

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO  
BOULDER, COLORADO 80302

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS AND ASTROPHYSICS

1006 JILA Bldg.

5 September 1969

Dr. Walter Orr Roberts, Chairman  
American Association for the Advancement  
of Science  
National Center for Atmospheric Research  
Boulder, Colorado

Dear Walter:

I am writing to request that the Board of AAAS consider carefully the plan to hold a symposium on Unidentified Flying Objects at the annual meeting in Boston next December, as announced in the preliminary program which appeared in Science for 15 August (p. 719). This would be a most inappropriate activity for AAAS to sponsor. I hope that the Board will decide not to have AAAS engage in it. To facilitate the consideration requested I am sending copies of this letter to the Board members.

There were plans to which I was opposed to hold such a symposium at the 1968 Dallas meeting. I thought when that was called off that the officers of the AAAS, although they said it was being postponed for a year, really intended to drop the whole matter.

When I saw the announcement in Science for 15 August at first I thought I would say nothing. But recently I have heard that members of the arrangements committee have been telling people that I have accepted an invitation to participate. This is not true. I have not been asked. I would not accept if asked. I will not attend any part of an annual meeting at which such a symposium is part of the proceedings.

The report of the study which I conducted for the Air Force on this subject has been so poorly distributed that some of the Board may not have seen it. Therefore I am sending a copy of it to each under separate cover. I am also sending as an enclosure an article from the Rocky Mountain News of 25 August, which will give you a clear idea of the caliber of persons who will undoubtedly expect to be principal speakers in the AAAS symposium being planned. Since some have Ph.D.'s and professorships, and may even be AAAS members, it will be hard to refuse them.

I also enclose a copy of a recent circular letter which NICAP (National Investigations Committee for Aerial Phenomena) has sent out to its membership begging for contributions. This was sent to me by a friend. This is the organization whose leaders started devoting themselves to attacking our study in the most irrational terms long before it was written or released. Let me call attention to our recommendation on p. 2 of our report that qualified persons who wish to do research in this field should be supported. I do not know of any formal proposals that any of the great "scientists" who are up in arms about UFO study have made. They scream to high heaven, but they have nothing constructive to offer, apparently.

To aid in your consideration of this general issue, I urge you at least to peruse a wonderful book by Joseph Jastrow, originally called, "Wish and Wisdom," (Appleton-Century, 1935) available in a reprint under the title of "Error and Eccentricity in Human Belief" (Dover, 1962). It is most entertaining and instructive. It provides the background needed for a proper consideration of the UFO issue. The study of UFOs is on a par with the vast parade of kooky beliefs which have had their day at various times, even in the fairly recent past.

Some will argue that the AAAS ought to provide a forum for fair and unbiased discussion of controversial scientific topics. I would agree if such a fair discussion could be arranged. But from personal knowledge of the UFO buffs, I know that it can not. These people in varying degrees insist that visitors are coming to Earth in flying saucers from other civilizations. Some insist that this is known to our government and that the truth is being deliberately held back from the public. After careful study I conclude that there is no scientifically valid evidence in support of either proposition. Notice that I do not say that no such evidence will ever be found; simply that none is available now. Nor do I think the UFO buffs will ever find it.

The UFO buffs are a slippery lot, and do a great deal by "insinendo," so that it is usually useless to try to find out what they really are contending. Some never had any critical faculty, some are suffering severely from progressive degeneration of whatever critical faculty they ever had.

Whether reputable scientists should behave as they do or not, I will not discuss, but most of them are pretty good at recognizing a kooky subject, after which they simply turn their backs on it, deciding not to waste time giving it serious consideration. For this reason alone, the AAAS will not find it possible to get well-informed speakers to criticize the fantasies of the UFO cult, and therefore any program that is presented will not be properly balanced. How many of you are willing to take time away from more serious subjects to become informed enough to deal with this subject in a public forum?

When the AAAS presents a symposium at an annual meeting, that amounts to the AAAS saying to the public, Here is a topic which we think is of sufficient importance to warrant serious attention at a major scientific meeting. The program announcement in Science is headed, "The unique opportunity to bring before those who seek to understand, those who understand deeply." Ha! Ha! The UFO nonsense is then solemnly listed right along with some serious and important topics. This makes it seem as if the AAAS considers UFOs to be of comparable importance. The ignorant will be misled. The intelligent will think the AAAS is crazy.

The AAAS has taken a serious and responsible interest in the presentation of science to school children. In the last three years some 40,000 school children have written letters to the Air Force, with the permission if not the overt encouragement of their teachers, to get material to write "science papers" on this kooky subject. This distracts the children from the proper study of science in school. An AAAS symposium on UFOs at Boston will encourage rather than discourage this dreadful waste of school time.

As you know, I have not been pleased with the way Science has dealt with our

study for the Air Force. In the spring of 1968 they rejected my requests not to indulge in scandal-mongering when we had some petty personnel troubles on the project. This led me to resign from AAAS. It is interesting and significant that Science has not published a formal book review of this study at all. Instead now we find the AAAS undertaking to give a platform to the UFO charlatans, thus aiding them in their deceptive and fraudulent operations.

I am puzzled by the new development of UFO interest in the AAAS. For nearly twenty years, Science printed essentially nothing on this subject: a correct policy. But then it sent a gossip man out to Boulder in 1968 to try to exploit our personnel difficulties, it has not reviewed our report, and now it is planning to stage a major two-day symposium on the subject. Why this foolish behavior? Have UFO kooks infiltrated 1515 Massachusetts avenue?

Include me out.

Sincerely,

*Ed.*

E. U. Condon

EUC:kes

cc - Board members w/ copy SSUFO

Encls. - Rocky Mountain News article, 25 Aug.

- NICAP letter

*note on back of original in McDonald's handwriting: "from Carl Sagan at my request. Rec'd Oct. 1969"*

# American Association for the Advancement of Science

WALTER ORR ROBERTS  
Chairman, Board of Directors

UNIVERSITY CORPORATION FOR ATMOSPHERIC RESEARCH  
BOULDER, COLORADO 80302

16 September 1969

Dr. Edward U. Condon  
University of Colorado  
Boulder, Colorado 80302

*Roberts  
removed this  
letter from his  
own files*

Dear Ed:

Thanks for your detailed letter of the 5th about the UFO symposium at Boston. I appreciate your feelings; on the other hand, I do sincerely believe that the AAAS should hold the symposium, and that it should, in this as in other similar areas, make the most earnest possible effort to do just what you have suggested should be done: "to provide a fair and unbiased discussion of controversial topics." The UFO buffs, to be sure, are stirring up all sorts of wild notions, but if we simply ignore them, I fear silence by scientists more than I do the kooks. Moreover, the matter had Board attention and the decision a year ago, right or wrong, was postponed until your report was out -- and this has transpired.

The AAAS Board, for several years and on several occasions, has affirmed and reaffirmed the view that scientists should be especially vocal in areas of great public confusion and controversy, and when questions of scientific fact, policy or opinion are involved. They have held that we should be willing to serve as a forum, a place where different viewpoints can be expressed and debated openly, even when unpopular viewpoints are involved. They have held that we should not even shy away from areas where there is a good deal of crank-ism -- if science is involved. The UFO issue is in just such an area.

Moreover, it is my view that the UFO issue, as much as I agree with the Condon Report conclusions, has responsible scientists holding different views. I feel, for example, that Hynek and McDonald are not kooks, but men willing to look objectively at evidence. To be sure, in this field evidence is not clean or hard, and to be sure I think they are spending time and emotional energy that would, in my view, be better directed elsewhere. But they should be heard, and the AAAS is a reasonable forum for a responsible debate for them and their views. By all the criteria that AAAS uses, they are entitled to a place on the program. If they make fools of themselves, time and the slow, inexorable wisdom of the marketplace will sort them out. And I feel we should let these slow processes be the controlling ones.

*so also  
spiritualism,  
astrology,  
phenology,  
animal  
magnetism,  
ESP*

Dr. Edward U. Condon

-2-

16 September 1969

I would like to see you participate, say just what you think about the issue, and forcefully emphasize the danger of promoting nonsense in schools, and the like. This will, in my view, be of greatest value in giving the public a clear and balanced view of what really is known. If scientists who disagree with McDonald and company, and who have spent time and solid effort studying the UFO, don't participate in reasonable forums of debate, the picture presented will, indeed, be a distorted one.

The AAAS Committee (Page, Sagan, Phil Morrison and I) have honestly wrestled with the problems of making a balanced and intellectually sound meeting out of it. The first session, which I will chair, contains solid people -- and I sincerely hope they'll accept, you included. We have tried very hard to eliminate cranks and people whose objectivity is dubious. Here, obviously, there are grounds for differences of opinion -- but we have wrestled with the matter and believe our choices are wholly defensible.

how?  
No one could have properly said that you had accepted our invitation to participate because the final invitation list was only completed last week. It was only Friday that I was asked to extend to you the official invitation, which I do herewith. I do this, now, in the sincere hope that you will accept. Can we get together over lunch up here in my office (or somewhere else if more convenient) and talk it over? What probably happened is that someone spoke to you about our June list of tentative choices for invitations. It was our great care to screen the participants that led to delay in actual invitations. You will see many changes between the June "tentative list" and the one we have now settled on. But you, obviously, are on both lists and all other tentative ones.

Frankly, Ed, I earnestly hope you will accept, will state your views frankly and forcefully -- and will stir up some added interest in the Condon Report which deserves far wider attention than it has had. It is not going to be a nutty session, I sincerely believe. You should enjoy it, and do some good for the cause!

In respect to the need for a good Science review of the UFO Report, I fully agree, and several other members of our Board feel similarly. It is overdue. I would have expected that one would have appeared before now, and am surprised to learn that it has not. I have, as a result of your letter, recommended to Abelson that he push this. As you know, AAAS policy leaves to Abelson editorial responsibility for Science. But Board members do not hesitate to give him suggestions and I will follow up on this. I have learned, also, that some other Board members, quite independently of your letter, have recommended a review. Abelson, of course, is somewhat at the mercy of any dilatory tactics on the part of his chosen reviewers, so that things sometime take longer than they should. But I do not know whether this is the case here.


