of a big mirrow [sic.] reflected on water of another planet."

* * *

Four girls from the Washington School in San Diego (8/5/52), all "members of the MARS SPACE CLUB, give their theory about FLYING SAUCERS."

* * *

A female high-school student from Urbana, Ohio (2/20/52) "asks what the FLYING SAUCERS are. Asks why the Air Force will not tell what they find."

Many of these UFO-oriented letters, of course, have something in common with the hundreds of other letters sent to any given president: the naive expectation that somehow the President himself not only will read them but also will respond to them. That form of faith in the paternalistic, omnipotent majesty of the Oval Office has carried over, for example, from the Truman days to the Jimmy Carter era of UFO awareness. Incidentally, the content of the Truman letters is echoed by the scores of UFO-related letters received by the Carter administration. Would Carter's staff have received far fewer such letters had Truman chosen to read his UFO-related correspondence and thus decided to transfer official UFO investigation from military hands to civilian control -- in an aim reflective of his move to assure civilian control of nuclear weapons?

* Larry W. Bryant, a writer in Alexandria, Va., directs the Washington, D.C. Office of Citizens Against UFO Secrecy.