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From the Director.

"It is my inclination right now to recommend that the Government get out of this business. My attitude right now is that there's nothing to it." With a smile, he added, "But I'm not supposed to reach a conclusion for another year"

Dr. Edward U. Condon ... 1968 January 25, as reported by the Elmira, N.Y., 'Star-Gazette' and 'Look' magazine of 1968 May 14.

Well what did we really expect to come out of the Colorado University Project on Unidentified Flying Objects after that comment by the Project's Chairman ?

BUFORA has not as yet made any official statement on its attitude to the Condon Committee's work. This was I think a wise decision on the part of the BUFORA Committee in view of the difficulties involved in procuring a factual account of the Committee's activities. Those people who have been following the Committee's pronouncements and activities from close at hand have, naturally, been UFO oriented. Their views on UFOs are already confirmed by their own investigations over the years and are not likely to be changed by any type of event that might have occurred within the Condon investigation. Thus the articles and comments coming from American UFOlogists cannot be taken as being totally unbiased. This does not mean that BUFORA has been tardy in trying to find out the Committee's views of the events in America.

At the start of the Condon Committee enquiry, BUFORA wrote to the Committee offering its assistance in respect of the supply of sighting reports from this country to the Committee. In the event the offer was not taken up. BUFORA officers subsequently, however, met Dr. Low when he came to Europe on a fact finding mission. Opinions after the meeting were mixed, though I think that it is fair to say that Dr. Low presented the project in a favourable light, although reassurances, categorical reassurances, as to the impartiality of the project and the protection of the project from outside pressures, mainly emanating from the United States Air Force, and Government, were absent from Dr. Low's statements. A look, however, at the financial backing of the project shows why these assurances could not be given.

When the press began to carry the stories of the peculiar turn of events within the Committee, BUFORA was unwilling to sever all relationships with the Committee immediately without making efforts to ascertain from the Condon Committee their own view of the press reports. Despite our efforts no comments were forthcoming from the Committee, and we decided to hold fire on the Project until the full Report was available for examination and analysis.

Now we have the first reports on the Report, and doubtless many of you know the content of it. Negative. But more than negative. The report so I gather contains definite proposals that once again the subject should be positively driven out of existence. No encouragement, and indeed discouragement should be given to those interested in studying the subject. Such a recommendation is utterly ridiculous and hardly falls within the scope of enlightened scientific investigation into the world about us. UFO reports exist, of that there is no denying. UFO reports are enigmatic, even leaving aside any questions of extraterrestrial visitations. One object of science is to ascertain the truth and to remove the enigmas of nature; UFO reports require scientific investigation.

I do not think that we should harshly judge the members of the Condon Committee. Research scientists are reputed to be bad public relations experts, and if anything the subject of UFOs is the most difficult to handle in the field of the PRO. I realise that some of the events of early 1968 do point to a preconceived result to the Committee's work, and that the Committee itself may not be the unbiased group of newcomers to the subject that it was supposed to be; with the exception of perhaps Saunders and Levine who met an unfortunate

demise. Nevertheless the real test of the objectivity and meaningfulness of the Committee's work will be in their Report on Unidentified Flying Objects.

This document is not as yet in our hands and so I can only at this stage suggest ways and criteria for testing the Report's objectivity and scope. The objectivity of the Report should be fairly clear from its wording and the methods used by the Committee in its compilation. It should bear comparison to the approach to the subject made by Vallee in his two books ('Anatomy of a Phenomenon' and 'Challenge to Science'). It should not be as naive and ridiculous as the case put forward in Tacker's 'Flying Saucers and the United States Air Force'. The scope of the report will be more easy to test. The Report will be compiled on the Committee's investigations into a particular list of sightings. If this list does not contain (eg) those cases singled out for especial attention by NICAP and Vallee, and mentioned by Michel and others, then it will not have covered a balanced range of cases. I suspect that the report will be as selective in its investigations as the Committee feels it can get away with, but then we all know that the numbers of inexplicable reports are small in comparison with those that are significant. BUFORA could, by carefully leaving out but 23 reports from its 1967 investigations present a report covering 202 cases for that year that purport to support the view that there is nothing in UFO reports at all.

We cannot reach a final view on the Condon Committee Report until the full Report has been released and fully examined to ascertain its true value; but in the meantime it seems that the Report may just be another lot of hot air.

