

UFO INVESTIGATOR

NATIONAL INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE ON
NICAP AERIAL PHENOMENA

AIR FORCE TEXT FAVORS UFO STUDY

Air Cadets Urged to Keep Open Mind

A U.S. Air Force Academy textbook on space science has attracted widespread publicity for its surprisingly objective treatment of UFOs. Devoting an entire chapter to the UFO subject, the textbook urges Academy students "to keep an open and skeptical mind, and not take an extreme position on any side of the question."

The book also advises that "we should not deny the possibility of alien control of UFOs on the basis of preconceived notions."

Viewed against the long history of government reassurance that UFOs are conventional phenomena, such positive statements seem out of character for an agency of the Air Force, if not flatly contradictory of Air Force policy. Spokesmen for the Academy, however, insist that no division of official opinion is represented by the book. It is not intended to "mouth a party line," they say, but rather to expose students to all points of view on a controversial issue.

Entitled "*Introductory Space Science*," the textbook is used for the course Physics 370, in the Academy's Department of Physics. The book is published in two volumes and includes 33 chapters, the last of which treats UFOs. Inclusion of the chapter is explained by the Academy as a logical step in presenting the students with information on "all physical phenomena in our atmosphere," as well as a means of teaching skills in dealing with anomalous scientific data.

Academic Freedom Prevails at Academy

"As informed citizens and aspiring Air Force officers," the Academy told NICAP, "the students should be aware of the UFO controversy and all related questions. They should be ready to weigh any new information that is developed, and to refrain from making up their minds without first investigating all aspects of the problem."

This position provides a curious contrast to the Air Force-funded Condon Report, which argues that examination of UFO literature should be discouraged in American schools. "We strongly recommend," the Report states, "that teachers refrain from giving students credit for school work based on their reading of the presently available UFO books and magazine articles."

NICAP obtained a copy of the textbook's UFO chapter in October 1969. No attempt was made to publicize it, however, because there was some doubt as to whether it would remain in use once the Pentagon acted on the Condon Report's recommendation to close Project Blue Book and cease study of UFOs. This doubt proved groundless, however, as the chapter was neither deleted from the text nor editorially altered in light of Blue Book's demise.

The chapter was written in 1968 by Major (now Lt. Colonel) Donald G. Carpenter, a member of the Academy faculty. Writing at the request of his superiors, who wanted to update educational material being used by the Physics Department, Carpenter was under no obligation to seek clearance of his work from the Pentagon or other high Air Force office. He did submit the textbook to the Academy's public information office, but no objection was raised to the UFO chapter.

In speaking recently with Carpenter (who no longer teaches at the Academy), NICAP asked his personal opinion on the subject of UFOs. "I have no firm conclusions," he said; "I can see merit in more than one point of view, and I find the data exceedingly interesting."

He went on to explain that his purpose in preparing the UFO chapter was not to stress one hypothesis or take a particular position, but to give the students an overview of the problem.

Sentiment Is Strong for Further Study

This neutral approach is shared by the present instructor of Physics 370, Captain Edward A. Peterson. Peterson told NICAP that he too feels an open mind is necessary in reviewing the UFO problem, and that closure of Blue Book does not necessarily mean a satisfactory solution has been found.

"The subject should continue to be investigated," he said.

The textbook considers some of the research already done to test various of the theories advanced to explain UFOs. But it warns against making rash conclusions on the basis of present scientific understanding.

"One thing that must be guarded against in such study," the book states, "is the trap of implicitly assuming that our knowledge of physics (or any other branch of science) is complete. An example of one such trap is selecting a group of physical laws which we now accept as valid, and assume that they will never be superseded."

In assessing the extraterrestrial hypothesis, the textbook acknowledges its seeming improbability, but admits that it cannot be ruled out.

"The entire phenomenon could be psychological in nature," says the book, "but that is quite doubtful. . . . The phenomenon could also be entirely due to known and unknown natural phenomena (with some psychological "noise" added in), but that too is questionable in view of some of the available data. This leaves us with the unpleasant possibility of alien visitors to our planet, or at least of alien controlled UFOs. However, the data are not well correlated, and what questionable data there are suggest the existence of at least three and maybe four different groups of aliens (possibly at different stages of development). This too is difficult to accept. It implies the existence of intelligent life on a majority of the planets in our solar system, or a surprisingly strong interest in Earth by members of other solar systems."

