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7-3745 - 378

K243.6012-7
Apr 1960

RETURN TO

USAF Historical Archives
ASIA(ASHAF-A)
Maxwell AFB, Ala 36112

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HEADQUARTERS
FOREIGN TECHNOLOGY DIVISION
AIR FORCE SYSTEMS COMMAND
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, OHIO

REPLY TO

ATTN OF: TD-E

SUBJECT: Unidentified Aerial Phenomena

TO: TD-G (Colonel Carlisle)

SMC

Director
Aerospace Studies Inst
ATTN: Archives Branch
Maxwell AFB, Alabama

RETURN TO:

K243.6012-7
Apr 1962

1. Reference our letter to AFCIN-P, subject: "Project Blue Book (Unidentified Flying Objects)," dated 20 April 1962, relating information concerning the briefing on unidentified flying objects given to Mr. Edward R. Trapnell, Assistant for Public Relations to the Secretary of the Air Force.

2. Paragraph 6 of the referenced letter expressed that in the opinion of FTD the UFO program should be discontinued as a special project and the function absorbed by the Air Force in the conduct of its overall mission. Investigating and evaluating UFO sightings should be the responsibility of the Air Force facility nearest the scene of the incident. Attempts should be made to determine the cause for all sightings, but the primary objective would be directed toward determining the threat potential of the occurrence.

3. Our opinion that the UFO program should be discontinued as a special project is drawn from the following:

a. During the past 15 years the USAF has studied over 7300 cases of sightings of unidentified flying objects without discovering one shred of evidence indicating that UFO sightings are due to interplanetary space vehicles.

b. Discontinuation of the UFO project would not result in the loss of valuable information. For those incidents which may be significant other than as UFO sightings, reports are made to other Air Force elements through channels completely independent for those spelled out for UFO reports.

c. Based on experience gained from handling thousands of cases, it is believed that field organizations could determine the causes for approximately 75 percent of the cases and evaluate the threat potential of them all.

d. Due to the time element and familiarity with the local environment, field organizations are often in a better position to determine the cause for sightings, such as those which result from the misidentification of aircraft, balloons launched locally, etc., than is FTD with the present method of operation.

4. Some of the sightings which take place during a year require more sophisticated treatment than some field units are capable of giving; however, in these instances the field unit should recognize the significance of the sighting and notify some agency with a specialized capability, e. g., the

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Smithsonian Institute, in the instance of suspected meteorite impacts. In other cases it should only be necessary for the field unit to collect the data and forward it to some interested agency for analysis, e. g., radar scope films to RADC.

5. Before the UFO program could be discontinued as a special project, the public would have to be educated to accept this new philosophy. The following information would have to be brought to their attention:

a. The USAF's primary interest in UFO's is to determine their threat potential and/or military value.

b. Positive determination of the causes for all sightings is desirable, but to accomplish this would require extensive investigation and study of all sightings, in most cases placing an unnecessary strain on the Air Force's budget.

c. Probable causes for sightings based on limited information should be accepted.

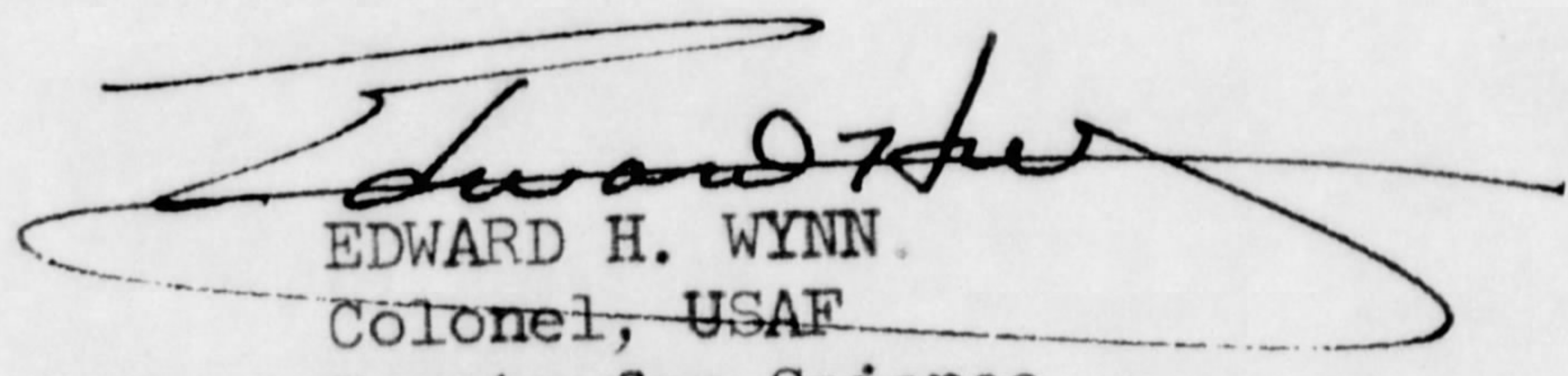
d. The Air Force should not be required to disprove the claims of independent UFO organizations or investigators that sightings are due to inter-planetary space vehicles.

