

NOTE (added March 1974)

This article was originally written in August, 1972, for publication in what was supposed to have been the first issue of a new Magazine AQUARIAN AGE. Unfortunately the magazine has apparently never appeared.

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# UFOs TODAY

by

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"Flying Saucers are a dead issue. Nobody's interested any more. Oh, you may get a couple of hundred people here because you're a nuclear physicist, but I wouldn't expect any more than that." The speaker, an astronomer, was the director of the planetarium at El Camino College in Torrance, California. It was October, 1971, and we were standing backstage of the college's auditorium which seats about 2000. In 30 minutes I was to present an illustrated lecture "Flying Saucers ARE Real." He had been asked to introduce me and wasn't very happy about it.

We started a little late that evening because the college had to open the balcony, which had never been done for a speaker before, (even Dick Gregory) to provide room for the record crowd of 1350 who eventually turned out. Frankly, I wasn't surprised, but he sure was. Almost everywhere I have lectured on UFOs, the crowds have been much larger than the sponsoring groups expected. The question-answer sessions always seem to last until the janitors kick us out. Even the post lecture newspaper coverage has been very friendly after almost all of the hundreds of talks in 30 states. The truth of the matter is that very many responsible, respectable people, young and old, men and women, seem to be very interested in hearing why a scientist believes, as I do, that some *UFOs are intelligently controlled vehicles whose origin is extraterrestrial*. The response has been so good that so far as I know I am now the only space scientist in the United States devoting full time to lecturing and writing about UFOs and investigating UFO sightings.

Obviously, I wouldn't have made the switch from being a nuclear physicist working on nuclear aircraft, nuclear rockets, and fusion rockets if I didn't really enjoy lecturing. One astrologer said I was living up to my Leo nature (Leo rising; born 7:05 A.M., July 29, 1934, Elizabeth, N. J.). I suspect she was right since there is far more "ham" in me than I had realized in my 14 years in industry. However, the important reason is that so few other scientists have been willing to commit themselves in public about UFOs, despite the overwhelming evidence that Earth

— if not very many of us earthlings — is being visited. I have felt a strong obligation to educate the public and dispel the many widely held myths about UFOs. One of my goals is to lift the "laughter curtain" which has not only prevented most scientists and newsmen from getting professionally involved in UFO investigations, but has also prevented many very respectable UFO observers from reporting their sightings — even when they involved UFOs on the ground and, sometimes, accompanying humanoid creatures.

One way to characterize recent developments in the new science of UFOLOGY is to say that the scientists have gotten in to the act and the kooks have gotten out. A world that has observed men walking on the moon over live television, which would have been considered science fiction by so many just a few years ago, wants more than science fiction type religious messages or contactee stories from untrustworthy people. Several manifestations of this widespread surge of interest are worth examining in more detail along with some of the reasons that the scientific involvement hasn't been better publicized.

Dr. J. Allen Hynek got the scientific ball rolling in 1966 with a letter published in SCIENCE magazine, the official journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Dr. Hynek, chairman of the Department of Astronomy at Northwestern University, had established and directed the world wide NASA optical satellite tracking network and was the scientific consultant on UFOs to the Air Force Project Blue Book from the late 1940's until the demise of the project in 1969. He was the butt of many cartoonists and gagsters in the late 1960s for his suggestion that a few of the UFO sightings in Michigan in 1966 might have been swamp gas. In his letter to SCIENCE he admonished his colleagues to study the UFO sighting data because there were plenty of still unidentifiable sightings by quite respectable people and that many of the beliefs of astronomers and other scientists about UFOs were, in reality, myths. He expressed similar views in PLAYBOY and The Saturday Evening Post. 1966

was also the year in which the University of Colorado UFO study sponsored by the Air Force and directed by ready-to-retire physicist, Dr. Edward U. Condon, was begun.