Dr. Edward U. Condon

-3-

16 September 1969

Let's get together for a talk. If we can't agree about your participation in the AAAS symposium, at least we can enjoy a lunch together. I just had a nice letter from Steve Dedijer.

Cordially,



Walter Orr Roberts

P.S. I enclose another letter I had prepared before I got yours of the 5th. It gives some added details about the program.

WOR

September 8, 1969

Dear Walter:

I have just received a copy of Dr. Condon's letter to you with the enclosures, and I am in complete agreement with his criticisms of the proposed AAAS symposium on UFO tentatively (I hope) planned for our Christmas meetings. He has expressed my views of this matter very well indeed. We can only do harm by supporting these charlatans and deluded people by the prestige of the AAAS in support of such a symposium. At the time of the discussion of a UFO symposium for the Dallas meetings, I expressed my opposition and was relieved that the matter appeared to be dropped. I was shocked when I discovered its inclusion on the tentative program of the Boston meetings. I feel as badly as I would if we were planning a symposium on astrology in which we took the claims of astrologers at their face value and invited astronomers to argue with them. In justifying a UFO symposium in terms of numbers of believers and interested persons is like arguing the merit of claims of astrologers because there are 10,000 of them in the U.S. to only 1,000 astronomers! I agree with Condon that self-respecting scientists should not dignify a meeting of this kind by participating.



UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO  
BOULDER, COLORADO 80302

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS AND ASTROPHYSICS

1006 JILA Bldg.

19 September 1969

SEP 23 1969

Dr. Thornton Page  
18639 Point Lookout Drive  
Houston, Texas 77058

Dear Dr. Page:

Your 15 September letter came yesterday morning. In the afternoon Walter Roberts came over to give me a copy of the tentative program of the proposed Boston AAAS UFO symposium, and to invite me to take part in it. We talked about the whole situation for more than an hour.

I had not heard of the distribution of the tentative program in June, nor do I object to my name's having been on that as to be invited. I have been told, however, that committee members have told people I had agreed to participate, and if that is true, I do object because I have not, and will not.

I wish I had known in June that plans were going forward so that I could have started opposition sooner. I think the whole idea is a bad one that, if carried through, could harm the AAAS. I still hope it may be possible for the Board to call the whole thing off, despite the two preliminary announcements that have already appeared in Science. I am sending copies of this letter to most of the invitees. Each individual has to make his own decision, but I would not want anyone to accept under the impression that I favor this thing.

You do not comment on the points made in my 5 September letter to Walter Roberts. I will simply say again that this subject, ignored correctly by AAAS for two decades, does not warrant being given such serious attention now, and that the press coverage is sure to emphasize the sensational and the irresponsible. Walter tells me that AAAS has already had symposia on ESP, astrology and Velikowsky. I did not know this. I think that was wrong. In no sense do past errors justify making another one in respect to UFOs.

In the course of our conversation, Walter said that he personally wishes the idea for UFOs in Boston could have been dropped. But he feels that he must go ahead with it because of a "moral commitment" to Sagan and yourself who want it so badly. In insisting on holding this affair, I think you and Sagan are doing a great disservice to AAAS.

From previous correspondence, I think it is almost certain that neither Donald Menzel nor Col. Quintanilla will accept. There may be a delay in hearing from Menzel as he is in Europe.

I enclose copies of letters from Hudson Hoagland, a AAAS board member, and from Donald Shane, in response to my 5 September letter, which indicate that I am not alone on this matter.

Sincerely,

*E. U. Condon*  
E. U. Condon





NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION  
MANNED SPACECRAFT CENTER  
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77058

IN REPLY REFER TO: Thornton Page, 18639 Point Lookout Drive, Houston, Texas 77058

Dr.

23 Sept 1969

Dear Dr.

Dr. Condon, who was invited to speak at the AAAS General Symposium on UFO's 26-27 Dec 1969 in Boston, has circulated to "most of the invitees" and to all of the AAAS Board Members, three letters opposing the Symposium because it will "harm the AAAS". I can understand that Dr. Condon has strong feelings about this subject, but he should recognize that my motives in proposing the 9-hour UFO Symposium at the AAAS Meeting were similar to his motives in undertaking a year-long UFO Study that did no harm to his university.

My Committee, appointed by the AAAS Board in November, 1968, has no intention of highlighting the "sensational material" feared by C. D. Shane in his letter of 12 Sept circulated by Condon. In fact, the proposed program covers much the same material included in Condon's "Scientific Study of UFO's". Our wanting to hold the AAAS Symposium derives in part from the facts presented in the Condon Report: (1) A large fraction of the US public (including scientists) is poorly informed on the UFO problem, (2) There is often an emotional reaction to press coverage of UFO reports, and (3) Most, but not all, of the UFO sightings can be explained in terms of well understood physical phenomena.

I personally feel that emotional reactions of scientists, though psychologically explicable, themselves do a great disservice to science and the AAAS. Our attempt to discuss UFO reports rationally at a symposium among astronomers, physicists, engineers, and psychologists will scarcely "support the charlatans and diluted people" as feared by Hudson Hoagland in his letter of 8 Sept. The Committee members hold independent and varied opinions, but we are all certain that none of us has been "taken in" by a medium or any other extremist.

The Committee felt that Dr. Condon should be invited to speak, in view of his thorough knowledge based on a lengthy study; we regret that he has declined. We have obtained other speakers to give a balanced summary of the Condon Report, and we hope to demonstrate that scientists can discuss a controversial topic without losing their sense of perspective (or sense of humor!). In my opinion this is an educational effort of considerable importance, and worthy of the AAAS. I hope you agree -- and will help us achieve our goal.

Sincerely,

cc: Walter Orr Roberts  
(and AAAS Board Members)  
Philip Morrison  
Carl Sagan

*Thornton Page*  
Thornton Page

W.O. Roberts Box 59  
University of Colorado at Boulder  
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Campus Box 184  
Boulder, Colorado 80309-0184

AAAS Jan '68 - 20 Oct '68

23A

5 September 1968

AIR MAIL

Dr. Dael Wolfe  
AAAS  
1515 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D. C. 20005

Dear Dael:

I think that we have a deferment-of-crisis in the making for the UFO symposium in December. I have been in touch extensively with Page and with Sagan, in the last few days.

Also I talked with Walter Berl when he was here last Sunday, and we cooked up a bit of an idea of a way to proceed.

What now seems likely, if you and the Board (or Executive Committee) will go along with it, is the following.

We here and now establish as a firm plan for the Christmas 1969 meeting of the AAAS a general AAAS symposium (as distinguished from a section symposium) on the subject of the UFOs. We then plan at the next Board meeting to approve the constitution of a symposium committee including Sagan and Page, with Page as chairman, and perhaps including Philip Morrison and possibly someone else (possibly even myself) who is not committed on either side of the issue. This committee could then plan the symposium to consider not only the issues already planned in the Page-Sagan symposium that we had planned for this coming Christmas, but also perhaps could consider some of the wider implications -- as for example the responses of scientists and laymen to discussion of the UFO issue.

The postponement of the symposium makes some sense because we can be certain, by postponing it, that we have the Condon report as one point of departure. At the coming Christmas meeting this is an uncertainty. And it seems more than likely that we will be able to get the participation of Condon, or perhaps of someone like Menzel or Markowitz if this has taken place. Certainly the AAAS will be in a stronger position to defend the timeliness of such a discussion, if the Condon report has been out, and there has been time for people to read it and discuss it. Moreover the passions aroused by the article

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1968

Dr. Dael Wolfle  
Page Two

5 September 1968

in Look and by the article in Science will be somewhat tempered, I suspect, by a year from now.

If you concur with this as a wise tactical move, I think it important for us to move quickly and firmly. Sagan will, I suspect, be very reluctant to postpone the symposium if he is presented with an "ultimatum" by the Menzel-Markowitz axis. So I would urge you and me and Walter Berl to make a firm commitment to a 1969 symposium, if that is within our powers -- and if it is not, I would urge us to take an action via Executive Committee, rather than waiting for the next meeting of our full Board.

I promised Sagan to phone you Monday to talk about this. And I also want to tell you about the conclusion of my discussions today with John Mason, and my discussions with the British Association. I have already told Walter Berl the general outlines, and I think we are now ready to issue specific invitations, and to go ahead with what will be a very manageable, and I predict very exciting conference of considerably more manageable proportions than the 75 that we had originally planned for. \*

Hope your vacation was a good one! Best personal wishes.

Sincerely yours,

Walter Orr Roberts

cc: Walter Berl

bcc: Bentley Glass  
Don Price

WOR/ngw

\* 10-15 from look and sc 1006 10  
like actual target.



# American Association for the Advancement of Science

1515 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NW, WASHINGTON, D. C., 20005

Phone: 387-7171 (Area Code 202)

Cable Address: Advancesci, Washington, D. C.

September 12, 1968

Dr. Walter Orr Roberts  
University Corporation for  
Atmospheric Research  
Boulder, Colorado, 80302

Dear Walter:

When I returned from the Gordon Research Conferences trustees meeting on the morning of September 11, the copy of your proposed letter to Thornton Page and Carl Sagan was waiting for me. I phoned your office to say that it was all right and should be mailed.

Later in the day Carl Sagan phoned to read me a draft of the letter he proposed to send to the people who had agreed to take part in the symposium. I read him your letter, which of course he had not yet received. We agreed on a couple of minor changes in his draft, and I then approved it.

