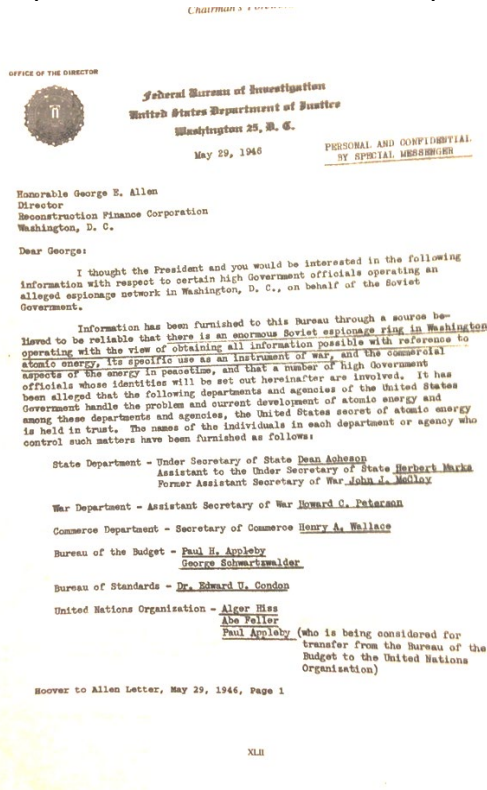


# The Condon Investigation on UFOs

Robert Salas

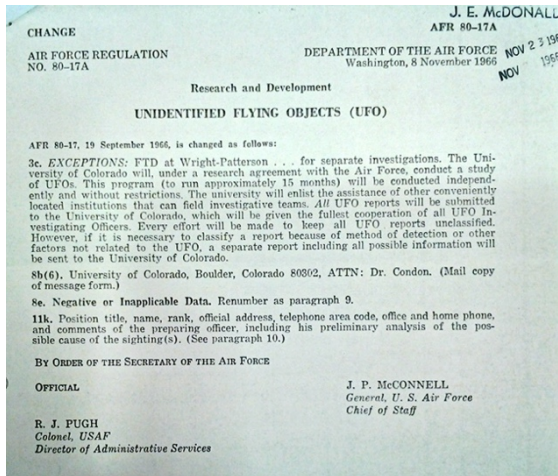
Dr. Edward U. Condon was a nuclear physicist who briefly joined the Manhattan Project in 1943 to develop the first atomic bomb. Within six weeks, he resigned as a result of conflicts about security with General Leslie R. Groves, the project's military leader. He was appointed as director of the National Bureau of Standards (NBS) in 1946 and the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) was established under NBS. The NBS was tasked to do much of the technical work in the development of nuclear weapons.

In May 1946, Condon was accused by J. Edgar Hoover of being a Soviet spy.



As a result of further investigations by the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) he lost his security clearance and his ability to work on government projects in 1953.

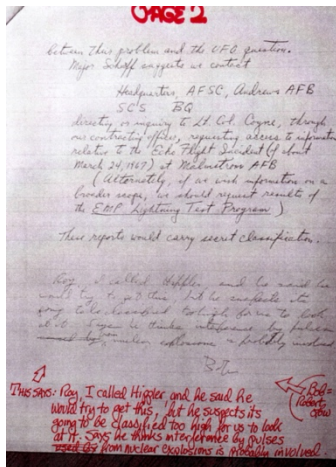
In 1973, Charles Weiner of the American Institute of Physics (AIP) interviewed Edward Condon. From that interview, he states he was visited by a government representative years after losing his clearance: "Condon: 'Don't you think you ought to be cleared.' He said, 'It would be nice and I kind of think things have changed enough at the Defense Department, there wouldn't be any trouble, but the procedure is such that you have to be willing to fill out the application form and sent it in, and I want you to be willing to do that.' So we did, and I was cleared...That was



about 1966, I guess.”<sup>1</sup> In September 1966, the USAF awarded the UFO Scientific Study Project to the University of Colorado group headed by Condon:

Note that this order authorizes release of all USAF documents on the UFO subject for this investigation and including classified reports. In fact, within a few months of the start of this ‘investigation’, the UFO incidents at Malmstrom AFB occurred. The classified USAF report on those incidents was never turned over to the Condon UFO study as required by this directive.