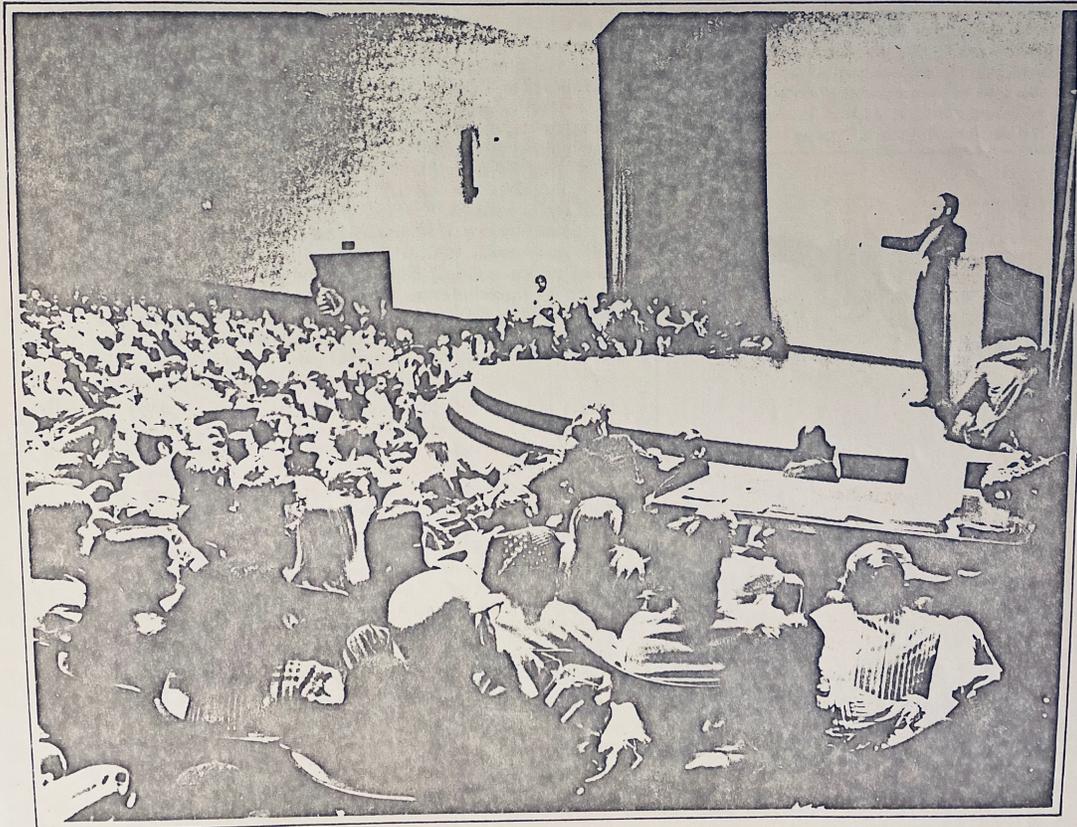
In July, 1968, a very important symposium on UFOs was held in Washington, D. C. sponsored by the Committee on Science and Astronautics of the U. S. House of Representatives. Six scientists including Dr. Hynek testified in person with 6 more, including myself, contributing written papers. All 12 papers were published a month later in a very comprehensive 247-page report. \* (See References at end of article.) One of the best papers in this report was by the late Dr. James E. McDonald, a physics professor at the University of Arizona, specializing in upper atmospheric physics and initially a sceptic about UFOs. (By the time of the hearings Jim had already talked to hundreds of UFO witnesses and had become convinced that UFOs were the most challenging scientific problem of our time.) In his written paper he gave details on 41 cases, which, taken together, demolish the objections of the uninformed critics of UFO reality. These included sightings by scientists and astronomers, by pilots, by groups of witnesses, and also sightings near big cities as well as UFOs observed by radar.

Among the other authors were a sociologist, a couple of psychologists, a biologist and a specialist in Astronautics.

These all had obviously studied the UFO data in considerable depth and were basing their comments on these data with general agreement that here was a very important phenomenon worthy of the attention of the scientific community. Most leaned towards the Extraterrestrial explanation though I was the only one who stated flatly that I was completely convinced that some UFOs are from off the earth. The papers by the social scientists showed that UFO sightings did NOT fit "mass hysteria." There was also a paper by Dr. Donald Menzel, Harvard astronomer, and the oldest contributor to the report. Dr. Menzel had already written two very strange anti-UFO books and true to his past history continued to explain away all sightings by carefully adjusting the data to match his explanations. One would have expected that a scientist would match his explanations to the data. Several cases that Menzel had casually dismissed were examined in McDonald's paper. Consistently it was found that the explanations did not match the facts of the cases easily obtained from a field study — for example, by checking weather records.