It happens that on the same day, September 11, Dr. Abelson received from Donald Menzel a letter submitted for publication in Science in which Drs. Donald Menzel and William Markowitz are quite critical of the proposed UFO symposium. You are on the distribution list and by now, I am sure, have a copy. In view of the request to withdraw and defer the symposium, I told Dr. Abelson of the action that had been taken. I expect he will reply to Dr. Menzel with a statement that there seems now to be no point in the publication of the Menzel-Markowitz letter.

Sincerely,

*Dael*

Dael Wolfle

DW: chb

*I'll look forward to  
seeing you at the Cosmos  
club about 8:30 pm on the  
23<sup>rd</sup>*

*DW*

*WOLF*

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

TUCSON, ARIZONA 85721

LUNAR AND PLANETARY LABORATORY

AUG 15 1968

August 13, 1968

Dr. Frank Bradshaw Wood, Secretary  
Section D - Astronomy  
American Association for the Advancement of Science  
c/o Department of Physics and Astronomy  
University of Florida  
Gainesville, Florida 32601

Dear Brad:

I share the grave concern over the proposed symposium on UFO's at Dallas on the grounds that I think it will be extremely difficult, though perhaps not impossible, to arrange a presentation that would be a credit to a responsible scientific organization. It seems to me that the timing is not the best--presumably shortly preceding the public release of the final report of Condon's group at Boulder. The place may not be the best--Dallas, at least in some people's view, being populated by an inordinate proportion of extremists and the lunatic fringe. Public interest in a symposium on this subject would run high, and the quality of reporting for the mass media would be most important. Who would participate? What are their credentials? What form would the presentation take--symposium, forum, or other? How would questions and discussion be handled? Who would preside?

We have on our faculty here, in the Department of Atmospheric Physics, one of the most vocal of the supposedly responsible members of the extraterrestrial-surveillance UFO camp, Dr. James E. McDonald. I have heard McDonald speak before a number of groups and read so many of his press releases in the newspapers that I am tired of them. From what I have seen and heard, McDonald is entirely too uncritical regarding subjective reports by supposedly responsible observers, who, in my own personal experience, can be honestly mistaken. He tends to dismiss negative evidence and to ignore proof that some of the points he likes are fallacious or irrelevant. He is entirely too concerned with publicity and Congressional hearings and too little concerned with objective evaluation of whatever evidence there may be. Are we to provide a platform for more of the same?

Tucson is also the headquarters of the APRO group lead by the Lorenzens,

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who appear to make their living turning out literature on the subject of UFO's. It is obviously to their advantage, also, to keep things stirred up.

Dr. William Hartmann, member of our faculty group in the Lunar and Planetary Laboratory, has been a collaborator in the Condon study. I have talked informally with him on a number of occasions and have been interested to hear him deflate some of McDonald's most impressive cases on the basis of objective measurements--sun angles, tracking data, positions of Venus, and the like. He admits that there is some remainder for which a satisfactory explanation has not been found, but he has expressed the opinion that the proportion is not large enough to justify the massive attack that McDonald seeks.

There does seem to be a deficiency in communication between the various groups involved in investigation of UFO's, but I get the impression that the cause is that too many axes are being ground to bother with objectivity. The degree of emotional involvement is extremely high.

If a presentation could be kept on a high plane, a very useful purpose could be served in laying to rest some of the distortions and misconceptions. But I should be amazed if the proceedings could be so kept under control as to walk the thin line between charges of "rigging" and something that we would wish to be associated with.

I do not think that the unwillingness of Drs. Menzel and Markowitz to participate is irremedial, though obviously they would have much to contribute toward a balanced presentation. It seems to me that the potential difficulties go much deeper.

On the basis of the information in your letter, combined with what I know through contacts here, I strongly urge that the Section committee go on record as opposed to the symposium on UFO's at the Dallas meeting.

Sincerely yours,

*Elizabeth Roemer*

Elizabeth Roemer  
Committeeman-at-Large  
Section D

cc: Dr. Dael Wolfe  
Dr. Walter Orr Roberts  
Dr. Dorrit Hoffleit  
Dr. Gibson Reaves  
Dr. George O. Abell  
Dr. Paul Herget  
Dr. Carleton B. Moore  
Dr. Charlotte M. Sitterly  
Mr. Tomas S. Vanasek

Dr. Donald H. Menzel  
Dr. William Markowitz  
Dr. Thornton L. Page



August 8, 1968

MEMBERS, SECTION D COMMITTEE, A.A.A.S.

1.

AUG 12 1968

A situation has arisen in connection with the program for the December, 1968, meetings which is without precedence in my experience. It seems advisable to bring it to the attention of the Section Committee for advice and comment.

The question concerns one of the scheduled symposia. This is a discussion of the nature and implications of UFO reports. The suggestion of such a topic came from Dr. Thornton Page who was elected Section D Chairman for 1968 by vote of the Section Committee. Dr. Page had organized the symposium so far as it exists to date with aid of Dr. Carl Sagan.

The idea for such a symposium was presented to the other section officers when we met in Washington to plan the 1968 meetings. The idea was not well received; no other section was willing to collaborate; the matter was for the time being dropped. However, Dr. Page, as Chairman, raised the matter again, and after learning from the national officers that each section was responsible for its own programs, a day was allotted for such a symposium; subsequently this was extended to a day and a half.

Recently, two of the invited speakers - Drs. William Markowitz and Donald Menzel - have not only refused to participate but have advised very strongly against holding this symposium. Their arguments in part are that some of the principal invited speakers are not responsible scientists, have published only in "popular" unrefereed magazines - i.e. not in any responsible scientific journal - and that to sponsor this symposium would be equivalent to sponsoring one on astrology in which astrologers were asked to participate. Further arguments are advanced but I believe this summarizes correctly the essence of their letters. However, I believe that either would communicate to our committee in greater detail if we desire.

On the other hand, Dr. Walter Orr Roberts, the only astronomer on the Board of Directors of the AAAS, feels that the symposium is properly organized - or will be if all invitees accept - and adds that people who are responsible and respected members of the scientific community have urged holding such a session. An added consideration is the wisdom of asking the AAAS Board in effect to censor the program of a section. His present judgment is that, if such a request were made, the Board would not intervene in the absence of any action by the Section Committee.

We have various alternatives.

(1). We can take no action whatever. This would almost certainly mean that the symposium would be held, probably without the presence of Drs. Markowitz and Menzel who would tend to give it balance. Whether they can be replaced by others of like views and equal competence, I do not know.

(2) We can inform the Board that the Section Committee does not approve of this symposium and urge that it be cancelled or drastically altered. If approved by unanimous or nearly unanimous action, this should carry heavy weight. In my view, it would be unfair to do this without letting Dr. Page (who, of course, will receive a copy of this letter) express arguments to the contrary.

(no reply needed)

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(3). We can, as a Section Committee, endorse the program and urge all invitees to attend. This, I think, should not be done without hearing more fully from Drs. Markowitz and Menzel.

(4). We can have the first section meeting in history. The AAAS could probably cover travel costs. I think this inadvisable unless at least two-thirds of the section members can and will attend.

Other alternatives may occur to you. I am writing Drs. Markowitz and Menzel that I am consulting the section, so that they may communicate with you if they wish. It may be pertinent to add that, if held, the papers will almost certainly be published as a book.

This is obviously a delicate matter and while there is certainly no objection to discussing it with responsible colleagues I hope that otherwise it will be treated as a private communication.

Sincerely yours,

Frank Bradshaw Wood  
Secretary, Section D

cc: Dr. Dael Wolfe  
Dr. Walter Orr Roberts ✓

(Note address after Aug 24, 1968)

% Department of Physics and Astronomy  
University of Florida  
Gainesville, Florida 32601



# American Association for the Advancement of Science

AUG 5 1968

DON K. PRICE, Chairman, Board of Directors

John F. Kennedy School of Government  
Harvard University  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

August 1, 1968

Dr. Walter Orr Roberts  
National Center for Atmospheric  
Boulder, Colorado

Dear Walt:

It was good to get a glimpse of you the other evening at the Cosmos Club since it prepared me for the phone call I got from Don Menzel yesterday. I tried to phone you today but gathered you were away from Boulder.

Menzel made to me the points he had already made to you. I told him that I was in agreement with the points which you had made to him in your letter of July 23. I told him that I distinguished carefully between my layman's opinion that the UFO's were all nonsense, and on the other hand the problem of making judgments within a scientific association, where the specialized sections were given a great deal of autonomy, and properly so.

His main worry is that in any session such as the proposed one it will be the cranks who will grab all the headlines. I told him that that would undoubtedly be true as far as the popular press was concerned, but the popular press would write substantially the same stories anyhow, and if opinion could be influenced within a scientific meeting it will have in the long run powerful effects indirectly on the leaders of opinion.

I said to him that the one cardinal point that I kept in mind was that it would not hurt the scientific community or AAAS to have it said that we listened to some scientific crank, but it would be extremely damaging to have stories all over the country that we had undertaken to play the role of censor. (I did not mention the old Velikovsky business, but I think Don got my point.)

I said to Don that I could not blame any individual for preferring not to take part in a public scrap, but that I certainly hoped that someone of his point of view would feel an obligation to stand up in public and say

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Dr. Walter Orr Roberts

-2-

August 1, 1968

what needed to be said. I think Don feels some considerable personal responsibility in this direction and my hunch is that in the end he will accept.

But he is prepared to urge that the planned sessions be cut down from a day and a half to a single day, and he thinks it would be better to leave out such matters (which he considers irrelevant) as interstellar travel, interstellar communication, and the possibilities of life in outer space. He reiterated his recommendation that Brian O'Brien (formerly of the American Optical Company) be put on the program.

Menzel is leaving Cambridge this afternoon for Colorado where he will be seeing Ed Condon, and may be in touch with you as well. I think he gets to Boulder early next week, if at all.

At this point I feel that I have exhausted my expertise with respect to the little green men and other extraterrestrial phenomena, and am happy to leave the issue entirely in the hands of the President and the Executive Officer.