"I feel that the Air Force has not been giving out all the available information on these Unidentified Flying Objects. You cannot disregard so many unimpeachable sources."

Hon. John McCormack, Speaker of the House of Representatives
as quoted in 'True' magazine of 1965 January.

"During the ensuing year there will be authenticated sightings of roughly 200 Unidentified Flying Objects, of which the Pentagon will be able to disprove 210."

'Life' magazine, 1958 January, p.16.

Stephen Smith.

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The Daily Mail New Year Show

Twelve days, 130,000 visitors, and over 7000 simulated sightings later the arguing, the debating and the demonstrating stopped, and a small tired band of BUFORA volunteers staggered off stand 153 at Olympia. The Daily Mail New Year Show and BUFORA's biggest publicity drive ever had ended. Those of you who did not come to London during the two weeks from 1968 December 28 to 1969 January 11 missed the best display of British UFO material ever assembled in recent years.

In over 1000 sq. ft. of exhibition space, surrounded by blow-ups of UFO photographs, press-cuttings, and typical sighting data, stood the BUFORA Mobile Field Research Unit loaded with all the paraphernalia of skywatching, binoculars, astro-compasses, geiger counters and ELF radio receivers.

Facing the vehicle was an animated, diaramic simulation of a typical UFO sighting. As if through binoculars, the witness sees the English Downs bathed in Summer's sun. Dusk falls and a faint whistling hum is heard as if from afar. It grows in volume until suddenly the object flashes into view. It's like two soup plates joined rim to rim, edged with numerous small red and white lights, its surface giving a dull metallic blue glow. It hovers with uncertainty, then glides to the left and hovers again, definitely intelligently controlled this time. Then it reverses in its tracks moving to the right. It turns again and then vanishes faster than the eye can follow. Dawn breaks. The sun rises to show a peaceful scene, as if unknowing the visitor in the night. The witness moves away unbelieving yet unconvinced, but he returns and watches the whole sequence through again and still cannot see how the model saucer vanishes so completely. Policemen, doctors, aircrew, technically precocious children, they were all puzzled. We did not tell them how it was done but we did tell them

sent hundreds away consciously thinking about UFOs, many of them for the first time in their lives. In this respect the show was worth every effort put into it.

It is difficult to make out a series of "thank-yous" to those who assisted in making the exhibition stand possible without leaving out someone who may be annoyed by the omission. Nevertheless, at risk of doing just this, I feel that we ought to say a few public "thank-yous" in recognition of the vast amount of work that went into the stand. Our thanks go to:

The Daily Mail for designing the stand and building it and providing the blow-ups for display, which they have kindly allowed us to keep.

Mr. Ivor Lewis for his work on our behalf with the Daily Mail.

Mr. Lionel Beer.... for handling the project coordination on BUFORA behalf.

Mr. Ivar Mackay....)

Mr. Mike Holt)

Mr. Richard Farrow.) for preparing various parts of the exhibition and for

Mr. Arnold West....) assisting in the manning of the stand.

Mr. Peter Johnson..)

Mr. Edgar Hatvany..)

and all those members and friends who came and took part in the manning of the stand throughout the two weeks of its hectic life.

Stephen Smith

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The Bison Hill Enigma

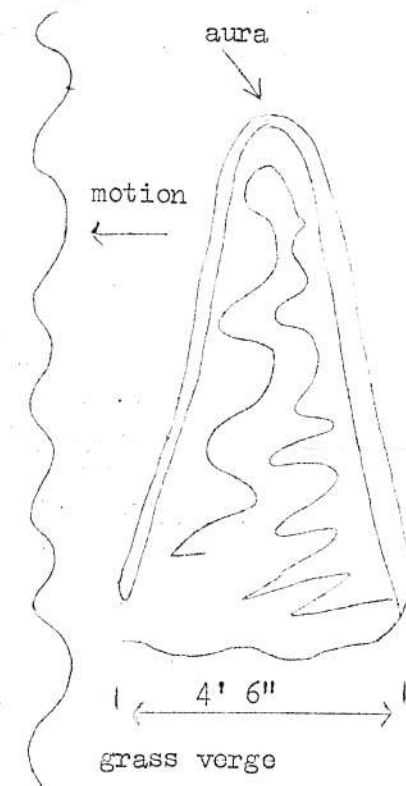
A report on an interview with Mr. E. Bennett and his daughter Mandy of Whipsnade, Bedfordshire by D. A. Cadell and N. Summers of the Bedford UFO Society following their unusual experience on the evening of the 21st Sept. 1968.