“Weiner - Would you have needed the clearance in order to take on the Air force project, UFO project? Condon – Only in case they insisted. I was in no sense hampered in the doing of it by lack of access – I don’t recall – except that one little business of one day seeing a movie of some advanced development planes, and that was not vital. It didn’t matter.”<sup>1</sup>



It did matter. The USAF had performed a classified investigation and report on the UFO-missile shutdown incidents at Echo and Oscar Flight, Malmstrom AFB, MT (March 1967). Condon’s chief investigator for the project, Dr. Roy Craig, had been informed of this report in October 1967 by Malmstrom Operations Officer, Lt. Col. Lewis Chase. Craig had learned about the Echo/Oscar incidents from Raymond Fowler who was managing civilian contractors for Minuteman electrical systems for Sylvania and who had received UFO sightings reports from his representatives in the field. Craig discussed getting access to the USAF report with Dr. Robert Low, Condon’s deputy. Here is that exchange (Craig’s hand-written note with Low’s handwritten response).

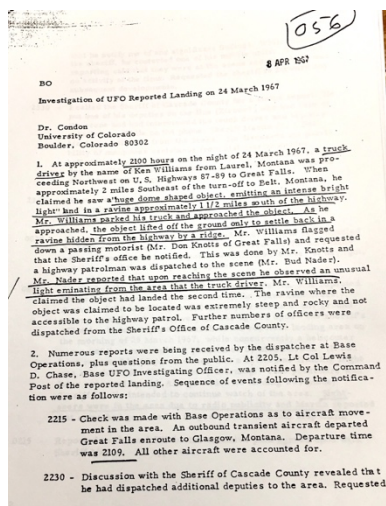
As a result of this decision not to pursue obtaining the Echo/Oscar investigation reports, nor witnesses interviewed, these incidents were never reviewed by the Condon investigators, nor included in the final report. The suggested possible cause for these incidents as EMP from nuclear bomb testing has no merit since records show there were no nuclear bomb tests during the time period of these incidents.

The Condon investigation into UFOs was never intended to be scientific, nor comprehensive. When the investigation first began there was a meeting on January 12, 1967 in Boulder, CO. It was attended by Lt. Col. Robert Hippler, Air Force Directorate of Science and Technology, project coordinator for the Pentagon. He stated, “You see, first of all, we have not charged you, and you have not promised, to prove or disprove anything.” Dr. Tom Ratchford, Air Force Office of Scientific Research, added, “I think the only thing that we are really asking you to do is to

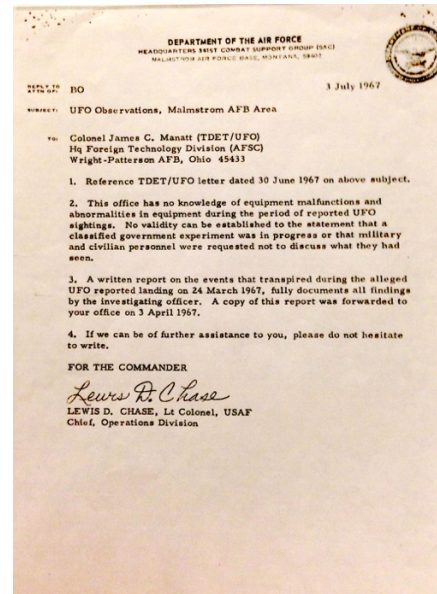
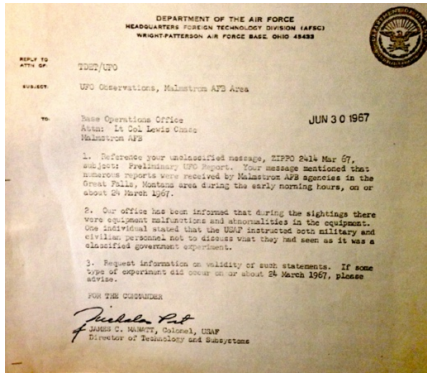
take a look at the problem, first of all, and on the basis of what you determine recommend what the Air Force should do in the future.” Hippler concluded, “I don’t think we want any recommendation from you unless you feel strongly about it.”<sup>2</sup>