Third of a Series

MAN AND NON-MAN

What Impact the Discovery of Extraterrestrial Intelligence?

The following is a continuation of the NICAP interview with Dr. Richard S. Young, Chief of Exobiology for NASA, on the search for extraterrestrial life. The interview began in the September issue.

NICAP: In 1965, the National Academy of Sciences put out a two-volume study on Mars, *Biology and the Exploration of Mars*. The study comments that science simply does not know the difference between life and nonlife.

YOUNG: Well, I wouldn't put it quite that way; perhaps it did.

NICAP: That's essentially what it said. In other words, you can get down to certain characteristics of living organisms, but even those characteristics do not really make life and nonlife mutually exclusive categories.

YOUNG: Well, there's a large element of truth in that. Generally speaking, of course, we know what's not alive, by some arbitrary set of conditions with which we define life. I think the real argument is that there has never been a definition of life that is completely acceptable to all scientists. There is always this basic debate as to what life really is. These are technical subtleties, I think; one can very easily generalize about what is life and what isn't life. But I think it's generally acceptable that life is a self-replicating, mutating system made of carbon or carbon-based compounds. It certainly is on Earth; there's no life (on Earth) that's not. But there are always borderline things, like the virus for example. There's a form of contention as to whether the virus is really alive or not. And the argument stems around whether the virus is self-replicating, which it isn't. A virus can only replicate in the presence of a cell, another life, or something that's alive, or more alive. So it's this kind of gray area that makes it difficult to really decide what's alive and what isn't alive.

NICAP: The study did say that essentially there's no basic difference between extremely simple forms of life and extremely complicated forms of life.

YOUNG: In other words, we are all made of the same moleculars.

NICAP: Yes, and from that point of view, man is indistinguishable from an insect or something even simpler.

YOUNG: You grind up a man and grind up a handful of bacteria, and run them through a chemical analyzer, and you will come out with the same stuff -- probably even essentially the same proportions. There is very little difference. Man is certainly not chemically unique.

NICAP: The reason we raise this question of what is life is

that it would appear to relate in a fundamental way to exobiology, to where you look for life, how you look, what you look for, what instruments you use, etc.

YOUNG: Well, that is a problem. We have often asked ourselves whether there could be a life that is based on a chemistry very different from life on Earth. But that is pure speculation; all life on Earth is based on the same chemistry. Chemical evolution, it turns out, in the laboratory produces carbon compounds. One starts with the primitive atmosphere of a planet and with energy, and starts synthesizing compounds, and it is organic compounds, carbon compounds, that are synthesized. You don't end up with silicon polymers; you don't end up with phosphorous polymers, or anything else; you end up with carbon compounds. So the suggestive evidence is fairly compelling that this kind of chemical evolution would have occurred on any planet that had a similar history where we would expect organic compounds to have been present. And if indeed this has anything to do with the origin of life, it should have occurred on any planet with a similar history.

As far as we know, all planets evolve in pretty much the same kind of way; all evolve from the same kinds of elements, in proportion to their cosmic abundance. So if you accept the line of reasoning that the origin of life is more or less controlled by basic laws of physics and chemistry, then one is led back to carbon chemistry each time. And we would expect life, no matter where it is, to have something in common with life on Earth, at least in terms of common chemistry.

When we start developing life-detection techniques, we use these assumptions as starting points. It would be silly of us to go to Mars and look for a kind of life that doesn't exist anywhere, that we can't really make a meaningful model of. We wouldn't know how to go about looking for it because we don't know what it is. So all we can do is look for life that we have a model of, and that's life on Earth. You can't exclude other possibilities rigorously, but there's no way to develop a program around these other possibilities.

NICAP: There was some publicity given to the discovery of small organisms on the moon, or something to that effect.

YOUNG: No organisms were detected on the moon. There was a report of organisms that were brought back (one species of bacteria) in one of the Surveyor parts that had been on the moon for 18 months. But that would have been an organism, if indeed it wasn't a contaminant, carried from Earth and that survived exposure on the moon.

NICAP: In going into outer space and looking, as you say, for life of which we have a model, what if we stumble upon something that appears to be life but that does not fit the model? Would scientists be surprised?