The report which appeared in the Dunstable Gazette on the 27th Sept, 1968 is unusually accurate and is in the main due to Mr. Bennett's insistence that if their story was printed only the facts should be given and not be elaborated upon.

Mr. and Miss Bennett were interviewed at Whipsnade on Sunday 13th October, 1968, and were able to recall the following details. Mr. Bennett also drew a sketch of the apparition (on right).

It was Mr. Bennett who first noticed the object, but did not say anything to his daughter in case she was alarmed. However, she could not fail to miss it because of its unnatural colour and aura. Neither of them could say where it first appeared, but it was first seen at the side of the road over the grass verge in Dagnall Rd. approximately 25 yds. ahead of their car. There was another car, but this was over 200 yds. ahead and they could not say if the occupants had seen the object.

hedge



The night was clear, there were no patches of fog or mist on the road and the apparition was seen for 3-4 secs.. The object drawn by Mr. Bennett was his interpretation, but his daughter who was in the passenger seat believed there was an additional appendage or protuberance on the left side, similar to the Winterfold Spectre (FSR, Vol.14, No.1,p.15) though not so pronounced. The object seemed to glide and did not touch the ground, but Mr. Bennett was not sure as the aura was shimmering and unsteady. It had a definite outline, was conical shaped, height about 6 ft.. The top about a foot wide was rounded. The base was about 4 ft.6 ins. across. The interior - if that is the proper word - had a washed out yellow appearance. The outside aura was like a neon

light. Mr. Bennett said the object was translucent, there were no odd smells or noises, though the latter would have been difficult to determine. Nor was there any loss of car engine power. The object disappeared through the hedge. Had Mr. Bennett been alone, he would have stopped to investigate, but because of his concern for Mandy he drove straight home.

Together with Mr. Bennett we had the opportunity of visiting the exact spot where the apparition was seen. There was certainly no gap in the overgrown hawthorn hedge on the near side, but there was on the other side. However, there was an entrance to some piggeries some 5 to 10 yards ahead. This led up a winding track to the wooden buildings. Exactly at the spot and overhead there were pylon lines. Mr. Bennett noticed this immediately that morning, but was unaware of their existence at that spot on the evening in question. Access to the field behind the hedge was easy. It had obviously been harvested some time previously and the stubble remained to be cleared. In several places and to the right of the overhead power lines, there were several small burnt areas. One large, the others small and extending to the left into the field. There were no other patches in the field. Tractor and horse impressions were found in the chalky soil. The field opposite yielded nothing unusual.

It was as Mr. Bennett said, an uncanny experience and because he was a sceptic of such occurrences, more than interesting because it had happened to himself. He was unaware of any local folk lore in the locality.

The following Sunday, October 20, a further visit was made to the field to determine if there was any unusual radiation meter readings. The technical members of BUFOS were David Viewing and Alan Beaumont, accompanied by Cadel.

The burnt areas were tested first with the geiger counter but yielded no high meter counts. The field was sited on the side of a sloping hill and near the top there was a natural saucer shaped depression (which had been noted the previous Sunday). A reading was taken at the centre and yielded an above normal count. Tests were made at the perimeter and the readings were approximately similar to others taken elsewhere in the field. Tests were also carried out at the 'spot' where Mr. Bennett and his daughter saw the apparition and further along the road edge, but again there was nothing unusual. Readings taken were as follows and based on an average number of one minute counts. They were taken whilst other parts of the field yielded an average of 18.2 counts/minute.

| | | | |
|-------------------|------|---|------|
| Burnt patches | 18.6 | & | 18.8 |
| Depression centre | 23.6 | & | 20.4 |
| Depression edge | 18.5 | & | 17.0 |
| Grass verge | 18.2 | | |
| Other areas | 18.2 | | |

It will be of interest that when Mr. Bennett related his story, his daughter Mandy also stated that she and her friend Toni Smith, also of Whipsnade saw a white coloured cross-shaped object move very rapidly over the village during one night in October/November 1967. Mandy recalls this because Toni was very frightened at the time. She says that it was raining and below cloud cover and was moving in the direction of Aston Clinton which lies in a south westerly direction.

Derek Cadel.
Bedford UFO Society.