6. If, contrary to our suggestion, the UFO program is continued as a special project, the following is offered as an alternate solution:

a. The UFO project office be divorced from any connections with intelligence and assigned to some organization within the Air Force's scientific structure.

b. The project office be staffed with personnel who have the proper backgrounds to analyze the sightings, conduct the investigations of significant incidents, and to conduct an effective public-relations program.

c. A public education program designed to allow discontinuance of the program as a special project after a specified time period, be a part of the mission of the project office.


EDWARD H. WYNN
Colonel, USAF
Deputy for Science
and Components

MEMO ROUTING SLIP		NEW USE FOR APPROVALS, DISAPPROVALS, CONCURRENCES, OR SIMILAR ACTIONS		ACTION	
1 TO	TD-E	INITIALS	CIRCULATE		
		DATE	COORDINATION		
2	Col Wynn		FILE		
			INFORMATION		
3	Lt. Col Freeman		NOTE AND RETURN		
			PER CONVERSATION		
4			SEE ME		
			SIGNATURE		
REMARKS 1. I prefer your alternate solution 2. I have no objection to using people in the field provided they are specifically prohibited from making releases to news media. RFB					
FROM		DATE			
		PHONE			

DD FORM 95
1 OCT 60

Replaces DD Form 94, 1 Feb 50 and DD Form 95, 1 Feb 50 which will be used until exhausted.

☆ GPO: 1960-0-568294

HEADQUARTERS
FOREIGN TECHNOLOGY DIVISION
AIR FORCE SYSTEMS COMMAND
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, OHIO



REPLY TO
ATTN OF: TD-E/Lt Col Friend
SUBJECT: Trip Report (UFO)

9 APR 1962

TO: TD-E (Colonel Wynn)

1. On 6 April 1962 Lt. Colonel Friend, TD-E, visited DOD to participate in a briefing on the Air Force's unidentified aerial phenomena program for Mr. Edward R. Trapnell, Assistant for Public Relations to the Secretary of the Air Force. Also present were Dr. J. Allen Hynek, Project Consultant, and Major C. R. Hart, SAFOI-3b. Mr. Trapnell requested this briefing after his interest in the matter was whetted by a statement by Dr. Robert Calkins, President of Brookings Institute. The gist of Dr. Calkins' statement was that it was unfortunate the Air Force must suffer the bad publicity associated with unidentified flying objects, with a suggestion that some private agency might relieve the Air Force of the problem.

2. During the briefing Mr. Trapnell was informed of the origin of the program, the Air Force method of handling it, conclusions and recommendations regarding it by such groups as the Robertson Committee of January 1953, Air Force conclusions after 15 years of study, current problems, and recommendations for solving them. The foremost conclusion was that no evidence has become available to the Air Force indicating that UFO's constitute a threat to national security or are interplanetary vehicles bearing life or intelligence of any sort. The outstanding recommendation was that definite steps be taken to carry out the recommendations of the Robertson Committee; to wit, that the UFO program be stripped of the aura of mystery and put into its proper prospective and that a program designed to inform the public regarding UFO's be instituted. In the eyes of the lay public anything associated with intelligence assumes an air of great secrecy; therefore, it was suggested that the first step toward stripping UFO's of their cloak of mystery would be to divorce the program from its connections with the intelligence community.