The hearings themselves did get some slight newspaper coverage — mostly concerned with a passing comment by Jim McDonald that UFOs were observed just prior to the great Northeast blackout and might possibly have caused it. The report itself has received essentially no press cov-

*Mr. Friedman's overflowing, attentive audiences attest to the strong public interest in UFOs.*



crage despite the wealth of data by quite reputable professional scientists.

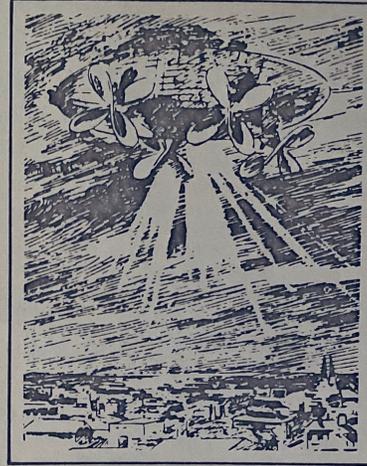
In January, 1969, the long awaited "Condon report" was finally issued. It is a document remarkable for its length; for the lack of connection between Dr. Condon's anti-UFO conclusions and the load of pro-UFO data in the report; for the wealth of cases which could not be explained; for the obvious ignorance of UFOs, plasma physics, security procedures, etc., shown in some sections; for the amateurishness of its organization, its steadfast defense by a special review committee (average age 65) of the National Academy of Sciences; and its fantastically inaccurate and biased, but very widespread newspaper acceptance at face value, this despite the fact that its face is no more scientific than the fronts of the western cowboy towns in TV movies are real.

A couple of examples will give some of the flavor of the report. Despite its title "Scientific Report on Unidentified Flying Objects" there is not even one chapter in all the 965 pages in the Bantam Book version (profits to the U. of Colorado) devoted to examination, classification or tabulation of Unidentified Flying Objects even though careful study by a professional committee of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics found that 30% of the 117 cases examined could NOT be identified though there was no lack of significant data !!!

There is a chapter on the government's role in UFO investigations that doesn't even mention Project Blue Book Special Report 14 though it was the only official UFO data summary report ever put together for the Air Force and even though it covered more than 20 times as many UFO cases as the Condon study and even though I had informed Condon of it in detail! Further data in Special Report 14 showed that 20% of thousands of sightings investigated could not be identified and that the better the quality of a report, the more likely it was to be labelled UNKNOWN. Statistical comparisons showed that the probability that the UNKNOWNS were merely missed KNOWNs was less than 1% and that the average UNKNOWN was observed for a longer time than the average KNOWN. There were also plenty of radar UNKNOWNS. The Condon report lacks any such statistical investigations or tabulations of color, size, shape, speed, etc. for the UNKNOWNS though it also contained a number of radar cases and the 30% of the cases which couldn't be identified included three observations by orbiting astronauts!

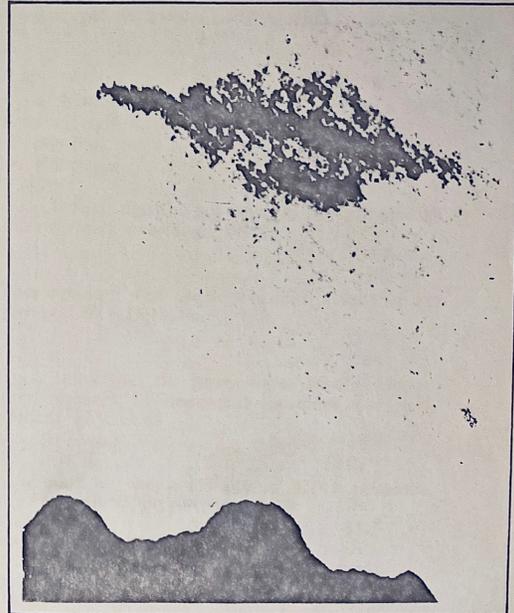
In 1969, several detailed critiques of the Condon report were quietly published in technical journals. Dr. Condon himself published the one and only paper resulting from his involvement: "UFOs I Have Loved and Lost." It will surely lead any rational reader to wonder what Dr. Condon was doing when he was directing the expenditure of \$539,710. He obviously wasn't finding out about UFOs but seemed more concerned with "KOOK" stories. Incidentally, only 2% of the cases in Special Report 14 were listed as "psychological aberrations." The American Physical Society also lists 2% of the papers submitted to it as "crackpot" papers.