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The Canvey Island 'Fish with Feet and Toes'

Working together, the Rev. H.D.L. Thomas (Long Hanborough Rectory, Oxford) and Mr. Derek Mansell (75 Norreys Road, Cumnor, Oxford) are trying to discover more of the 'Canvey Island Fish'.

Newspaper Reports: Daily Express of 30/11/53 and 11/8/54, columns headed 'The thing has 20 pink toes' and 'Fish with Feet'.

Yorkshire Post of 30/11/53, column headed 'Fish with Feet'.

A book entitled 'Stranger than Science' describes the 'thing' in greater detail. 'Slightly more than 4 ft. in height, weight about 25 lbs, with two large eyes, nostril holes, a gaping mouth, and very sharp teeth. The creature had gills, but instead of scales was covered with a pink skin, as tough as hide of a healthy pig. It had two short legs with perfect feet which ended in five tiny toes, arranged in the shape of a 'U', with a concave centre arch.'

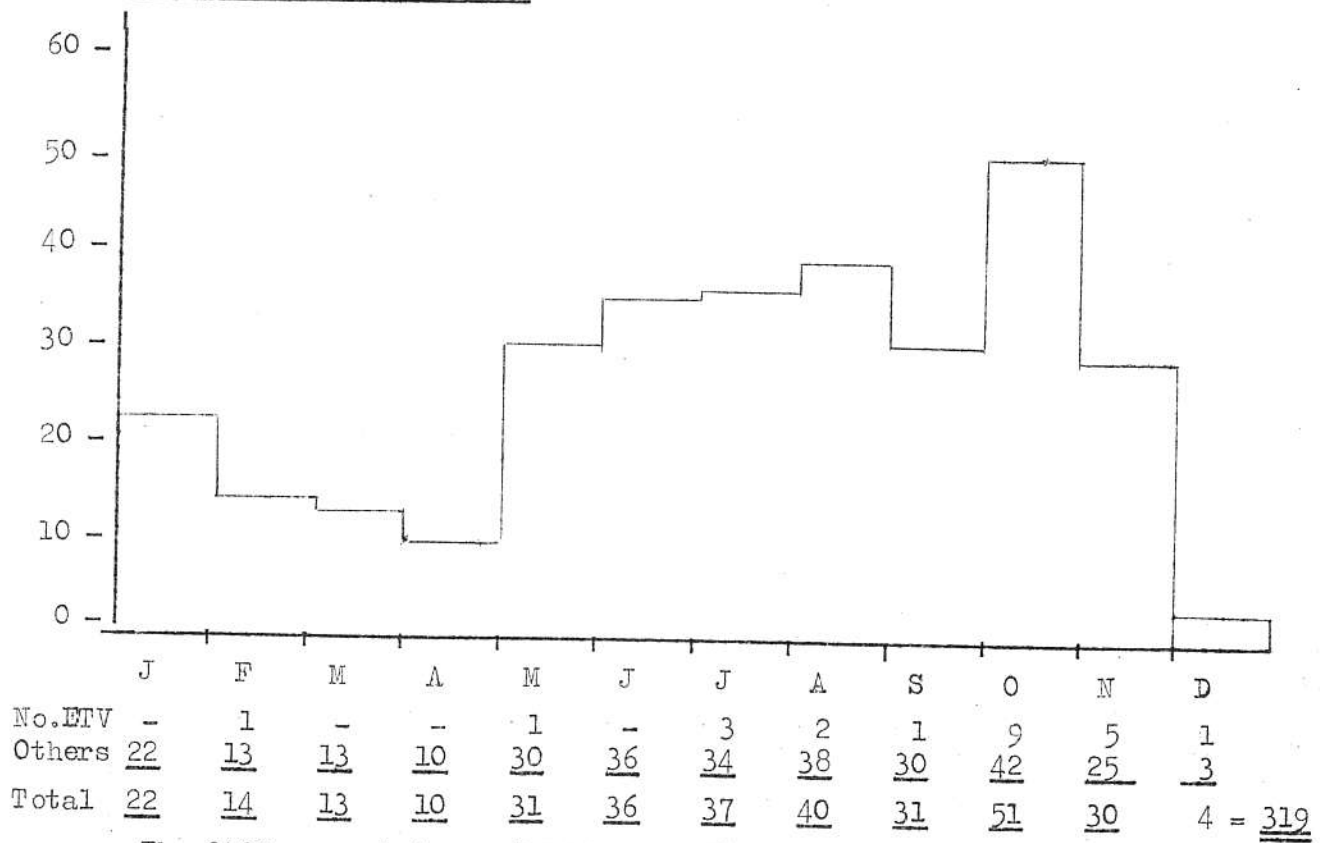
Details are given below of the preliminary statistics of sighting reports sent in to BUFORA Research Department during 1967 and afterwards, sighting reports that can be dated as having occurred during 1967.