Yours ever,



Don K. Price

DKP:B  
cc:DW

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*American Association  
for the Advancement of Science*

AUG 5 1968

DON K. PRICE, President

John F. Kennedy School of Government  
Harvard University  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

August 1, 1968

Dr. Edward U. Condon  
761 Cascade Avenue  
Boulder, Colorado 80302

Dear Ed:

I am sorry to receive the copy of your letter to Walter Roberts and sorry too for the unhappy circumstances that provoked it.

While I am sure that if the incident had developed a year ago I would have felt constrained to act just as Walt did, this does not lessen my regret.

I hope that the successful completion of your study will bring the present difficult circumstances to an end and that after the passage of a bit more time you may even be willing to consider rejoining the fold.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,



Don K. Price

DKP:B  
bcc: Dr. Roberts  
Dr. Wolfle

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001 2 4 1968

July 31, 1968

Dr. E. U. Condon  
761 Cascade Avenue  
Boulder, Colorado, 80302

Dear Ed:

Earlier I wired you an invitation to correct any errors in the Science article on the University of Colorado UFO project.

Your letter also said you wanted to resign from AAAS. If that is a firm decision, of course we will honor it. But I hope you will reconsider. Walter Roberts has told me that he has also written you to say he would discuss the matter with other members of the Board. May we continue to consider you a member for a while longer?

Sincerely,

Dael Wolfle

DW:chb

h

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# American Association for the Advancement of Science

AUG 2 1968

1515 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NW, WASHINGTON, D. C., 20005

Phone: 387-7171 (Area Code 202)

Cable Address: Advancesci, Washington, D. C.

July 30, 1968

AAAS Board of Directors:

You have all received copies of a letter of resignation from E. U. Condon addressed to Walter Roberts. This is a sad end to a sad story.

Following the appearance in Look magazine in May of an article describing some of the difficulties and strife of the UFO project which Dr. Condon directs, Dan Greenberg reported that Dr. Condon discussed with him the possibility of an article in Science. The Science reporters did not want to be used to write a slanted story to counteract the bias of the Look article and declined to give Dr. Condon the privilege of seeing in advance what would be written. It is standard practice here and elsewhere to talk to people who can express a variety of points of view concerning an article under preparation, but not to submit the article to any of the principals about whom it is written.

From then on, things moved to a climax with everybody standing on principle, each principle being quite defensible and the total result being quite wrong.

Dr. Condon declined to talk with Mr. Boffey, who wrote the Science article, or, I understand, with other news representatives. He wrote and talked to Walter Roberts, trying to have the article (which he had not seen) withdrawn, and threatening legal action if we quoted from the controversial memorandum that is referred to in the Science article.

The news staff wanted to write the story, and, I think, were reinforced in that desire by Dr. Condon's efforts to have it killed. Dr. Abelson and I both thought the story should not be written, but did not wish to censor the staff. Dr. Abelson would have countermanded the article if the content had justified that action. But so far as we can tell, the account is accurate. Walter Roberts, who read the draft, agrees. Dr. Abelson did not want to set the precedent of killing an accurate and, in the judgment of the news staff, timely story because the subject of the article objected to having anything published. I agreed.

Nevertheless, he would have killed the story if Walter Roberts or I had insisted. Neither of us felt we should. We have long followed

b7k



the policy of trusting the judgment of the editor. The Board has explicitly stated that it should not tell him what to publish or not to publish.

Because Dr. Condon threatened legal action, I had the draft of the article reviewed by our legal counsel, and on his advice we made some changes in the copy before publication.

I have wired Dr. Condon in response to his letter of resignation to say that we would like to publish a specific account and refutation of the errors his letter says the article contained.

Neither Dr. Abelson nor I think the article worth the trouble it caused, and we would have preferred to postpone any account until the report of the UFO project comes out later this fall. But while I did not like to publish the article, I liked even less to prevent its publication.

Sincerely,

*Dael Wolfle*

Dael Wolfle

DW: chb



*American Association  
for the Advancement of Science*

1515 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NW, WASHINGTON, D. C., 20005

Phone: 387-7171 (Area Code 202) Cable Address: Advancesci, Washington, D. C.

July 26, 1968

Dr. Frank Bradshaw Wood  
Attean Lake Camps  
Jackman, Maine, 04945

Dear Brad:

In your enviably remote location, I hope you are having a wonderfully fine time. I feel apologetic for intruding, but there has been so much flak over Thornton Page's UFO symposium that I thought you should be informed.

Several letters have come here from Markowitz and Menzel blasting the program. Menzel has talked to Walter Roberts at length, has said that he and several others would boycott the symposium unless it was reorganized as they thought it should be, and, finally, has asked Walt to have the Board of Directors cancel the whole symposium. I enclose copies of some of the correspondence.

I think none of us here at the AAAS office had much enthusiasm for the symposium when Page first proposed it. On the other hand, I agree with Walter Roberts that we do not want to start on the censorship route.

Sometime when you get near a telephone, you may want to phone Walt Roberts in Boulder, Colorado. His number is (303) 444-5151. He would be glad to talk with you.

Now go back to enjoying the lake. In a few days I am heading for an equally remote and inaccessible lake in the State of Washington.

Sincerely,

DW

Dael Wolfle

DW:jat  
Enclosure

cc: Dr. Walter Roberts ✓



*American Association  
for the Advancement of Science*

July 25 1968

1515 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NW, WASHINGTON, D. C., 20005

Phone: 387-7171 (Area Code 202)

Cable Address: Advancesci, Washington, D. C.

July 25, 1968

Dr. Walter Orr Roberts  
National Center for  
Atmospheric Research  
Boulder, Colorado, 80302

Dear Walt:

This morning's mail brought several things from you. I'll answer them all.

Thank you for the check and membership information for David Werts. We will take care of the rest of the details.

The UFO article is now in print. I also sent Ed Condon a letter, of which a copy went to you. I hope he breathes a big sigh of relief when he actually sees the article, for I think he has been fearing something we had never planned to do.

Thank you also for the correspondence with Bill Golden about his discussion with Al Friendly. I am passing it on to Walter Berl.

I agree with Loren Eiseley that the people who spend a great deal of time in helping to produce the shows for NBC should be properly compensated. I am not sure AAAS should be paid by NBC. Perhaps we will want to talk of this again. ||

We must in any event keep our fingers crossed about the NBC arrangement. The letter I recently sent to you and the other members of the committee, asking for advice about the programs NBC is now planning for the next two years, indicates that the advice we sent following our last committee meeting did not appear to have much influence.

At Dundee you will need a dinner jacket for the Council dinner, the dinner on the final evening, at which you will respond to the toast to overseas guests. During the course of the preceding week, there may or may not be another occasion when you will want a dinner jacket. On the opening night, when the whole meeting is started off ceremoniously and the president gives his address, the invitations call for full dress, academic robes, and medals. There is no need to bother with tails, however. Dinner jacket and black tie are quite acceptable. Whether you take academic robes will depend on your wishes and your baggage weight. I have been able to squeeze them in on my trips to BA meetings.

*WOR*

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The Council dinner on the concluding evening is a very pleasant affair for officers, past officers, local dignitaries, and overseas guests. After the opening toast to the Queen, and perhaps a couple of other formal toasts, all of which will be very brief, there will be a somewhat longer (perhaps five or ten minutes) toast to the overseas guests given by one of the British officers. The reply can be either serious or humorous, or preferably both. I would think it particularly appropriate in your case to say something about the meeting the two organizations will be holding in Boulder next April. But you will be speaking not only for the few Americans but for all of the overseas visitors, and there will probably be formal representatives of the associations for the advancement of science from France, South Africa, India, Pakistan, Ceylon, and perhaps other places. So the reply should not be strictly on a U.K.-U.S. line. Nor need it all be serious. It is the final evening; most of the work and worries are over; there will have been lots of opportunity to hear lectures on the previous days and evenings. So brevity would be appreciated, and so would be a good, apt story.

The other social events will be largely at your option. There are likely to be several garden parties. Ordinary business clothes are worn on those occasions. There may be a reception by the city. The invitation will tell you what dress is appropriate, or one of the officers of the BA can give advice; it may be academic robes or it may be dinner jacket. On the opening day, there is likely to be a reception and sherry party for the overseas guests. That is a good opportunity to see them all together.

As for overseas transportation, I would like to say first class, but to be consistent I have to say tourist.

There are no scientific sessions on Saturday and Sunday of the meeting week, but there are always a variety of excursions (and there are also shorter excursions on other days) which will give you an opportunity to see surrounding parts of the country.

BA meetings are more relaxed, sociable affairs than ours. Have fun.

Sincerely,

*Dael*

Dael Wolfe

DW: chb



*American Association  
for the Advancement of Science*

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JUL 29 1968

July 25, 1968

Dr. Walter Orr Roberts  
National Center for Atmospheric Research  
Boulder, Colorado, 80302

Dear Walt:

I have not been able to reach Brad Wood. He is in Maine, at some distance from a telephone, and hard to reach. In the meantime, however, I have learned from Walter Berl that Thornton Page has been in Boulder and intended to have a talk with you. Consequently, I have done nothing to follow up on our discussion of Tuesday about whether we should try to alter or call off Thornton Page's symposium, except to learn that Berl would be quite reluctant now to tell Page that it had to be killed. However, I have suggested that Berl talk with you.

On a quite different matter, Dr. Berl brought back from Europe greetings from Norman Wright, the secretary of the British Association, and an expression of the uncertainty in the BA office as to whether our joint meeting was intended to focus on the year 2000 (or thereabouts) in the general sense of trying to analyze what conditions we might have at that time, or in the more narrow sense was to consist of people actively involved in the management and policy planning of the BA, the AAAS, and perhaps some other associations for the advancement of science, with the discussion emphasis on our own associational programs rather than on conditions of the world at large.