3. Mr. Trapnell was amazed to learn that the UFO traffic today was three times that of the early years of the program and observed that this could grow into a life-time job unless headed off in some manner. He stated that following a planned meeting with Mr. Zuckert, Secretary of the Air Force, Dr. B. McMillian, SAFRD, and Dr. Calkins, Brookings, one of the following actions might be taken.

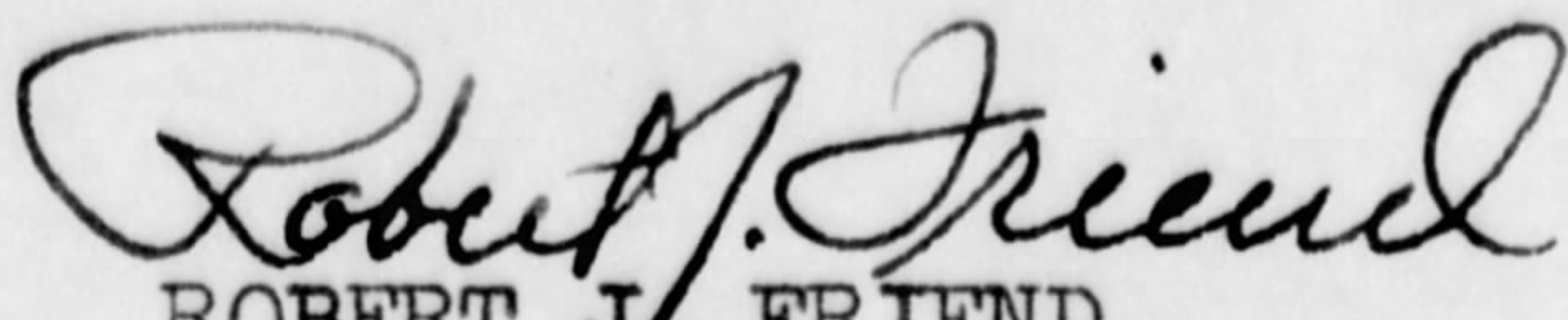
a. The UFO program will be transferred to some agency such as NASA, NSF, or Smithsonian and pursued under an entirely different title such as Atmospheric Physics.

b. Transferred within the Air Force from technical intelligence to a strictly scientific complex and contracted to some private organization, such as Brookings.

c. Contracted to some private organization, such as Brookings, which will make positive statements regarding the program and the Air Force's handling of it in the past and make recommendations regarding its future, i.e., disban the program completely or handle it as outlined in A or B above.

4. Following his planned meeting with Mr. Zuckert, Dr. McMillian, and Dr. Calkins, Mr. Trapnell plans to visit FTD with Dr. Calkins for an informal discussion prior to a decision regarding the UFO program. No date has been set for this visit. Mr. Trapnell suggested that the UFO files be put into order to allow transfer of the complete office at a moment's notice.

5. It is my opinion that it will prove very difficult, if not impossible, to transfer this program to another agency because none of them want to inherit the public relations problem that goes with it. The final solution will probably be either to disban the project entirely and allow the Air Force to absorb it in the normal course of its overall mission or to contract it to some private organization, the contract being monitored by some agency within the Air Force's scientific structure.


ROBERT J. FRIEND
Lt. Colonel, USAF

I recently sat beside Dr. Robert Calkins, president of Brookings, at dinner. Among the items we discussed was the UFO business. He feels that the Air Force should get somebody to take an independent look at this thing, probably some kind of a citizen committee which could review the matter and issue a report in such a way as to get the Air Force off the spot it seems to think we are on.

I have agreed to sit down with him some time and discuss the possibilities. He says Brookings would be willing to help in whatever way it can. In the meantime, I would like to have your views on what might be done constructively in this connection.