In December, 1969, the American Association for the Advancement of Science held three full sessions of papers on UFOs at its annual meeting in Boston. Dr. Condon had made an all out effort to prevent these sessions from being held but was unsuccessful though terrible snowstorms did keep many away. The papers presented will finally be published by Cornell University Press at the end of 1972. Again we find a tremendous variation. Those scientists who had studied the data in detail believe that



Above, this drawing appeared on the front page of the old San Francisco "Call" newspaper on November 19, 1896. Called the first "heavier than air" flying machine, it was seen by thousands of persons at least twice. Although search parties combed the area for hundreds of miles the UFO disappeared and was not see again.

Although the sighting was undoubtedly legitimate there is a good possibility that the newspaper artist added those huge propellers because people of that time had no knowledge of jet or rocket propulsion. Actual photographs could not be reproduced in newspapers of that day and the early day camera plates had such slow emulsions it is doubtful that they could "freeze" a fast moving UFO.



One of 4 photos taken on February 21, 1958, by a Brazil Navy photographer from a training ship off Trinidad, 600 miles East of Brazil.

the subject is extremely important. The so-called scientists who were invited because they were big names spoke off the tops of their heads with some of the silliest drivel ever heard from such a high power assemblage. Two Harvard professors of psychiatry must be awarded the prize for the least scientific approach. They suggested that really the round shape for most smaller UFOs and the cigar shape of the so called "mother-ship" are easily explained in psychiatric terms. The round shape represents the female breast especially yearned for by insecure people in this difficult and nerve-wracking world. The cigar shape is an obvious phallic symbol related to a desire for power. There isn't a shred of evidence to support these views and, of course, the authors have not studied either lots of UFO witnesses or the published papers by the psychiatrists who have. A suggestion by the science editor of the New York Times that the UFO "hysteria" was fanned by newspapers and TV sensationalism, is equally unfounded.

Since the AAAS symposium also received little newspaper coverage, a word about newspaper coverage of UFOs is in order. First, I must stress that I have personally had a fine press with very little ridicule and a great deal of favorable lengthy coverage, especially by those reporters who attended my lectures. The problem with the press has been that it has not made a serious effort to cover the subject of UFOs. Sports reporters know their subjects far better than the great majority of writers of UFO stories. Perhaps the best way to summarize press coverage of the UFO scene in general is to quote the comments of Dr. Herbert Strentz whose 1970 PhD thesis in journalism at Northwestern University dealt with 20 years of press coverage of UFOs. (At least three other PhD theses related to UFOs were in progress in early 1972). Dr. Strentz stated:

"The Air Force inquiry from 1947 through 1966 generally has been depicted in the press as thorough, scientific and meriting public confidence. This study concluded that the Air Force UFO inquiry generally exhibited none of these characteristics." p. 300.

"The Press has uncritically accepted Air Force statistics on the high percentage of explained UFOs even though a cursory review of the Air Force UFO program should have raised questions." p. 301.

"The high degree of ridicule present in the UFO phenomenon was reflected in the press coverage, and much of the ridicule resulted from failure to distinguish between the nonsensical flying saucer stories and the few reports which merited study." p. 302.

"The coverage has been marked by superficiality, redundancy, silliness, careless reporting, and lack of relevant information . . . the lack of relevant information was also attributable to the reluctance of the press to ferret out information about the phenomenon and those involved in it." p. 303.