I answered that I thought it appropriate for some of the introductory talks to be of the year 2000 variety, but that the discussion, the questions to be considered in the meeting, and the report--if we prepare one--should be focused on association responsibilities and activities. I have not said this to Dame Kathleen or Sir Norman, but I thought you would want to know that they are puzzling over the question.

Sincerely,

*Dael*

Dael Wolfle

29 JUL 1968

DW: chb

*Dael:  
I think we'd all agree  
about this, and I'll be  
prepared to discuss  
it in this context.  
Conrad  
Walt.*

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*American Association  
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JUL 25 1968

1515 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NW, WASHINGTON, D. C., 20005

Phone: 387-7171 (Area Code 202)

Cable Address: Advancesci, Washington, D. C.

July 23, 1968

Dr. E. U. Condon  
1006 JILA Building  
University of Colorado  
Boulder, Colorado, 80302

Dear Ed:

I am sad and distressed that we should have gotten into so much disagreement over the decision of the Science staff to publish an article on the University of Colorado UFO project. But you are an important public figure; the topic is of wide interest; and the News and Comment staff members feel that the time is appropriate for a news report. Whether I agree or not is largely irrelevant if the story itself appears to be carefully and objectively done, for I think you know that it has not been our policy to tell the news staff members what they must or must not write about.

The story will appear in this week's issue, the one dated July 26. I have read it carefully. It is not an attack against the University of Colorado. When you see it I hope you will find it not nearly so bad as you have feared.

Sincerely,

DW  
Dael Wolfle

DW:chb

cc: Dr. Walter Orr Roberts ✓

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*W*

AAAS

Night Letter  
20 July 1968  
6:15 p.m.

Dr. Dael Wolfle  
AAAS  
1515 Massachusetts Avenue  
Washington, D. C.

CONDON THREATENS LEGAL ACTION AGAINST AAAS OVER ALLEGEDLY STOLEN  
ALLEGEDLY COPYRIGHTED FILE MATERIAL IF SCIENCE ARTICLE APPEARS  
WITH QUOTES FROM MEMO. LETTER FOLLOWS.

Walter Roberts

Charged to home number  
Bill AAAS.

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*American Association  
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JUN 24 1968

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Phone: 387-7171 (Area Code 202)

Cable Address: Advancesci, Washington, D. C.

June 18, 1968

Dr. Thornton L. Page  
319 Washington Terrace  
Middletown, Connecticut 06457

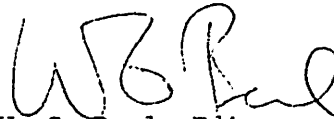
Dear Dr. Page:

I am replying to your letter of 14 June where you indicated that the symposium on Unidentified Flying Objects (et al.) may now require more than two half-day sessions. Indeed, you estimate a need for 9 hours, at current reckoning.

There are two drawbacks to an evening session. The more formal one is that it would run at the same time as the AAAS-wide address of the Retiring President (Don K. Price) and with the reception for AAAS members and guests; the more practical is that the day sessions give you no more than six hours of usable time. It is almost impossible to pick up another three hours in the evening. However, if there is need for substantially more time, a half-day session can be added without great difficulty, either on the preceeding day (December 27) or the following one (December 29).

It would appear that the main pieces are beginning to fit together. I still hope that the Condon Report will provide a useful structural underpinning and that it (and Condon) will be available.

With sincerest regards, *and best wishes*



W. G. Berl, Editor  
AAAS Annual Meeting

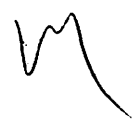
WGB:mlc

cc: FSWood

WORoberts

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JUN 17 1968

WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY  
MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT 06457  
DEPARTMENT OF ASTRONOMY

VAN VLECK OBSERVATORY

14 June 1968

Mr. D.W. Thornhill  
AAAS Meeting Manager  
1515 Mass. Ave. N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Mr. Thornhill:

Donald Menzel (Harvard astronomer) has written me a long letter with many suggestions about the Symposium on Unidentified Flying Objects on 28 Dec. in Dallas. He favors the objectives and would like to contribute a talk on two subjects: Russian activities, and the variety of natural explanations of UFO-sightings. He recognizes that the symposium schedule is already crowded, and suggests an evening session. It is my opinion that there will be considerable interest in the UFO Symposium, and that an evening session would attract a large audience.

Could you let me know whether such a session can be scheduled on the evening of 28 Dec. in the same large hall used for the morning and afternoon sessions of the UFO Symposium. I will then arrange for Prof. Menzel and perhaps other suitable speakers.

The arrangements for sessions I and II outlined in the tentative schedule have proceeded as follows:

- I. 1. Hynek accepted; R.M.L. Baker (UCLA) also invited; Maj Quintanella (USAF) also invited; NICAP representative also invited.
2. Markowitz invited; Menzel tentatively accepted
3. A psychologist is still needed
4. McDonald invited
5. Klass accepted, Powers accepted, W.K. Hartmann (Univ. of Arizona) also invited
6. Arnold McLain (Ent AF Base, Colo) invited as NORA speaker
- II. 7. Sagan accepted
8. Stephen Gould (Harvard Museum of Comp.Zool.) accepted
9. Drake accepted
10. Bussard invited
11. Friedman invited
12. The summary may be replaced by a 30-minute panel discussion in the evening session.

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Mr. D.W. Thornhill

2.

14 June 1968

The 17 speakers and panel discussions will take a total of at least 9 hours; hence Sagan and I feel that we need 2 hours in the evening as well as 3 in the morning and 4 in the afternoon.

Sincerely,

*Thornton Page*

Thornton Page

Encl: Symposium Synopsis

cc: Carl Sagan  
Walter Beri ✓  
F.B. Wood  
Dael Wolfle

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Phone: 387-7171 (Area Code 202)

Cable Address: Advancesci, Washington, D. C.

June 10, 1968

Dr. Walter Orr Roberts  
National Center for  
Atmospheric Research  
Boulder, Colorado 80302

Dear Walter:

Your continuing correspondence with Professor Menzel is very useful in pinpointing the potential hazards of the AAAS Section D/Astronomy symposium on "The Nature and Implication of UFO Reports". So that there can be no misunderstanding on plans or intentions I am enclosing copies of my file on this subject. It is not complete but it may be useful in reconstructing the train of events.

I have attempted to convey the "AAAS viewpoint" to both Page and Wood, viz: (1) in the absence of the Condon Report, nothing basically new has come along recently that can be discussed without repeating well-known positions; (2) if the decision is made to go ahead, even in the absence of the Report, all major contributors must prepare written statements of their remarks well ahead of the meeting to avoid the dangers of misunderstanding and inaccuracies during the discussion. Without these safeguards I believe that we will not only have an inconclusive meeting (which, by itself, is not a unique occurrence) but in addition, the publicity of this inconclusiveness will do a good deal of harm.

I share Professor Page's viewpoint that we should not shirk from discussing controversial matters in order to help in their resolution, This is one of our most vital purposes. But one has to take great pains to assure that these high expectations are met. The outline of the proposed symposium submitted by Professor Page shows that he is aware of potential pitfalls. I am sure that he would appreciate any suggestions from people who want to be helpful and wish to support his project.

With best regards,

*W. G. Berl*  
W. G. Berl, Editor  
AAAS Annual Meeting

WGB:mlc  
enclosures

DALLAS MEETING

DECEMBER 26-31, 1968

JUN 13 1968



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14 JUN 1968

*Thanks, Walter.  
You've handled this  
well, and we must simply  
hope for the best.  
New, hope for  
(This come in  
after my present  
letter to Page  
dated the 11th.)*

*Walt*

*Walter*

UNIVERSITY CORPORATION FOR ATMOSPHERIC RESEARCH  
BOULDER, COLORADO  
80302

DATE: 13 Nov 68

FROM: Walter Orr Roberts

TO: Dr. Philip Abelson, Science

Phil:  
I too was startled  
and disappointed by Dan  
Greenberg's use of Science  
"Letters" to make his response  
to Corder (referring to Dad's role)

I'm willing to put up  
with embarrassment and  
difficulty in things like Boffey's  
article because it was a fair  
and legitimate reporting job.

But now I'm hard  
put to maintain, with Ed  
Corder, my previous view vis-  
a-vis Science's objectivity - and  
this saddens me. Walt

bcc: Wolfe



*American Association  
for the Advancement of Science*

1515 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NW, WASHINGTON, D. C., 20005

Phone: 387-7171 (Area Code 202)

Cable Address: Advancesci, Washington, D. C.

October 30, 1968

To: Daniel S. Greenberg  
John Walsh

Our claim to greatness in the publication world rests on a reputation for objectivity in the presentation and discussion of issues of interest to Science readers. Publication of the letter by Dan Greenberg in the 25 October issue of Science raises questions concerning two principles I hope you will consider.

One concerns the use of the Letters column by members of the staff. The Letters section is for readers. It gives them an opportunity to comment on or disagree with material published earlier. When we accept for publication a letter that criticizes something that appeared earlier, it is our practice to allow the author of the original piece to prepare a brief rebuttal for simultaneous publication. Had Mr. Boffey responded in this fashion when the Condon or Branscomb letters were printed, we would have been following our usual practice. In general, however, I think it unwise for members of the staff to use the Letters section. (There may sometimes be justifiable exceptions to this rule, but the reopening of an old argument is not one of them.)

The members of the News and Comment staff and the authors of editorials have great freedom to select topics and to write as they please. They do not need and should not seek to belabor their critics in the Letters section.

The second principle is that criticisms should deal with issues and not with personalities. When Greenberg's letter speaks of Condon's "high-sounding principles in support of his new-found belief" or refers to "the celestial Bay of Pigs that Condon is running in Boulder," he is making a personal attack. No statement that Dr. Condon did not always act in good faith and no claim that he hoped for a favorable article in Science and withdrew his offer of support when the Look article did not turn out as badly as anticipated can excuse our bad manners in publishing the letter.