YOUNG: Yes, I think so. I think we would be very surprised if we detect life that wasn't based on carbon chemistry, that wasn't made of amino acids and carbohydrates and fatty acids. We might find a slightly different array of amino acids than we find on Earth; it may be that some of the fatty acids would be arranged differently; but basically it would be a recognizable carbon-based chemistry. I think that's what's generally expected if we find life elsewhere. There may be differences, but it will be recognizable. And I think we'd be very surprised to find that there is a completely different kind of chemistry, such as a silicon chemistry instead of a carbon chemistry.

NEXT: Do Fossils Exist of Extraterrestrial Organisms?

CASEBOOK

DATE: February 8, 1951

LOCATION: North Atlantic

Crew members and passengers on a Navy R5D aircraft experienced a dramatic sighting in the early morning hours of February 8, 1951, while flying over the North Atlantic (see last month's issue). The details of that experience, as told by the pilot, are published here for the first time.

"The aircraft was on automatic-pilot (this was standard procedure during clear weather, so both pilots could watch for other aircraft). Lt. Com. F.K. and myself were on constant watch for other aircraft. I observed a yellow glow in the distance about 30 to 35 miles away, at about the 1 o'clock position and below the horizon. My impression was that there was a small city ahead, because it was the same glow you get from a group of lights on the surface before you get close enough to pick them out individually.

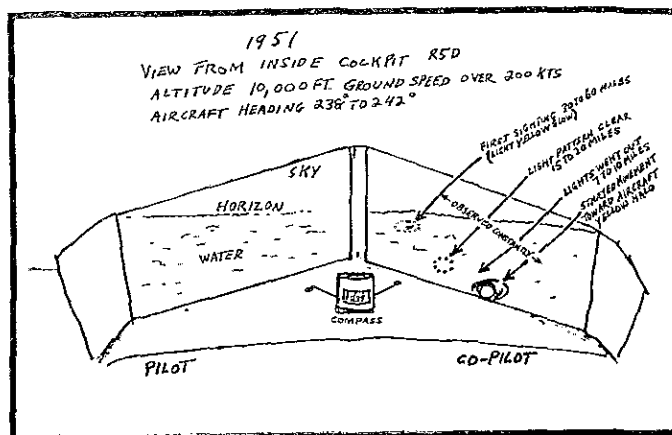
"Knowing that we pass the tip of Greenland, my first thought was that we were behind schedule and had drifted north, but remembering that we had passed over the weather ship, I knew this was not the case. I called F.K.'s attention to the glow and asked him what he thought it was. He said that it looked like we were approaching land. I asked our navigator to check his navigation. He did and replied that we were on flight plan and on course.

"The lights were farther away than we thought because it took us from eight to ten minutes to get close enough to where the lights had a pattern (our ground speed was over three miles per minute), about 15 or 18 miles away. At that time, due to the circular pattern of lights, I got the impression that possibly two ships were tied up together and that lights were strung between them for either transferring cargo from one to the other or that one was in some kind of trouble.

"I asked the navigator to check his ship plot. He replied that there were no ships plotted in this area and that we were not close to the shipping lanes anyway. The radioman also went on the air to the weather ship, which verified that there were no ships in the area.

"Since it was time for Lt. J.'s crew to relieve us, I had the plane captain awaken them. When Lt. J. and Lt. M. came up forward, I pointed the lights out to them. Their only comment was that it had to be a ship because it was on the water and we were overtaking it fast. At this time, we were five to seven miles away; it was about 30 degrees to our right; and we had to look down at about a 45-degree angle. The lights had a definite circular pattern and were bright white.

"Suddenly, the lights went out. There appeared a yellow halo on the water. It turned to an orange, to a fiery red, and then started movement toward us at a fantastic speed, turning to a blueish red around the perimeter. Due to its high speed, its direction of travel, and its size, it looked as though we were going to be engulfed. I quickly disengaged the automatic-pilot and stood by to push the nose of the plane over in hopes that we could pass under it due to the angle it was ascending. The relief crew was standing behind us; everyone began ducking, and a few heads were hit on objects.



Pilot's drawing shows view from cockpit as strange object rose from ocean's surface and approached aircraft on apparent collision course.

"It stopped its movement toward us and began moving along with us about 45 degrees off the bow to the right, about 100 feet or so below us and about 200 to 300 feet in front of us. It was not in a level position; it was tilted about 25 degrees.