A perfect illustration of the reason one doesn't read much about UFOs in big city newspapers occurred in the summer of 1972 in Los Angeles. I held a press conference for Dr. J. Allen Hynek to discuss his important new book "The UFO Experience: A Scientific Inquiry." (The first printing was sold out in one summer month.) All seven TV stations showed up along with half a dozen radio stations and Dr. Hynek made ten other radio and TV appearances during his 53 hours in town. No major Southern California newspaper attended the Press Conference or requested an interview with Dr. Hynek though all had been invited! The L. A. Times, whose 1,000,000 per day circulation is the highest of any newspaper west

of the Hudson River, said that nothing new on the subject had occurred in 20 years !!! Ignorance must indeed be bliss since my monthly clipping service provides loads of UFO sighting reports from all over the world including Southern California, and since the Times has not given accurate coverage of most of the items discussed in this article.

I know from personal experience that some sceptical media men insist that no other scientists besides me believe in UFOs. That this is absolute nonsense was clearly shown in an opinion poll on UFOs conducted by Industrial Research magazine. IR is sent monthly to 90,000 professional engineers and scientists who qualify to receive it by their involvement in research and development activities. That its readers are not kooks is clearly shown by the fact that 27% have a PhD as their highest degree, 26% have a Masters degree and the balance a Bachelors degree. Each month IR has a poll on a different subject. The January, 1971, poll was on UFOs, and 2700 readers responded which is fairly typical. The results shown in their entirety below should certainly startle those who think only little old ladies in tennis shoes believe in UFOs:

OPINION POLL\*

- Q1: Do you believe that UFOs exist?  
 Definitely ..... 20%  
 Probably ..... 34%  
 Undecided ..... 15%  
 Probably not ..... 23%  
 Definitely not ..... 8%
- Q2: Do you know anyone who claims to have seen a UFO?  
 Yes ..... 36%  
 No ..... 64%
- Q3: Have you ever observed a UFO yourself?  
 Yes ..... 8%  
 No ..... 78%  
 Perhaps ..... 14%
- Q4: Do you think that most people who observe a UFO report their sighting to authorities?  
 Most report ..... 15%  
 Some report ..... 49%  
 Few report ..... 36%
- Q5: Do you believe that the government has revealed all its information concerning UFOs?  
 Yes ..... 24%  
 No ..... 76%
- Q6: In your opinion, were the conclusions of the Condon Report on UFOs Definitive?  
 Yes ..... 20%  
 No ..... 80%
- Q7: Do you think that the government should support further research to document existence (or non-existence) of UFOs?  
 Yes ..... 49%  
 No ..... 51%
- Q8: If you consider the possibility of UFO existence, where do you think they originate?  
 Outer space ..... 32%  
 Natural phenomena ..... 27%  
 U. S. A. .... 5%  
 Communist nations ..... 0.6%  
 Undecided ..... 35.4%

\*(Poll reprinted with permission of Industrial Research Inc., Beverly Shores, Ind. 46301).

One March 8, 1972, retired Navy man and Photo journalist Roy H. Lauritzen was driving his car in Salt Lake City, Utah. All of a sudden, looking up into the clear early afternoon sky, Lauritzen spotted an Unidentified Flying Object! He stopped his car and removed a camera. Because Lauritzen is an active professional photographer he always carries a camera with him in the trunk of his car. His expensive Linhof camera was loaded with film. Three exposures were already on the roll, leaving seven exposures remaining. Hurringly, the excited professional placed the camera on a sturdy tripod and finished off the roll of film, taking seven photographs of the UFO. While he attempted to reload his camera the UFO moved off and disappeared.

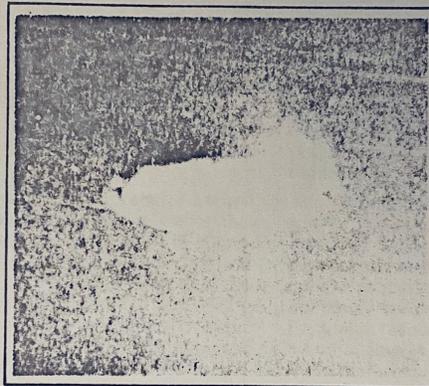
The photos below are prints from frames number 5 and 6 on the roll which remains uncut. The closeup of the UFO is taken from frame number 5.