These statistics are given without thorough analysis and detailed examination of the more particular points in any one sighting. We realise that these figures of themselves have only a limited value from the research angle but they do put into perspective the activity of 1967.

1) CLASSIFICATIONS

| | | |
|---|---|------------------|
| a) Evaluated cases: | (i) Satellites, etc. | 24 |
| | (ii) Aircraft, helicopters | 53 |
| | (iii) Balloons, flares, etc. | 12 |
| | (iv) Meteorological or atmospheric
in origin | 16 |
| | (v) Astronomical misidentifications | 9 |
| | (vi) Bird formations | 1 |
| | (vii) Meteors, bolides, etc. | 19 |
| | (viii) Hoaxes | 2 |
| b) No evaluation possible because of lack of detailed facts about the object or circumstances of the sighting | | 68 |
| c) Cases evaluated as having been of solid, craftlike vehicles, behaving as controlled machines: | | |
| Possible Extraterrestrial Vehicles (ETV) | | 23 |
| | | <u>225</u> Total |

2) ACTIVITY THROUGH THE YEAR



The difference between the above figures and those quoted under section 1 are accounted for by the inclusion of the reports from the Stoke area submitted by Stanway and Pace.

3) ACTIVITY THROUGH THE DAY

The figures below give the time of day of the start of a sighting report by hours in 24. The hour number 5 (eg) means the period of time from 5 a.m. to 5.59 a.m..

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| HOUR: | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| No. REPORTS: | 19 | 4 | 10 | 6 | 3 | 6 | 7 | 4 | 3 | - | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 7 | 11 | 11 | 15 | 24 |
| HOUR: | | 21 | 22 | 23 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| No. REPORTS: | | 29 | 25 | 14 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

We employed the raw data published in Project Blue Book 1968 (BB68) to derive several statistical series, namely;

- (1) The 'cumulative' curve' of unusual aerial phenomena (AP) reports (this is a plot for each year of the sum of all reports up to and including that year).
- (2) The running annual mean number of AP reports (this is a plot for each year of the average number of reports per year up to that year). See plot on graph labelled 'Mean AP'.
- (3) The cumulative curve of unknowns.
- (4) The running annual mean unknowns. See plot on graph labelled 'Mean Unknown'.
- (5) The annual percentage of unknowns.
- (6) The running total percentage of unknowns.

The derived tabulations are too extensive to reproduce here but the results may be briefly summarised as follows:

(a) The average number of reports of AP examined by the USAF each year is at present steadily increasing, although there is considerable variation from year to year.

(b) The mean number of unknowns per year, in contrast, to this, is steadily decreasing. Since 1954, there has been little variation in the rate of this decrease from year to year.

(c) In both the above parameters, the year 1952 marks a striking discontinuity. Prior to this year, the mean number of unknowns per year was increasing, as was the mean number of AP reports per year. Had this trend continued after 1952, the mean number of unknowns per year would now be of the order of 100; it is in fact only 33.2.

(d) As a consequence of the variations leading to results (a) and (b), the running total percentage of unknowns shows two distinct phases: from 1947 to 1952 it rose from 9.8% to 16.8%; after 1952 it continuously decays to its present magnitude, 5.7%

(e) The annual percentages of unknowns also show two phases. Between 1947 and 1954 this parameter varied between 6.8% (1948) and 20.2% (1952). In 1955 it dropped to 4.4% and has not risen past 3.5% since that date. There is an inverse relationship with AP reports, whereas before 1955 there was a direct relationship.