EDWARD TRAPNELL
ASST PUBLIC AFFAIRS
(MR ZUCKERT)

*See Francis on previous
review -*

TD-E/Lt Col ^{RB} Friend/vw/69216

Project Blue Book (Unidentified Flying Objects)

20 APR 1962

Hq USAF
AFCIN-P
Wash 25 DC

1. On 6 April 1962 FTD participated in a briefing on the USAF unidentified flying objects project which was given to Mr. Edward R. Trapnell, Assistant for Public Relations to the Secretary of the Air Force. This briefing was requested by Mr. Trapnell, following a casual conversation between him and Dr. Robert Calkins of Brookings Research Institute where the latter made a remark regarding how unfortunate it was that the Air Force was forced to suffer the bad publicity associated with unidentified flying objects.
2. During the briefing Mr. Trapnell was informed of the history of the program, the Air Force's method of handling the project, and the major problems which have been encountered. He was also informed of the study conducted in 1953 by a panel of scientists headed by Dr. H. P. Robertson of California Institute of Technology. This panel concluded that UFO's did not constitute a threat to the security of the United States and recommended that a program designed to educate the public and strip the aura of mystery from UFO's be instituted. Mr. Trapnell was informed that our continued study of UFO's since 1953 had not revealed any evidence which would change the conclusion of the Robertson Committee.
3. It was pointed out that a major step toward stripping the air of mystery from UFO's would be accomplished if it were divorced from any association with intelligence. Mr. Trapnell went a step further and stated that the program was out of place with the Air Force, and indicated that he intends to talk the matter over with Mr. Zuckert, Secretary of the Air Force, with a view toward accomplishing one of the following:
 - a. Transfer of the UFO project to another agency such as NASA, NSF, or the Smithsonian Institute and have it conducted as a program to study atmospheric physics.
 - b. Divorce the project from any association with intelligence and hire a contractor to conduct the program under Air Force monitorship.
 - c. Contract a private organization to study the material which has been accumulated to date and recommend a course of action. This recommendation could be to completely disband the program as a special project and allow it to be absorbed by the Air Force in the conduct of its overall mission; or a modification of A or B above.

OFFICIAL FILE COPY

4. Mr. Trapenll plans to visit FTD prior to a final decision as to what course of action should be pursued. However, he did instruct FTD verbally to get the UFO files in an order which would allow transfer at a moment's notice. It is our intention to review all reports with a view toward downgrading and declassifying as many as possible. The provisions of AFR 205-1, 10 June 1960 with changes, AFR 205-2, 1 March 1961, and AFR 200-17, 12 January 1961 will be adhered to during this exercise.

5. The plans to transfer the UFO project to some other government agency or to contract it to some private organization are not considered feasible for the following reasons:

a. The Air Force would still be burdened with handling the communication of all reports except the few which would be mailed directly to the agency or contractor by private citizens.

b. Transfer of the program to some agency such as NASA would only serve to convince a larger segment of the public that sightings are due to visits to earth by interplanetary space vehicles.

c. Contracting the program would be many times more expensive to the Air Force than the present method of operating and would not relieve the Air Force of the responsibility. The public would still feel that an organization under contract to the Air Force was directed to make certain statements. We have experienced this on a smaller scale regarding statements made by Dr. J. Allen Hynek, the present project consultant.

d. A contractor would serve principally as an analyzing agency, and the Air Force would still find it necessary to investigate the majority of the cases.

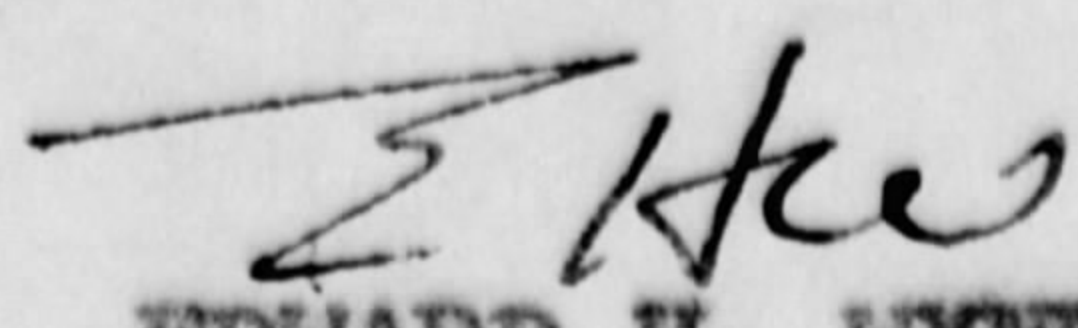
e. It would be necessary to provide a contractor with specialized information such as missile, satellite, and balloon data; information regarding special programs and/or operations; and other specialized information to support their analysis effort.

f. Air Force personnel would be required to monitor the contract and provide support to the contractor.