According to Lauritzen's eyewitness account, "the object appeared overhead and then changed position. It seemed to revolve quite rapidly and seemed to give off light from the bottom area."

In the closeup, Lauritzen continues, "you can see luminous regions which could possibly be ionized air plasma produced by some kind of electro-magnetic propulsion." Such regions have been seen in other UFO's.

Lauritzen used Plus-X Professional film and carefully developed it in D-76 developer. The lens of the camera was equipped with a PolaScreen for more separation between subject and background. The photographer has kept the roll of film uncut.

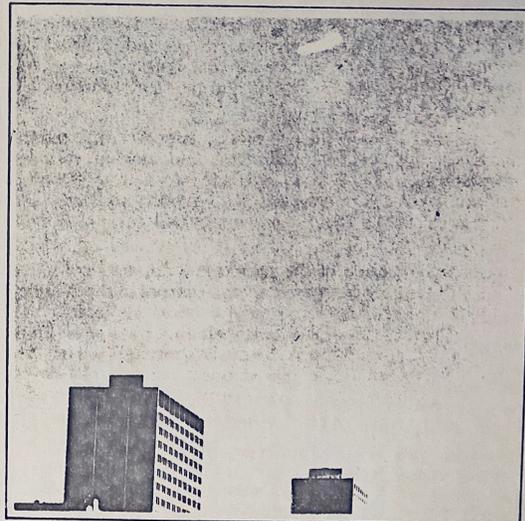
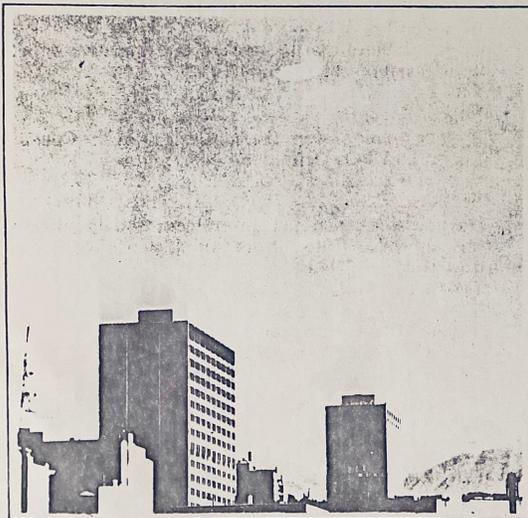
The length of the sighting was estimated by Lauritzen at being between 3 to 4 minutes.



"Nothing new on the (UFO) subject has occurred in 20 years."

—L. A. Times, 1972

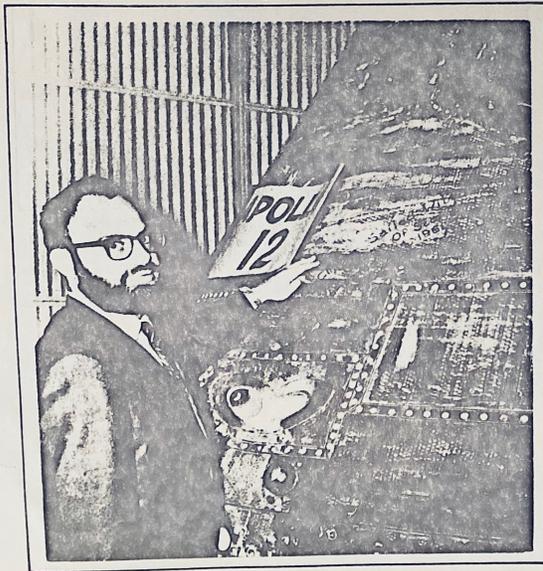
"Persons wishing to report UFO sightings past or future are requested to send as much information as possible to UFO Research Institute, P. O. Box 941, Lawndale, CA. 90260."