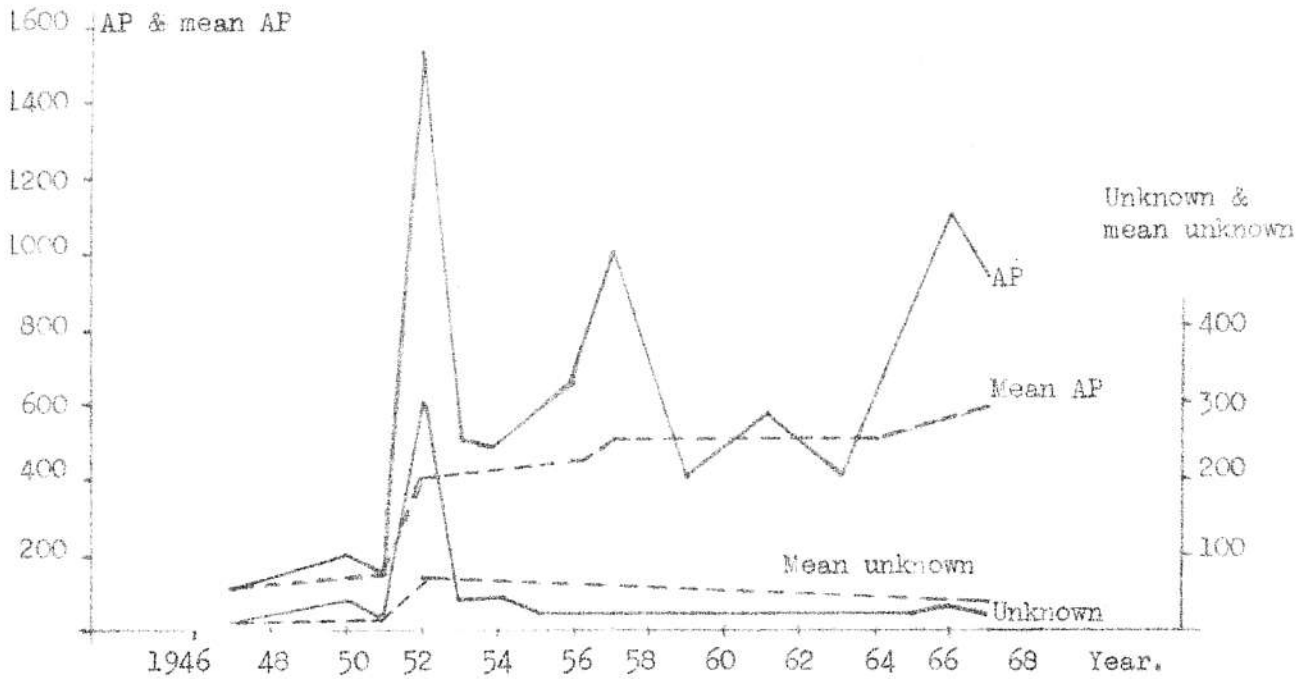
(f) When the cumulative curves of AP and unknowns are drawn there is a tendency for the unknowns curve to level off after 1954.

Despite a certain lack of sensitivity, this analysis seems to indicate what we already know - a drastic change of investigative or analytical procedure in or around 1953/4, after which the number of unknowns per year remains pretty constant and, somewhat against what one logically expects, fails totally to reflect the annual rise and fall of AP reports.

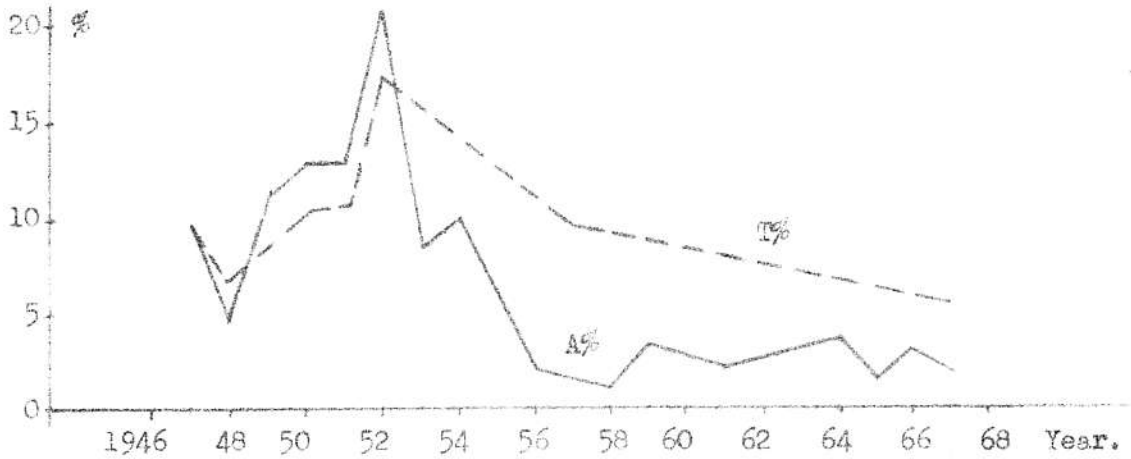
It seems clear that the actual circumstances that brought about this effect was the CIA recommendation, incorporated in the Report of the Robertson Panel of January 1953, that a systematic "debunking of the flying saucers" be undertaken so as to reduce public interest in the phenomenon (15). This recommendation resulted in the promulgation, in August of that year, of the notorious Air Force Regulation 200-2, which has since provided the guiding philosophy of USAF UFO investigation with the actual wordings: "Air Force activities must reduce the percentage of unidentifieds to a minimum". (16). This regulation was strongly backed up with another, JANAP-146, "that effectively made it a crime punishable with up to ten years imprisonment and 10,000 dollars in fine, if anyone disclosed, at air base level, any information on any unidentified" (15). In fact, under the terms of AFR 200-2 information can only be released by anybody "after positive identification of the sighting as a familiar or known sighting" (16); otherwise queries regarding a specific case can only be replied to in terms of, "the sighting is under investigative action and information regarding it will be available at a later date". (16)