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Since Mr. Boffey's piece on the UFO study appeared last summer, I have repeatedly explained that we were not attacking the University of Colorado or Dr. Condon, but that we were trying to report a difficult and entangled situation. I can no longer make that claim, for in publishing the Greenberg letter, Science has made a personal attack on Dr. Condon.

I hope we can agree on a firm policy to prevent future violation of these two principles, and I will appreciate seeing your comments.

I have discussed this matter with Dr. Abelson and am sending you this memorandum with his concurrence.

Daal Wolfle

cc: Philip Abelson

bcc: Walter Orr Roberts ✓

12 P.  
Ed "AAAS 22-10-68 to 30-9-69"  
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W.O. Roberts CoV59  
University of Colorado at Boulder  
CU

22 September 1969

Dr. Hudson Hoagland  
The Worcester Foundation for  
Experimental Biology  
Shrewsbury, Massachusetts 01545

Dear Hudson:

Thanks for your letter of September 8th and your comments regarding the AAAS symposium on UFO's.

I appreciate your viewpoint, but feel that the symposium planners have done a conscientious and quite thorough job of preparing a symposium that meets all of the criteria that we usually establish. It seems to me quite dangerous to try to shut off expressions from responsible members of the scientific community who want to express themselves about this issue. And there are, in my opinion, quite a few people who cannot be put into the category of "cranks" or "nuts" who believe that there is something more to be looked into than the investigations to date have accomplished.

To be sure I personally think that they are kidding themselves about the evidence. And I would not personally place enough priority in the organization of my own timetable to consider it worthwhile to pursue. But some do, and have just enough doubts that the studies up to now have been sufficiently detailed that I believe we should give them opportunity to express themselves.

It is too bad, of course, that the attention to this does attract the cranks and the ones who would use the public enthusiasm to their own benefit.

Enclosed is a copy of a letter I wrote in response to Ed Condon, and it gives my reasons for feeling that the symposium is responsibly organized, and will be carried through in a dignified fashion befitting the meetings of the AAAS. I hope you will attend, and I hope you will not have cause to feel that the sessions have reflected unfavorably on the Association. This would indeed be unfortunate.



Again with sincere thanks for your thoughtful and frank letter.

Very cordially yours,

Walter Orr Roberts

P. S. Since I shall be away when this is typed, I have asked my secretary to sign this and send it along to avoid delay.

WOR

bcc: Thornton Page  
Dael Wolfle

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NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION  
MANNED SPACECRAFT CENTER  
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77058

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Code TG

23 Sept 1969

Dr. Walter Orr Roberts  
U C A R  
P.O. Box 1470  
Boulder, Colo. 80302

Dear Walt:


The enclosed letter, personally addressed, has gone to all the invitees of the AAAS General Symposium on UFO's. It is a response to Dr. E. U. Condon's letter to me dated 19 Sept, which he sent to the invitees and to members of the AAAS Board. I would like the AAAS Board to see my letter since it supports their action in scheduling the Symposium, and notes as gently as possible the weakness of Condon's contention that the Symposium will "harm the AAAS".

A copy of the letter, with a personal note to Condon, has been sent to him also. I hope that you can send copies to the Board Members.

Sincerely,

*Thornton Page*  
Thornton Page

cc: Philip Morrison  
Carl Sagan

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Boulder, Colorado 80309-0184

WALTER ORR ROBERTS  
NATIONAL CENTER FOR ATMOSPHERIC RESEARCH  
BOULDER, COLORADO 80302

19 September 1969

Dear Donald:

Sincere thanks for your thoughtful letter expressing your concurrence with Ed Condon in regard to the AAAS symposium on the UFO question at the Christmas meeting. I agree with many of the points you make; yet, on balance, I feel that the kind of symposium we plan is a useful contribution to the public understanding of science, and that it fits the AAAS goals and purposes to hold a carefully planned and responsibly guided discussion on these topics -- and I hope our symposium will indeed prove to be of such character.

Enclosed is a copy of my response to Ed. I have also sat down with Ed to talk things over. He has declined to participate, and I respect his viewpoint on this. We do plan, however, to go ahead with the symposium, and will do our best to try to get someone to do a good job of presenting the Condon Report findings.

Needless to say, I sincerely hope that the sessions we plan will not reflect unfavorably on the AAAS, nor subject the Association to ridicule by reputable scientists. If this were so, then we'd have truly done a disservice.

Best personal wishes,

Sincerely,

*Walter*

Dr. C. D. Shane  
P.O.Box 582  
Santa Cruz, California 95060



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*file  
w*

*American Association  
for the Advancement of Science*

1515 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NW, WASHINGTON, D. C., 20005

Phone: 387-7171 (Area Code 202)

Cable Address: Advancesci, Washington, D. C.

September 12, 1969

Dr. Kenneth V. Thimann  
Crown College  
University of California  
Santa Cruz, California 95060

Dear Ken:

Sylvia Eberhart, who handles book reviews for Science, and I have talked about the possibility even at this late date of a review of Ed Condon's "A Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects." She has problems getting a reviewer for that topic.

Although Science has not published a book review by an outsider, in the January 17 issue of Science we published a seven-column-long, complimentary, and--I think--quite good account of the study and report by Phil Boffey. It cannot be claimed, therefore, that we have not paid any attention to the report.

The hard-cover edition of the volume has just appeared. That publication gives us a second opportunity to try to get an external book reviewer to write a review, and Mrs. Eberhart is willing to do so if you or Walt Roberts, to whom I am sending a copy of this letter, think that desirable.

Sincerely,

*DW*

Dael Wolfle

DW:lp

cc: Walter Orr Roberts

17 SEP 1969  
*Dael: I do think it  
desirable, and recommend  
it.*  
*Walt*



C. D. Shane  
Post Office Box 582  
Santa Cruz, California  
95060

September 12, 1969

Dr. Walter Orr Roberts, Chairman  
American Association for the Advancement  
of Science  
National Center for Atmospheric Research  
Boulder, Colorado

Dear Walter:

I am writing to express my complete agreement with the contents of Ed Condon's letter to you of September 5, 1969. I served on the NAS panel that reviewed the Condon report and in the course of our study read it carefully and much of it several times. It is an excellent report but does not contain material of the sensational nature that appeals to the wide audience enjoyed by the UFO enthusiasts.

Condon's compelling argument against the proposed symposium is that no reputable scientist is going to waste his time in a study that would be necessary to refute the fallacious arguments of the UFO buffs in a manner convincing to an uninformed public. It would be this public that would receive and accept the sensational press reports inspired by the UFO enthusiasts' presentations.

I would consider a symposium on UFO's to be in the same category as one on astrology, Velikovsky's theories or on any one of the many prevalent superstitions.

It would in my opinion be disastrous for the AAAS to hold the proposed symposium and would subject the organization to ridicule among reputable scientists.

Yours sincerely,

*Donald Shane*

C. D. Shane

cc: Dr. Condon

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*file*

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ

SEP 13 1969

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OFFICE OF THE PROVOST  
CROWN COLLEGE



SANTA CRUZ, CALIFORNIA 95060

September 10, 1969

Dr. Walter Orr Roberts  
American Association for the  
Advancement of Science  
National Center for Atmospheric Research  
Boulder, Colorado 80302

Dear Walter:

After perusing the letter of Condon and his enclosure, my immediate reaction is that I think a review of the Condon report should certainly appear in Science. This was after all a thorough job spread over considerable time, and of much interest to a number of scientific people. It seems to me it would be only proper for it to be given a full review in Science.

As to the problem of the Symposium, that can of course be discussed at the forthcoming meeting, but I do think a book review would be a simple matter, and could be started. Do you agree?

Yours sincerely,

Kenneth V. Thimann  
Provost and  
Professor of Biology

KVT:mm  
cc: Dr. Dael Wolfle

19 SEP 1969

Kew: I agree that a review should appear. They have been trying. I suggested to Dael that Science should try Donald Shore as a reviewer.  
Walt

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Phone: 387-7171 (Area Code 202)

Cable Address: Advancesci, Washington, D. C.

September 10, 1969

Dr. Walter Orr Roberts  
University Corporation for  
Atmospheric Research  
Boulder, Colorado 80302

Dear Walter:

I have a copy of Ed Condon's letter to you about the symposium on unidentified flying objects. I have not replied, but would be glad to have for the record here a copy of what you say if you decide to reply in writing instead of discussing the matter with him directly or by telephone.

Let me comment on Ed's sentence, "It is interesting and significant that Science has not published a formal book review of this study at all." I asked Sylvia Eberhart if a review was in the works. There is none so far, and she does not know whether there will be. This is one of several topics in which she finds it very difficult to locate reviewers who do not have already well-known favorable or unfavorable attitudes.

Sincerely,

*Dael*

Dael Wolfle

DW:lp

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*WOP*



SEP 11 1969

THE WORCESTER FOUNDATION FOR EXPERIMENTAL BIOLOGY

MASON FERNALD  
Executive Director

*Shrewsbury, Massachusetts* 01545

Telephone (617) 842-8921

HUDSON HOAGLAND, Ph.D., Sc.D.  
President Emeritus

ROBERT R. HURT  
Director of Administration

September 8, 1969

Dear Walter:

I have just received a copy of Dr. Condon's letter to you with the enclosures, and I am in complete agreement with his criticisms of the proposed AAAS symposium on UFO tentatively (I hope) planned for our Christmas meetings. He has expressed my views of this matter very well indeed. We can only do harm by supporting these charlatans and deluded people by the prestige of the AAAS in support of such a symposium. At the time of the discussion of a UFO symposium for the Dallas meetings, I expressed my opposition and was relieved that the matter appeared to be dropped. I was shocked when I discovered its inclusion on the tentative program of the Boston meetings. I feel as badly as I would if we were planning a symposium on astrology in which we took the claims of astrologers at their face value and invited astronomers to argue with them. In justifying a UFO symposium in terms of numbers of believers and interested persons is like arguing the merit of claims of astrologers because there are 10,000 of them in the U.S. to only 1,000 astronomers! I agree with Condon that self-respecting scientists should not dignify a meeting of this kind by participating.



