

President Smiley: This same letter was sent to the other five members of the Colorado delegation.

January 8, 1969

Honorable Gordon Allott
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Allott:

The University's report, Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects, the summary of the two-year study supported by a contract with the Air Force Office of Scientific Research, has been completed. We now have confirmation that the Air Force will make public this report on Thursday, January 9.

There are indications that the report will be subject to ill-founded criticism, particularly by some who have taken public positions on the subject and fear that the report will not support them, and by others who stand to gain financially from such controversy. In the past, some of these special interest pleadings have stimulated inquiries within the Congress. For this reason I am writing you, and other members of the Colorado delegation, to inform you of the position of the University.

The University undertook the study upon solicitation of the Air Force OGR, in the hope that it could provide a useful summary and evaluation of the subject as it can be understood today. The project director, Professor E.U. Condon, wished to present in a single final report the full conclusions of the study. This is the report now to be released. It is extensive, running to over 1400 typewritten pages. The text alone is the product of many persons. The authorship of each section is clearly indicated, and each author stands behind his contribution. The conclusions and recommendations are work of the scientific director, Professor Condon.

Recognizing that the scientific integrity of the report would be of the greatest importance, the University insisted from the very beginning that the report should be reviewed by a panel of competent scientists drawn from outside the study group. The National Academy of Sciences agreed to appoint such a panel. For the past six weeks the report has been in the hands of the NAS-appointed panel. The independence of this panel is illustrated by the fact that the identity of its members is unknown to all of us at the University save only for Professor Condon, who earlier this week met with the panel at its request to answer questions put to him about the study and report. Although we do not know the composition of the panel and have no

January 8, 1969

information about the content of its review report, the University will regard the report of this panel as a fair, impartial, and scientifically sound evaluation. This position is adopted because of our confidence in the high standards of the National Academy of Sciences.

You should be aware that, aside from the NAS-appointed review panel, no one has received a copy of the report. I mention this point because some newspaper stories this week contain "evaluations"--which must be, in fact, the products of the imaginations of the commentators, who have not seen the report, much less had opportunity to read and study its 1400 pages.

Recognizing the widespread interest in the report, and agreeing with the expressed desire of AFCSR to disseminate its results, the University has discussed with various publishers the possibility of publication and widespread distribution. It is probable that a paperback edition will be published by Bantam Books as soon as possible after the report is released by the Air Force. However, to insure against even the appearance of special concessions, no contract will be signed for this publication until after the public release. It is possible that a hardcover edition will also be desired by libraries and other depositories, and this is now being carefully studied. To guard against publication of "selected parts" of the report (which could distort the scientific quality of the publication), the University will copyright the report, and is authorizing the publication of only the complete report, except for publication of the conclusions and recommendations by news media (this latter "partial" publication would be possible in any event under "fair use" provisions of copyright law). Of course the Federal government has complete authorization to use the report freely for its own activities. I should note that any net return to the University from such publication will be used to support scholarly and creative work in the institution at large. No person associated with the study, and no special part of the University will receive a single penny of payment as a result of the publication.

I would, of course, be glad to provide any further information that would be helpful to you, and I urge you to call or write me at any time. Let me conclude by emphasizing that, sight unseen, we regard the NAS-appointed panel's review (which we understand will be available later this week) as the most competent and measured evaluation of the study and report, and of the University's ability to carry a difficult and extremely sensitive assignment to a conclusion.

Yours sincerely,

Thurston E. Manning
Vice President for
Academic Affairs

TEM:mf

cc: Professor E.U. Condon
Vice President Wilson
Mr. Robert J. Low