6. It is the FTD opinion that the UFO program should be discontinued as a special project and the function absorbed by the Air Force in the normal conduct of its overall mission. Each sighting would be the responsibility of the Air Force facility nearest to the scene of the incident. The investigating unit would evaluate the occurrence with a view toward determining if the object is a potential threat to national security. Determination of the actual cause of the incident should be attempted but is only of secondary importance. UFO reports which originate as compliance with JANAP-146D should continue to be processed in the manner outlined in this directive.

7. Although FTD is now the office of primary interest regarding reports of unidentified flying objects, this letter is being forwarded to AFCIN due to its earlier association with this project and the fact that some of the reports are on IR's.

FOR THE COMMANDER


EDWARD H. WYNN
Colonel, USAF
Deputy for Science
and Components

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
ASTROPHYSICAL OBSERVATORY

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
ASTROPHYSICAL OBSERVATORY
60 GARDEN STREET
CAMBRIDGE 38, MASSACHUSETTS

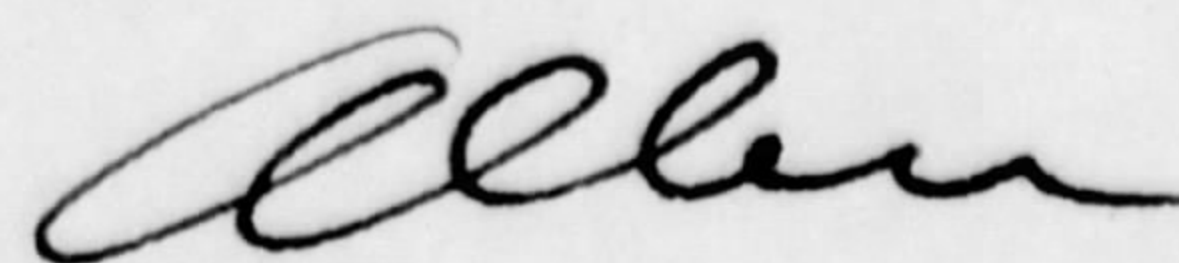
March 24, 1960

Major Robert J. Friend
Aerospace Technical Intelligence Center
Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
Dayton, Ohio

Dear Major:

I believe you might be interested in the
enclosed reply to my letter to General Holzman.

Cordially,



J. Allen Hynek
Associate Director

JAH:ps

Enclosure

February 17, 1960

Office of the Commander
Air Force Research Division
Air Research and Development Command
United States Air Force
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear General Holzman:

Thank you very much for your letter of 14 January 1960 in which you informed me of your appointment by Lieutenant General B. A. Schriever as Director of the new Air Force Research Division. It is my understanding that the Air Force Research Division is now one of the four major divisions of the Air Force devoted to scientific work, and that it has cognizance over the Air Force Office of Scientific Research, the Aeronautical Research Laboratory at Dayton and certain basic research activities at the Geophysics Research Directorate and at other research centers. I understand also that Colonel A. P. Gagge, of whom I have heard many good reports, will assume Directorship of the Office of Scientific Research.

I wish to thank you for your invitation to offer advice and suggestions with respect to the policies and operations of the new Air Force Research Division. Since I continue to have close contact with both the Geophysics and Electronics Research Directorates at Cambridge and with the Air Force Office of Scientific Research, as well as with the Aerospace Technical Intelligence Center, I welcome this opportunity to congratulate you on your new position of great responsibility and to offer, if I may, a few comments and suggestions.

At present under the sponsorship of GRD I supervise an unmanned balloon project directed toward the study of stellar scintillation and image motion at high altitudes. With the Air Force Office of Scientific Research I am presently directing the scientific aspects of a series of high altitude manned balloon flights. Our pilot is Captain Joe Kittinger, and the work is being done under the careful eye of Dr. Wennersten. I should like to report that I have found Dr. Wennersten a most amiable and capable person with whom to work, and I hope that our association continues well into the future. I have recently directed to Dr. Wennersten an

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informal summary and outline of what, in my opinion, the future of scientific research from high atmospheric altitudes holds. I should be pleased to direct a copy to your attention should you so wish.