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My editorial in SCIENCE of last February 14 likened the UFO story to the hysteria over spirit mediums following World War I. Enclosed is a copy of this editorial. I see repeated in the emotionalism of believers the same phenomenon as I encountered in our investigation of "Margery" the medium. The article I wrote in the 1925 ATLANTIC MONTHLY dealing with her exposure resulted in violent attacks on us investigators, including attacks by some scientists who were taken in by her.

I hope the Board will refuse to allow this absurd symposium to take place, dignified by the auspices of the AAAS.

Sincerely yours,

  
Hudson Hoagland

Dr. Walter Orr Roberts  
National Center for Atmospheric  
Research  
Boulder, Colorado 80302

Copies to: Dr. E. U. Condon  
Dept. of Physics and Astrophysics  
University of Colorado  
Boulder, Colorado 80302

Mr. Dael Wolfle and Mr. Walter Berl  
American Association for the Advancement  
of Science  
1515 Massachusetts Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20005

*American Association  
for the Advancement of Science*

1515 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NW, WASHINGTON, D. C., 20005

Phone: 387-7171 (Area Code 202)

Cable Address: Advancesci, Washington, D. C.

March 13, 1969

Dr. Walter Orr Roberts  
University Corporation for  
Atmospheric Research  
Boulder, Colorado 80302

Dear Walter:

I seem to be running harder but still losing ground, hence am a bit tardy with correspondence. Ed Condon certainly moves quickly, and I must say that his reaction to your invitation to attend the BA-AAAS meeting can be likened to that of the camel who sought and received permission from his master to insert his nose into the tent.

I was not aware of any plans to publish proceedings of this meeting, but if there is any likelihood at all that this will be done, I suppose we should plan to have all sessions taped, or at least the discussion part if speakers will have at hand texts of their talks. Transcribing from tape is slow (hence a bit expensive) and the copy is usually not much better for editing than is a rough draft, but this is about the only way I can think of to get some kind of copy to work with in the absence of prepared manuscripts.

As a procedural matter, the decision to publish or not to publish a book under AAAS auspices is usually made by the Committee on Publications, but since this meeting is a special situation for which the Board is solely responsible, the Board could certainly make this decision independent of the committee if it chose to do so. The matter of publication by Yale University Press or any other press is an entirely different matter, however, and I question whether or not we should establish such a precedent now on such short notice and without careful study. Over the years the Committee on Publications has regularly turned down offers from a number of presses, both university and others, to publish our symposium volumes. In fact at the March 18 meeting the committee will consider again a similar proposal from M.I.T. Press. The only unusual feature of the M.I.T. proposal is that it comes from the new committee member, Carroll Bowen, director of the Press. In any event, I think Dr. Condon is jumping the gun a bit.

If you don't mind I'll ask the Committee on Publications to give an opinion on the matter for the use of the Meeting Committee. And the committee will have acted on the M.I.T. proposal one way or the other by that time.



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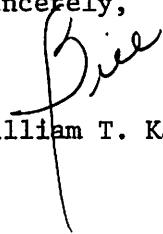
I talked with Dael yesterday, and he asked me to ask you where Board members (who will not attend the BA-AAAS meeting) should plan to stay while attending the Board meeting in Boulder. I have advised those who have asked me to plan to be at Boulder no later than mid-afternoon on April 19 in order to attend the final reception but did not specify a place. I said I thought it would be at the Harvest House Hotel. If you have or have not made arrangements for them, please let me know by telephone and I'll get out a letter. If accommodations are likely to be tight, let me know and I can instead call each Board member (except those coming for the BA-AAAS meeting) and get specific arrival and departure times from each and then make a definite reservation at Harvest House or elsewhere as you suggest.

All else is going along swimmingly, but all of us on the staff will certainly breathe a collective sigh of relief when Dael returns. My only worry is that he may find the life of a professor altogether to his liking.

A last item of business. I polled by telephone the Executive Committee on the election of Lou Battan as Section Secretary for the new AAAS Section on Atmospheric and Hydrospheric Sciences and received a go-ahead from all except Athel (who is abroad) and from you. Since you had earlier indicated your approval, I did not think you would want me to ask you again. Lou has accepted, and I am quite satisfied that we have an excellent man. He and I are now working on a slate of section officers to present to the Executive Committee. I have nominations from a number of societies that want to be listed in the new section--AGU, AAS, AIAA, AMA, and MTS--and Lou and I will do our best to see that oceanographers, hydrologists, and aeronomers are represented in the Committeemen-at-Large. Our rank order of preference for Vice President and Section Chairman is: Robert White, Tom Malone, and Fred Singer. We have a strong preference for either of the first two over the third, but think we will have in any case a good officer for the one-year term. We are now separately working over Committeeman-at-Large nominations. Some names being considered are Malone or White (if we don't get them for the #1 slot), Earl Droessler, Ray K. Linsley, David Todd, Max Kohler, Walter Munk, Richard Abel, Fred Singer, John Knauss, W. W. Hildreth, and Harris B. Stewart. There are, of course, a host of possible candidates, but I think an initial team of quality can be assembled from these. Terms of appointment will vary from 1 to 4 years initially, so that any initial para-democratic selection process can be supplanted in part in a year by such orderly procedures as the section wishes to employ.

Sorry to be so windy.

Sincerely,

  
William T. Kabisch

WTK:lp



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Walt Roberts

AAAS



NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION  
MANNED SPACECRAFT CENTER  
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77058

REPLY TO  
ATTN-OF:

18639 Point Lookout Drive, Houston 77058

31 Jan 1970

Memo to: Walter Berl, AAAS

From: Thomson Page

Comments on AAAS 136<sup>th</sup> Meeting, Boston, 1969

- (1) The General Symposium on UFO's was successful, although the snow and ice reduced our audience from the 1000 expected to 300 (due on 26 Dec.) Possibly this helped to avoid the over-emotional response we had feared, though our first session's psychology emphasis may also have helped. The NET interview was viewed by a number of my friends around the US and they say it was good. The press conference was handled well; in fact, we avoided emotion so well that the Boston papers hardly mentioned the UFO symposium (possibly deterred by the attack on science and NASA). Other papers (e.g. in Houston) found the psychology of UFO's worth a headline.
- (2) The physical arrangements were good, though we had no posters or other indication of what session was going on in the Sheraton Plaza ballroom until I bought a "magic-marker" and drew one on the back of some cardboard provided by a janitor. Session chairmen should be advised to bring a sign with topic and time printed on it.



W. O. Roberts Box 59 Ed AAAS Oct 1 69 - June 73  
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cc: Dr. Thornton Page  
Dr. Joachim P. Kuettner  
Dr. Walter O. Roberts

PHILIP J. KLASS  
560 "N" STREET, S. W.  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20024

January 18, 1970

Dr. J. Allen Hlynek  
Northwestern University  
Evanston, Ill. 60201

Dear Allen:

The big snowstorm in Boston over the Christmas period delayed my arrival for the AAAS meeting until the evening of Dec. 26, so I missed the UFO press conference held on the morning of Dec. 26. Thus I do not know whether you were correctly quoted in the subsequent newspaper articles, such as the one that appeared in the Dec. 27 issue of The Boston Globe.

"The study of 'flying saucers...could suffer a serious setback if the Air Force destroys the secret portions of 22 years of records of unidentified flying objects (UFOs), scientists said here yesterday. Prof. J. Allen Hlynek...said some punched summary cards already had been destroyed. He and a colleague, Prof. Thornton Page of Wesleyan University, asked that all UFO records be preserved and made non-secret."

This prompted me to initiate a query to the Air Force, at the Pentagon. They have advised me by letter that "Since 1953, the results of UFO investigations have been unclassified except when it was necessary to restrict information in certain cases due to the classified performance aspects of aircraft, radars, etc."

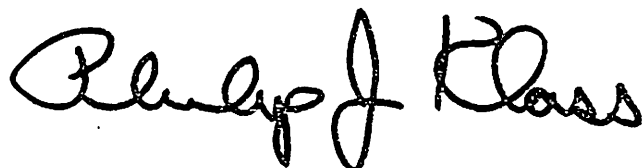
The Air Force adds: "With the termination of Project Blue Book in December, 1969, all such records have been declassified. Consequently, the complete records of Project Blue Book are now unclassified and will remain intact in the Air Force archives, Maxwell AFB, Alabama."

As for the punched summary cards, prepared for Special Report #14 in the early 1950s, these were destroyed six years ago (1963) since all seemingly useful data had been extracted from them and the original reports were being retained.

I am therefore writing to ask if the foregoing is at variance with the facts as you understand them.

Your prompt response is requested so that this question can be promptly resolved. If corrective measures are needed, or the facts are not as the Air Force has stated, this should be brought to the attention of top Air Force officials at the soonest possible moment. And if your own Boston alarmist statements were in error, the record ought to be set straight promptly.

Very truly yours,





University of Colorado at Boulder

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Walt - I hope this is OK - If not, leave a message for me at Sheraton Plaza Rm 427

American Association  
for the Advancement of Science

1515 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NW, WASHINGTON, D. C., 20005

Phone: 387-7171 (Area Code 202) Cable Address: Advancesci, Washington, D. C.

(Sheraton-Roston Hotel) 29 Dec 1969

30 Dec 1969

The Hon. Robert Seamans, Jr.  
Secretary Of the Air Force  
Washington, D.C.

Sent message that I prefer  
not to sign this.

W O Roberts

29 Dec 69

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The scientists listed below, convened at a General Symposium during the Annual Meeting of the Association, understand that USAF Project BLUE BOOK has been discontinued in accordance with Dr. E. U. Condon's recommendation in the Colorado Study of Unidentified Flying Objects. We know that Project BLUE BOOK accumulated, over the past two decades, irreplaceable data of great historical interest and potential value to physical and (particularly) behavioral scientists.