Note that the silent majority of engineers and scientists clearly accept UFO reality, and don't believe either that the government has revealed all it knows about UFOs or that the Condon Report provided any definite conclusions. Notice, too, that half of those expressing an opinion on the origin of UFOs said "outer space" and that a full 8% have definitely observed a UFO with another 14% possibly having observed one. My own polls conducted after each lecture give similar results with 5-10% of the people having observed a UFO, but 95% of the observers not having reported their sightings.

There has also been a lot of quiet but important work unknown to the general public relating to the feasibility of travel to the stars. The noisy exobiologists and astronomers tell us that such trips are impossible but ask for literally billions of dollars to find out about Martian microbes (Project Viking) and to build bigger and better radio telescopes (Project Cyclops) so that they can listen for signals from outer space. Fortunately pragmatic engineers have quietly published several technical papers showing that trips to nearby stars are very definitely feasible *now*, without violating the laws of physics and with round trip times shorter than 50 years. These studies do NOT invoke 4th dimensional space time warping, or matter-anti-matter annihilation or even anti-gravity. They do involve staged nuclear fission and nuclear fusion propulsion systems on both of which I have worked in industry. Very successful fission propulsion system tests have already been conducted. None of the stay-at-home-and-listen arguments stand up under careful scrutiny and one even begins to wonder how some of them managed to be published in the first place.

This is not at all to say that you can buy tickets for excursions to nearby star systems tomorrow but only that the question is now a political one — "Do we want to spend the money? — not a scientific one requiring new laws of physics. The situation might be considered analogous to the possibility of going to the moon 30 years ago. A lot of money and engineering were required but the basic science was already at hand even if new technological developments came in handy. Frankly, it seems clear that



technological progress comes from doing things differently in an unpredictable fashion and that our visitors probably use techniques about which we know nothing at present . . . just as the laser, microcircuit, and fusion weapons involve science about which we knew nothing a few decades ago. Remember somebody else out there may have very well gotten started on his technological kick a billion years ago rather than just a few generations ago. Wouldn't it make more sense to find out about intelligent extraterrestrial life coming here than about Martian microbes or the TV commercials from nearby stars? Wouldn't it be very much cheaper as well?

Speaking of technology, TV coverage of the Apollo flights over the last three years has certainly helped my audiences accept two further points that I make in my lectures. The first involves the round blunt non-streamlined shape of UFOs. In the late 1940's everybody "knew" that anything able to fly at thousands of miles per hour in the atmosphere would have to be highly streamlined with a sharp nose and sharp wing edges to cut through the air. There were of course some scientists who proved that one couldn't go as fast as UFOs were reported to be flying anyway. It is obvious that they were wrong since the Apollo Command Modules coming back from the moon hit the atmosphere at 25,000 miles per hour or well above the early radar-reported speeds for UFOs. Notice though that the Command Modules are round and squat and look very much more like UFOs than they look like any winged aircraft. There are no sharp noses, no wings, no protruding engines, no tail, no landing gear, and no high melting point metals either. To move really rapidly we use a round, blunt shape also.

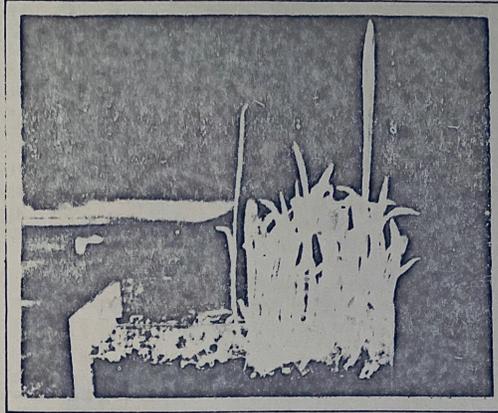
The second point is that I have suggested that we really should use a new name for those UFOs which can't be identified by competent investigators and that are seen to hover near and/or on land on the Earth leaving marks behind when they depart and occasionally debarking humanoid creatures. The name I have suggested is *Earth Excursion Modules* or EEMs since the reports indicate many analogies with our own *Lunar Excursion Modules*. In both instances we have strange looking craft landing out in the boondocks with humanoid looking creatures picking up samples, playing games, reentering their craft, lifting off at high speed without any help from local workers, rendezvousing with a mother ship and zipping off towards another planetary body. Hopefully the analogy reduces some of the mysteriousness.