I should also like to comment with pleasure on the immense (that seems to be the most appropriate word for it) enthusiasm and skill of Captain Kittinger. I consider myself extremely fortunate to be associated with Captain Kittinger in the execution of the balloon flights.

I have no specific recommendations with respect to our balloon work, which is doing well, except, of course, to express the hope that as it continues to develop it will receive your personal good wishes and support. I do, however, have some specific recommendations in connection with a totally different aspect of my work with the Air Force.

For more than a decade I have been consultant to the Aerospace Technical Intelligence Center at Dayton. During this time I have been primarily concerned with the problem of Unidentified Flying Objects, particularly their astronomical aspects.

As you well know, the Air Force has attempted to do as creditable a job on this touchy matter as was within their province. However, much of their work has been misunderstood by the public, and all too often such public opinion has been unfavorable to the Air Force. It seems that the wishful thinking portions of the public are all too ready to accuse the Air Force of covering up the evidence and misleading the public. This is most unfortunate, but is in part a natural outcome of placing this problem in an intelligence division of the Air Force rather than in an out-and-out scientific department. By this I in no way imply an unfavorable comparison; I merely point out that the objectives of an intelligence division are necessarily somewhat different than those, say, of the Geophysics Research Directorate.

Since you have been kind enough to ask for my suggestions, I would, therefore, acting in my capacity as consultant to the Air Force, but entirely on my own responsibility, like to recommend that the scientific aspects of the UFO problem be transferred from ATIC to a division more directly concerned with atmospheric physics, perhaps to the Geophysics Research Directorate.

The subject of Unidentified Flying Objects more logically belongs in a scientific office rather than in an intelligence center. My reasons for saying this are these: I think it is amply clear by now that those relatively few sightings that are puzzling are related to upper atmosphere phenomena and may offer interesting examples of meteorological and atmospheric optics phenomena and, as such, be worthy of study in themselves. Quite apart from the public interest in such matters, which should be kept quite separate from the Air Force's scientific offices, and should properly be the province of the public information office, there may well be nuggets of scientific value in the often well reported sightings which continue to come into the office of ATIC. I need only remind you that less than two centuries ago the entire province of meteorites was kept out of legitimate astronomy because stories of "stones that fell from the sky" were regarded as old wives tales. Had these accounts been given careful attention by the scientists of that day, the productive branch of astronomy which we now know as meteoritics would have been born well over a century earlier than it was.

I do not maintain that there is necessarily any parallel between the "stones that fell from heaven" and the many "flying saucer" stories we hear today. What I do say, however, is that since the Air Force, because of its defense obligation to the nation to keep track of potentially hostile objects in the sky, must take account of such reports, that certain of those reports which are deemed to have possible scientific value should be brought to the cognizance of scientific offices most directly able to cope with them. With its excellent roster of physicists and upper atmosphere specialists, it seems to me that the Geophysics Research Directorate might well undertake this aspect of the UFO problem. I do believe that with their staff of scientists many of the reported sightings which remain "unknown" and develop into political headaches for the Air Force (since it so frequently happens that the public is quick to write to its congressional representatives that these sightings are not getting a square deal from the Air Force) would be quickly cleared up; and secondly, and of greater importance to me as a scientist, many such reports, properly examined, might add a rich chapter to atmospheric optics and upper atmosphere research.

I do, therefore, recommend that consideration be given to the transfer of the scientific aspects of the Unidentified Flying Object problem to the cognizance of the Geophysics Research Directorate or another appropriate scientific division of the Air Force.

HEADQUARTERS
AIR FORCE RESEARCH DIVISION
AIR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT COMMAND
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

8 March 1960

Dr. J. Allen Hynek
Astrophysical Observatory
Smithsonian Institution
60 Garden Street
Cambridge 38, Massachusetts

Dear Dr. Hynek:

I was very happy to receive your letter of 17 February. I have read with interest your suggestion that the study of UFO's be transferred from intelligence channels to the scientists.

Accordingly, I am forwarding a copy of your letter to Headquarters, Air Research and Development Command with a request that it consider your suggestion.

Again, my appreciation for your thoughtfulness.

Sincerely,

B. G. HOLZMAN
Brigadier General, USAF
Commander