After two days' discussion of the data involved, the Colorado Study, and several proposed studies by sociologists and psychologists, we formally request that you, Mr. Secretary

- (1) Insure that all of the material, both classified and unclassified, be preserved without alteration or loss,
- (2) Declassify promptly all documents filed by the Aerial Phenomena Section of the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base which are classified by virtue of AFR 200-17 and AFR 80-17,
- (3) Make all the unclassified documents available to qualified scientific investigators at a more suitable location than the USAF Archives (we recommend a major university in the mid-west), and
- (4) Order an annual review of the remaining classified documents in the present file to determine when they can be declassified without alteration in accordance with current USAF security procedure.

My twelve colleagues, who receive copies of this letter, would appreciate your favoring us with a reply. I can distribute it to the others if you address it to Dr. Page, 18639 Point Lookout Drive, Houston, Texas 77058.

Sincerely,

Thornton Page  
Thornton Page (Wesleyan University)  
Chairman, AAAS Special Committee, for

Walter Orr Roberts, Retiring President, AAAS  
Franklin E. Roach, University of Hawaii  
William Hartmann, University of Arizona  
Lester Grinspoon, Harvard University  
Robert Hall, University of Illinois  
Philip Morrison, Mass. Inst. of Technology

Douglass Price-Williams, Rice University  
J. Allen Hynek, Northwestern University  
James McDonald, University of Arizona  
Carl Sagan, Cornell University  
Walter Sullivan, The New York Times  
George Kocher, University of S. California

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44

19 December 1969

UFO Symposium

26 December 1969

Sheraton Plaza Ball Room

2:00 p.m.

A. I have the honor of opening Symposium on UFO's.

1. Few recent issues have so stirred the public and scientists.
  - a. Distinguished scientists (not to speak of non-scientists also) have taken much of their time and energy in an effort to understand the persistent reports of exotic objects with strange properties and behaviors in the atmosphere.
  - b. Some scientists are convinced that these sightings represent a real scientific problem -- that special efforts are justified to explain them.
  - c. Others feel that there is not, under detailed scrutiny, any solid evidence at all suggesting that important unexplained phenomena are involved in these sightings, let alone extra-terrestrial visitors. These scientists consider the "sightings" to be misinterpretations of natural phenomena by untrained observers, mixed with a substantial number of imagined observations or outright hoaxes.
  - d. The largest group of scientists, I suspect, is neutral:
    - (1) has not seriously examined the evidence.
    - (2) but does not feel, with the priorities before us in environmental pollution, medicine, energy source research, botany, genetics -- just to name a few areas -- that they want to spend time or money on a problem -- no matter what is the true explanation of the sightings -- that has little prospect of useful scientific payoff.
  - e. Harlow Shapley, years ago, took still another view when he said he knew what the flying saucers were: they were nothing more nor less than flying sea serpents.
2. Unfortunately, passions have sometimes risen inordinately high on both sides of this issue -- to the confusion and distress of the public and the scientific profession.
  - a. Many respected scientists, for example, have felt that AAAS was in error if it dignified the UFO's by putting them on the program, in this symposium, thus misleading the public into new credence in them -- since it would be impossible to get a balanced presentation of the subject.



- b. Others felt that the AAAS would be guilty of suppression of open scientific discussion if it refused to air a dignified, balanced, and unfettered discussion at this time.
- B. The Committee, for this symposium, of which I am a member, has taken this view:
1. That serious scientific effort has been committed to evaluation of UFO's -- of which the study by the Condon Committee has been a prime example. (As most know, this symposium was postponed from last year in order that it follow the publication of the Condon study.)
  2. That the public understanding of science and its social interactions is heavily at stake in controversial issues like the UFO one -- and that the boundaries of scientific and non-scientific need explicit discussion -- which will be openly presented before the scientific and general public.
    - a. The public is interested and concerned over UFO's.
    - b. The Condon report has, after NAS review and endorsement, been published; some of its recommendations have been adopted.
    - c. It is important, at this juncture, to have a balanced, responsible, discussion of all aspects of this controversial matter.
    - d. We expect this symposium to be a useful contribution to the public understanding of how science advances, sometimes through error and imperfect logic, but ultimately, through the inexorable self-correction that characterizes science as a human endeavor.
    - e. Final answers can't be expected -- but a review of where we stand -- yes. To quote Committee Chairman Thornton Page:  
  
"The symposium is intended to demonstrate the application of scientific methodology to a contemporary controversy, and to acquaint scientists with the wide variety of facts and interpretations."
- We look forward to the session with great anticipation.

The End



PHILIP J. KLASS  
560 "N" STREET, S. W.  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20024

October 11, 1969

Dr. Walter O. Roberts  
Univ. Corp. for Atmospheric Research  
Boulder, Colorado 80302

Dear Dr. Roberts:

I write as a brief acquaintance (we once shared adjoining seats on a flight east and talked sun-spots), as a member of AAAS, and as one who has devoted more than three years of intensive research and on-the-scene investigation to the subject of UFOs. (Perhaps you will recall that I quoted from one of your own talks in my book "UFOs--Identified", published last year.) In brief, I write as amicus curiae, knowing that it may well be too late.

At a time when the fantasy of extraterrestrial visitors is at its lowest ebb since UFOs were "discovered" in 1947, at a time when the USAF is about to close down its Project Blue Book UFO office and get out of the business, at a time when newspapers no longer report a UFO sighting with bold headlines on page 1 (and in a subsequent issue bury the explanation of the sighting as a misidentification or hoax), at this time especially it pains me to find that AAAS will lend its prestige to pumping new life into this pseudo-scientific fantasy.

It pains me even more that so respected a name as yours has become one of the principal advocates of the AAAS symposium on UFOs.

If you could read only a few of the many hundreds of letters I have received and personally answered during the last three years. You would find some from people who are afraid to walk the streets at night--not because of crime--but for fear they might be abducted by the crew of a flying saucer, as alleged by the Barney Hills of Portsmouth, N.H.

You would find correspondence with a young woman in Florida whose in-laws, after 25 years there, fell under the spell of "Dr." Dan Fry, whose honorary PhD comes from a London diploma mill and who claims to have flown in a flying saucer from New Mexico to New York, and that they land at his ranch in Oregon where he sells real estate. The in-laws have sold a small fortune in real estate and moved to Oregon to be near Fry and, I am told, to help finance a radio-TV station to be used to broadcast the wisdom of the space people to earthlings.

If you could read the dozens of letters from young students who think they are pursuing science when they read and accept as gospel all of the "garbage"--the gross distortions of fact and outright falsehood--which fill most UFO books and articles, then perhaps you could better understand my feelings.

At a time when legitimate science is having difficulty in obtaining needed funds for worthwhile programs, I am pained that the AAAS is providing a forum which will seek to generate public pressures to divert available funds for a multi-million dollar, or even larger UFO investigation effort.

Note: read on 5 Nov 69

Copy to Hoffle

10 NOV 1969

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Oct. 11, 1969

Dr. James E. McDonald, in a published version of his talk on Jan. 26, 1968, to the United Aircraft Research Laboratories, has called for a UFO program which initially would cost "a few tens of millions of dollars."

After this initial study, McDonald seeks "the deployment on a global basis of an adequate network of new UFO sensors..." McDonald estimates the cost at "billions of U.S. dollars per year." But he adds that this could prove to be "a small price to pay for clarification of such a profoundly important issue."

McDonald is one of the most effective spokesmen for the extraterrestrial hypothesis and will, I presume, be a member of the AAAS panel. But since he adjusts his comments to his audience, I doubt that he will be so bold in calling for so extravagant an effort before an AAAS audience.

McDonald is a prolific speaker and has had the opportunity to present the evidence in behalf of his extra-terrestrial hypothesis to every important governmental scientific agency. He also has spoken to engineers and scientists of every major technical society and most major corporate research centers.

What has been the response of the scientific community to the best evidence that the most effective spokesman for this hypothesis could muster? By McDonald's own admission: "I have met with little response." (Speech in Washington on June 3, 1968.)

He added: "There is now little hope of getting the problem under top-level scientific scrutiny until a science-oriented Congressional committee holds a searching inquiry into the entire UFO problem." In other words, having failed in the traditional scientific approach, McDonald said that Congress must intervene to shake the scientific community.

Two months later, thanks to a sympathetic Congressman, Ed Roush, McDonald and the other extraterrestrial proponents got their wish. The six scientists invited to speak at Roush's UFO symposium did not include a single critic of the extraterrestrial hypothesis and most of the scientists selected were outspoken proponents. Only one participant, Carl Sagan, had sufficient sense of fairness to point out that the Congressmen were hearing only one side of the question.

The 250-page proceedings of this carefully loaded "hearing" has been published and widely distributed through the Government Printing Office, and forms the basis of a recent hard-cover book by UFO author John G. Fuller.

Certainly the UFO proponents can hardly claim that they have not had an opportunity to present their case to the scientific community and to the public. If any viewpoint has not been given fair hearing, it is those of their critics.

McDonald and Allen Hynek like to invoke "21st Century science" in their arguments for extraterrestrial visitors. I have no doubt that 21st Century science will indeed find the UFO mystery of interest--much as today we view with interest the "animal magnetism" of Mesmer and the "N-Rays" of Blondlot.



Dr. Walter O. Roberts

-3-

Oct. 11, 1969

The scientists of the 21st Century will understand how a handful of otherwise competent scientists, who have strayed outside their field of expertise, could unwittingly practice what Dr. Irvin Langmuir has called "Pathological Science" -- the science of things that simply ain't so.


I wonder, however, if they will be so tolerant of organized science's seeming eagerness to provide a public platform which encourages the practices of pathological science--especially when it threatens to divert sorely needed funds from legitimate science?

Cordially,



Philip J. Klass

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