"It stayed in this position for a minute or so. It appeared to be from 200 to 300 feet in diameter, translucent or metallic, shaped like a saucer, a purple-red fiery ring around the perimeter and a frosted white glow around the entire object. The purple-red glow around the perimeter was the same type of glow you get around the commutator of an auto generator when you observe it at night.

"When the object moved away from us, it made no turns, as though it was backing up about 170 degrees from the direction that it approached us, and was still tilted. It was only a few seconds before it was out of sight. (Speed estimated in excess of 1500 mph.)

"All of our cameras were within reach, but no one was calm enough to think about taking a picture. Most of us were wondering what it was. Our impression was that this was a controlled craft. It was either hovering over the water or sitting on it, then it detected us and came up to investigate.

"After Lt. J.'s crew had taken over, I proceeded aft and learned that most of the passengers had observed the same thing. Since I was unable to identify the object, I asked Dr. M., CDR U.S. Navy, if he had observed the object. He replied that he had and that he did not look because it was a flying saucer and he did not believe in such things. I immediately returned to the cockpit and informed the crew to keep quiet about what we observed because it might have been our first sighting of a flying saucer (during those years when you mentioned you had such a sighting, you were believed to be crazy). Lt. J. informed me that it was too late because he had called Gander airfield in Newfoundland to see if the object could be tracked by radar.

"When we landed at Argentia (Newfoundland), we were met by intelligence officers. The types of questions they asked us were like Henry Ford asking about the Model T. You got the feeling that they were putting words in your mouth. It was obvious that there had been many sightings in the same area, and most of the observers did not let the cat out of the bag openly. When we arrived in the United States, we had to make a full report to Navy Intelligence.

"I found out a few months later that Gander radar did track the object in excess of 1800 mph. I did not see the reports made by other members aboard the aircraft. I did talk to the Air Force at Wright-Patterson AFB in 1957 but did not look at the report. They said they had it and many similar reports."

**A STATEMENT FROM
THE PRESIDENT**

In times past, a special message from an officer of NICAP usually meant an appeal for money. This time, however, the message has another purpose. As a NICAP member, you are entitled to know how your money is being used and what revenues are being received. It is essential that you understand exactly what it takes to keep NICAP functioning, because only then can you feel a real sense of interest and participation in the affairs and future of the corporation.

To help provide you this understanding, I want to review briefly the events of the past ten months, and our present situation. When NICAP was reorganized last December and the present administration was inaugurated, many problems remained to be dealt with. In attempting to find solutions, our basic premise has been that by applying sound business practices, we can not only resolve inherited problems but can prevent new ones from beginning. Thus, we have revamped our membership system, introduced an annual renewal cycle, revised our dues structure, adopted a new publication schedule, and decreased the size of our office staff, just to mention a few of the recent changes.

All these are important steps and have gone a long way toward putting NICAP on a secure operational basis. But there is a lot left to be done, and we are continuing to work at implementing our new programs, as funds allow.

On this page, you will find a summary of our financial history for the first three quarters of this year. It is not as good as it should be. When we will be able to improve it, and to what extent, are questions I cannot presently answer with any certainty. We will, however, continue to watch our expenses very carefully and seek maximum return on what limited funds we have. In January, when our fiscal review of 1970 has been completed, I will report to you on our progress.

In the meantime, I want to take this opportunity to respond to the many members who have asked what they can do to help NICAP now. With fluctuating public interest in UFOs and poor press coverage of sightings, it is easy to wonder what the future holds for a corporation like NICAP, which seeks to carry on as one of the few organizations attempting to resolve the UFO problem.

The answer is simple. NICAP's greatest asset is people like yourself: members. Our members not only provide us funds, they support us in other important ways. They supply us sighting information and leads to cases; they tell other people about us and encourage them to join; they talk about UFOs and help make the public more aware of the subject; they help us stay informed of local events relevant to our work (such as UFO broadcasts, lectures, meetings, etc.).

Therefore, of all the things you can do for NICAP, the two most valuable are: 1) Renew your own membership, and 2) Urge other people to become members. If every member persuaded one new person to join, our membership would double. And if that happened, we would be in a much better position to uncover current sightings, follow up promising cases, and do the other work of NICAP.