Condon got the message. “Condon: At any rate, they (Air Force) had a committee headed by Brian O’Brien that was a sort of advisory committee that gave them a report on this, and the way they sort of phrased the question was not that you were to necessarily dispose of the question thoroughly, scientifically, but just, they had come to the conclusion that there was no sense doing anything more on as defense, their specialty...So the question that was really put to us was kind of lost sight of in most public discussion of this thing. It was just that now our question was, ought they or ought they not to be willing to support projects in this field? We were more therefore to study the subject as it stood from that point of view.”<sup>1</sup>

In a meeting of Air Force ‘UFO officers’ from various bases that would assist in the investigation, held by Condon in Boulder, CO June 1967, the point of the investigation was made clear. Major General Otto Glasser, Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff of the Air Force had selected and ordered these UFO officers to attend the meeting. Lt. Col. Lewis Chase held the highest ranking of these investigators who were mostly junior grade officers. Chase wrote a trip report of this meeting and parts are quoted here: “Much effort was expended in explaining the methods that have been used to discount approximately 95% of the UFO sightings to date, i.e., optical mirage, stars, satellites, temperature inversion, etc. No time was devoted to the 5% of sightings on the Project Blue Book list that remain admittedly unexplained to date.” In another paragraph he stated: “It was also quite clear that, for the study to be effective, there is almost total dependency upon base UFO officers to sort the multitude of reports and to identify those cases worthy of detailed examination.” The last paragraph of his trip report reveals much about how the Condon Committee and the Air Force were intending to orchestrate this program. “Although the University study has approximately 8 months to run, and barring any dramatic events, the conclusions in the initial formal report will most likely read as follows: a. There is no evidence to support a hypothesis that extraterrestrials have visited earth. b. Certain events have occurred that are difficult to explain due to lack of conclusive data and/or instrumentation and state of the art investigative procedures.”<sup>3</sup>



In June of 1967, Lt. Col. Chase certainly would have known of the Echo/Oscar incident investigations because he had directly communicated with Condon about other UFO sightings at and near Malmstrom AFB on March 24, 1967, the same day as the Oscar flight incident.<sup>4</sup> He also informed Dr. Craig, Condon's chief investigator, about the on-going investigations of those incidents during a meeting in October 1967. It was made clear he was complicit in the coverup of those incidents when he received and answered an inquiry from the USAF Foreign Technology Division (FTD) - home of Project Blue Book.



FTD asked Chase directly if there was any truth to the information they had, that there were “equipment malfunctions and abnormalities” during the UFO sightings. Chase stated, falsely that he had no knowledge of equipment malfunctions. The testimonies of Lt. Robert Jamison, myself and others clearly indicates that it was widely known by the maintenance squadron, the command post, and squadron commanders that all ten missiles of Oscar flight were disabled during UFO encounters on March 24, 1967, and those of Echo Flight on March 16, 1967.



The coverup was complete when USAF issued its statement in 1969 announcing their decision to discontinue UFO investigations, terminating Blue Book December 17, 1969. This statement acknowledged that their decision was based on the “Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects,” by the University of Colorado. This FACT SHEET stated: “No UFO reported, investigated and evaluated by the Air Force was ever an indication of threat to our national security.” This false and deceptive document, that has misled the public for over fifty years, continues to be the official position of the U.S. Air Force on the subject of UFOs.

<sup>1</sup> Interview of Edward Condon by Charles Weiner on 1973 September 11, Niels Bohr Library & Archives, American Institute of Physics, College Park, MD USA, [www.aip.org/history-programs/niels-bohr-library/oral-histories/4997-3](http://www.aip.org/history-programs/niels-bohr-library/oral-histories/4997-3)

<sup>2</sup> UFOs – An Insider’s View of the Official Quest for Evidence, Craig; University of North Texas Press 1995

<sup>3</sup> “Trip Report – Meeting of Investigators of UFO’s at the University of Colorado, 12 and 13 June, 1967” Papers of Dr. James E. McDonald, University of Arizona Library Special Collections