We know that the LEMS have disturbed the soil behind them on the moon. Ted Phillips, a serious UFO investigator from Sedalia, Missouri, has collected well over 450 "landing-trace" cases from 32 countries and adds to his collection of cases constantly. All involve some sort of burn circle, or burn ring, or landing gear marks, or damaged plant life or other physical measurable traces. Many involve observations of humanoid creatures associated with the typically disc shaped EEMs sitting on or near the ground out in the boondocks. Believe it or not my audiences don't laugh when I talk about creatures.

There have also been a whole host of other recent conferences and symposia and publications on UFOs involving scientists and engineers. The Aerial Phenomenon Research Organization had 13 PhDs present papers at a session in Tuscon in November, 1971. The AIAA mentioned "In the late 1940s everybody 'knew' that anything able to fly at thousands of miles per hour would have to be highly streamlined with a sharp nose and wings to cut through the air." Friedman shows the command module to emphasize the practicality of a squat, round shape.

above had a technical panel discuss UFOs at one of its meetings and published two important radar cases at well. The Midwest UFO Network, a rapidly growing organization, has had a number of professionals involved not only quietly in the organization but also presenting papers at the three Annual public conferences which have been held. The National Enquirer has offered \$50,000 for proof that UFOs are extraterrestrial and \$5000 for the best single case reported by the end of 1972. The committee passing judgment is composed of 5 University professors including Dr. Hynek. In short, there has been a rapid and significant shift in emphasis from the undercover interest to the public exposition of viewpoints which would have led to a kind of professional suicide just a few years ago.

Unlike these relatively unpublicized publications the lunar landings of the last three years have influenced very many people in another area related to willingness to accept the possibility of UFOs as EEMs. Everywhere I go people tell me that they no longer can believe that Earthlings are the only intelligent beings in the universe . . . a view very popular 50 years ago when today's "ancient academics," "fossilized physicists" and "naysaying newsmen" were growing up. I have come to believe that the real problem with acceptance of UFOs as somebody else's Earth Excursion Modules is that it makes some people feel much less important than they would like to think of themselves as being. The attitude, especially of some of the most negative astronomers, seems to be "If there were visitors to Earth they would, of course, want to talk to us. They haven't asked for an appointment. They must not be coming here." The editors take the attitude: "They would have called a



The soil at left above is from the strangely snow covered ring seen below on the Johnson farm in Delphos, Kansas. The right sample is from a few feet away. Tests showed that the UFO observed over the ring on Nov. 2, 1971, had also changed the texture, color, composition, and ability to mix with water of the ring soil. This case was awarded The Enquirer \$5000. award in Mid. 1973.

Both Photos by Ted Phillips.



press conference." This same selfcenteredness characterized the response by the high priests of the 16th century who insisted that Copernicus was wrong when he said the Earth was not the center of the universe but that the sun was. Fifty years ago there was much opposition to the "outlandish" notion that the sun wasn't at the center of the universe or even of our own galaxy. It seems time finally to recognize that not only isn't our solar system something really special — except to us — but that the totality of man's history on this planet is in the larger scheme of things no more impressive or significant than the total history of a beehive. Fascinating and important to its inhabitants and of significance to its exploiters, but not such a big deal after all.

These views may sound a bit pessimistic. In actuality, I am very optimistic about society and UFOs. I believe that

the evergrowing acceptance of UFO reality, especially amongst young people, bodes well for a new view of the people of this planet as Earthlings first and Russians or Chinese or American second, and black or white and male or female third or 4th. Is there any other path to peace for the 21st century?

Several of the more significant and scientific books and reports on UFOs are listed below. Persons wishing to report UFO sightings past or future are requested to send as much information as possible to myself and my professional colleagues at the UFO Research Institute, P. O. Box 941, Lawndale, California 90260. We guarantee not to use witness' names without permission. Mere lights in the sky not obviously attached to a solid object are of much less interest than landings, photographic, radar and multiple witness cases. 

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