Please give it some thought. I am certain you know at least one person who is interested in UFOs and would like to be better informed about the subject. We are happy to send information and membership applications to anyone who is interested. Just send us their names and

addresses, and we will do the rest. Or, if you prefer, advise interested people to send us a check or money order directly, for a year's dues (\$10 U.S., Canada, and Mexico; \$12 foreign), and we will enter their memberships right away.

Another direct form of help, of course, is a donation. Ever since its inception, donations have been part of NICAP's lifeblood, and I would be less than candid if I did not admit that we are very grateful to receive them. With our new tax exempt status, all donations are deductible from the donor's income tax.

I personally feel that the basic function of the corporation should be supported by membership dues. However, as you can see by the financial statement, the income from dues is not supporting NICAP. We cannot decrease the staff further and continue to exist as a viable organization. We presently operate with one full-time staff member (our Secretary-Treasurer) and two part-time personnel, a secretary and bookkeeper.

Please accept my personal appreciation for your interest and support over the years. The NICAP membership has worked faithfully to further the aims of the corporation, and I and the rest of the NICAP management are determined that your support shall not be wasted.

John L. Acuff
President
NICAP

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT
FOR PERIOD
JAN. 1 TO SEPT. 30, 1970**

Receipts

Memberships and Renewals	\$12,555
Deferred Membership Dues	8,034
Publications	2,722
Contributions	486
Newsletters (back issues)	62
Lectures	245
Lapel Pins	725
Miscellaneous	2,264
Total	\$27,093

Expenditures

Newsletter Production	\$ 4,780
Computer Services	1,393
Salaries	10,414
Rent	2,500
Telephone	684
Postage	1,117
Legal Fees	937
Accounting Fees	475
Office Supplies	286
Property Taxes	92
Employee Benefits	222
Advertising	14
Publicity and Promotion	105
Meetings	37
Copyright Fees	28
Publications	600
Printing	705
Equipment Rental	359
Maintenance and Repairs	40
Travel	123
Miscellaneous	1,273
Total	\$26,184

Note: Expenses include payments made or due on pre-1970 debts.

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Annual Membership Dues	
United States, Canada and Mexico	\$10.00
Foreign	\$12.00

Editor: Stuart Nixon



HOW TO HELP NICAP

Members often ask what they can do on a personal basis or at the local level to help NICAP. They say they want to do more than pay dues and read the newsletter but don't know what is of practical advantage to the organization. To help answer this question, we have prepared the following suggestions that we hope you will consider.

1. Give NICAP memberships and publications as Christmas or birthday gifts. For the person who has everything, this may be the perfect answer. A lot of people have been introduced to NICAP this way, including some of our most enthusiastic members. This is an especially good gift idea for friends or relatives who enjoy such subjects as astronomy, science fiction, or aviation.

2. Buy a NICAP lapel pin and wear it. You would be surprised to discover how eye-catching the pin is, and what a good conversation-starter it can be. A lot of people are interested in UFOs but hesitate to say so, even to friends. Seeing you with the lapel pin could be just the thing to get them talking. You never can tell whom you might meet this way.

3. Urge your local library to buy NICAP publications. We constantly receive complaints that libraries do not have good books on UFOs. We even hear from librarians who say they wish they had heard of NICAP long ago, because they do not know what UFO books to buy or recommend. The next time you visit your local library, check the shelves for UFO publications. If NICAP is not there, give the librarian NICAP's name and address and urge her to write us for details. She may appreciate your thoughtfulness more than you realize.

4. Urge your local radio and TV stations to treat UFOs seriously. A lot don't, usually because they don't know where to go for authoritative information and opinion. If you would like to see your station do a better job of covering the UFO subject, write their program director or manager and urge him to contact NICAP. We do telephone interviews with broadcasters all the time, and we would be pleased to hear from the stations in your area. We might even be able to arrange a personal appearance.

5. If you know of any group or organization that would like a speaker on UFOs, refer them to us. We have provided lecture services for hundreds of different groups all over the country. Sometimes, several groups will join together to sponsor a UFO program. If we cannot send a representative from NICAP headquarters, we may be able to recommend someone else who is qualified.

6. Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper and advise readers that despite the Condon Report and deactivation of Project Blue Book, UFO research is alive. Tell them about the work of NICAP, and urge them to become members. Be sure to include our address so they know where to write for further details. And if your letter is published, don't forget to send us a copy.

(More Suggestions to Follow)