It would be impossible to force a confession from the USAF that this policy is tantamount to censorship; but these two orders (which we must inevitably contrast with the statements on public relations contained in Major Aikman's letter (part 1)) have completely stopped the flow of reports from military pilots (other than those few made privately - and illegally - to civilian organisations such as NICAP, which formerly made up the top 17% of all reports evaluated by the

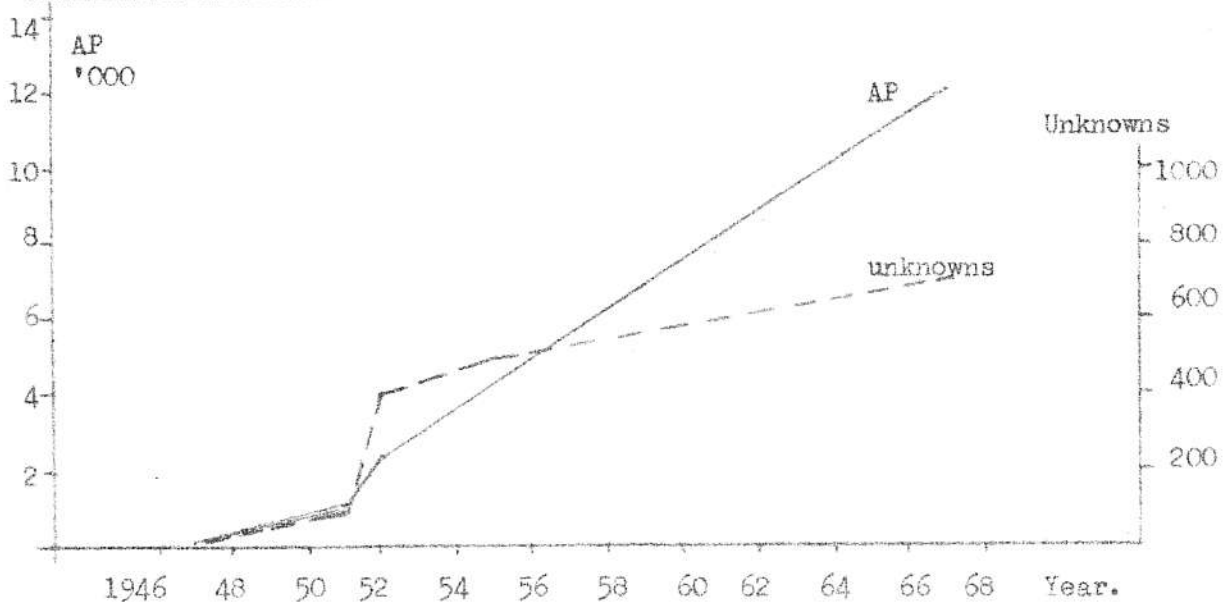
Aerial Phenomena and Unknowns - showing long term trends.



Unknowns - annual percentages (A%) and running total percentages (T%)



Cumulative curves of Aerial Phenomena (AP) and unknowns.



Subsequently, the same disservice was done to the excellent-value 13% of all reports until then derived from US civilian airlines pilots; on February 17, 1954, "officers of the Military Transport Intelligence met with officials of the Airline Pilots Association at the Roosevelt Hotel in Hollywood". The purpose of the meeting was to urge commercial pilots to 'cooperate' in what was described as 'a serious matter for the government' (Edwards, op.cit.) The outcome of this meeting was that commercial pilots were strongly urged by the Association to make no public statements on their UFO sightings. In the following years several commercial pilots defied this 'request' for their cooperation, and paid for it - often with their jobs, more frequently in ridicule and damaging assertions of poor eyesight, poor mental health, or even drunkenness. The classical example is the Killian case of February 24th, 1959 - contrasting accounts will be found in Keyhoe, (20) and (21), and Tacker, Flying Saucers and the US Air Force.

(Note:- AFR 200-2 was superseded by AFR 80-17 on September 19th, 1966; virtually the only change was an order that information on UFO sightings should be made available at Air Force Base level to scientists of the Colorado University Project (15). Note also that, at about the time AFR 200-2 was promulgated, reporters were banned from seeking information on UFOs at Wright-Patterson AFB and in the files of ATIC, and all stills and movies of radarscopes showing unidentified flying objects' returns were declared 'classified Material' (17).)

The order to reduce the percentage of unidentified to a minimum seems to have worked retroactively to some extent, also. Another statistical source with which the BB68 figures fail to agree is (4), in which Ruppelt states that the Project had received 1,593 AP reports during the period 1947-52, of which 429 (26.9%) remain unexplained. The corresponding figures as of 1968 are 2,344 and 393 (16.8%); that this drop in percentage has a dual origin in both the fall in the number of 'unidentifieds' and a rise in the number of reports for the period, with the latter taking place well before the former, is confirmed by the fact that Ruppelt's figures for the unknowns, 429, is the same percentage of the total number of sightings for the period as quoted in BB62 as the percentage there given, namely 19.6% approx. It is clear that, possibly since 1962, a large number of reports have been gradually removed from the unidentified category and re-evaluated as identified, perhaps by an extension of that process mentioned by Ruppelt, by which reports evaluated at the end of investigation as (eg) 'possible aircraft' were quoted in reports as 'probable aircraft'. In particular, we are agreed that the category of radar reports has been heavily hit, with such major reports as Michigan (29/7/52), Haneda (5/8/52) and Brookley (Sept.1952) undergoing re-evaluation. There were more than thirty such high-quality reports in 1952, many of which, Ruppelt admitted, could not be explained in conventional terms. We feel that many of them may have been discarded on grounds of 'insufficient information' relating to weather, meteorological records for the dates in question having been mysteriously mislaid, as happened in the famous Washington National Airport case(s) of July 1952, in which weather information which, according to Ruppelt and to the current USAF case summary, could not be found in the records, was found by Dr. McDonald actually within the pages of the official report (15).

An interesting result, at first sight? was obtained by drawing a correlation diagram with (Aerial Phenomena minus Unknowns) on one axis, and Unknowns on the other; the points so formed, each point corresponding to one year, with the exception of that for 1952, line up parallel to the (Aerial Phenomena minus Unknowns) axis. If we were able to trust Project Blue Book evaluation, this would be evidence that the mechanism responsible for misidentifications are independent of those responsible for unknowns - in other words, that the unknown classification is derived from a totally different type of phenomenon from that giving rise to identifications, and not merely a different order of complexity of the same type of phenomenon. The truth is, however, that the number of unknowns has remained relatively constant due to the method of "evaluation" employed, and the motivation ("reduce unknowns to a minimum") lying behind it.

Carl Grovo,
Donald K. Mills.

(Part 3 will appear in Vol.2 No.1 of the Research Bulletin and concludes this article).

BRITISH UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

R E S E A R C H S E M I N A R

1969 February 22nd

at

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY

A seminar is to be held at Cambridge University on February 22nd, the main theme being :

"INVESTIGATION AND EVALUATION OF U.F.O. REPORTS"

The object of the Seminar being to acquaint as many BUFORA investigators of the techniques of thorough investigation and also recognition of man-made and natural phenomena. Much can be learned by those well experienced in investigation as well as those with little experience. Will all who are interested and require further details write to -

Mr. Richard Farrow,
BUFORA Investigations Coordinator,
95 Winner Street,
PAIGNTON, Devon.