

GARY P. POSNER, M.D.
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October 21, 1982

Dear Marcello,

Many thanks for your letter of Oct. 17---better late than never.

Enclosed is 2nd draft of Statement. Acceptable? Any further suggestions?

I still prefer the following selections for the Conference Committee:

Klass, Sheaffer, Oberg
Hynek, Hendry, Maccabee

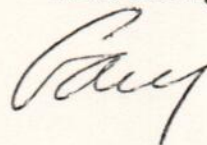
To exclude Klass and Hynek, the recognized leaders in the field, because "Hynek generally wants nothing to do with Klass", negates the purpose and spirit of the entire project. If they could share the stage at the Smithsonian Symposium, they should be able to co-exist in this forum. They needn't even correspond directly by mail, much less in person, if they choose not to.

Although the Committee proper would consist of only six members, in my letter of Sept. 16 I included a list of those who I would like to have sign the Statement, representing their respective organizations. Any comparable selections that I have omitted? Then below these, other signatures would be welcome (feel free to make a list).

If this 2nd draft is acceptable to you as is, please inform me promptly, so that I can formally request the participation of Klass, Oberg, and Sheaffer. I would like you to then request the same of the other three. Lets keep each other appraised of any progress.

If you request additional changes in the Statement, I'll try to accommodate. Also, if you object to the selections for the Committee, I'll consider others. I see no hope at all of anything coming out of all this unless you and I are on the same wavelength, but I have reservations about your alternative Committee selections.

Sincerely,



Zetetic scholar

An Independent Scientific Review of Claims of Anomalies and the Paranormal

Marcello Truzzi, *Editor*

Oct. 26, 1982

Dear Gary,

I generally like your new draft and am really prepared to sign it but I would like to see the following small changes which I think will make it easier to get others to sign it and which actually make it somewhat clearer (I hope you will agree). These are:

In the first section in (b) make "cannot be identified" into "have not been identified" or perhaps "cannot be adequately identified." This change is suggested because it makes clearer the fact that identification is often a matter of legitimate identification rather than mere identification. We would surely both agree that sometimes things become malidentified.

In the second section, in (a) could we change the word "settle" to the word "resolve" or even "adjudicate." The word "settle" suggests to me-- and I think to others likely also -- something a bit more absolute and final than we probably will ever get even if Hynek and Klass were to agree.

In the case of (c) following "UFO reality" I would insist upon the phrase in parentheses "(as defined above and not as any merely unidentified object)" eventhough this may seem redundant. My reason here is to make the matter most clear. If we meant merely an unidentified object, the burden of proof would be on any identifier, including someone like Klass who wants to identify them as mundane things. We tend to forget (on the critical side) that identification of an unknown also involves a burden of proof. It is because we are here defining UFOs as more than merely unknowns, we are defining them as having the a-through-f characteristics you put in the first part, that the person who claims a UFO has the burden of proof.

In the case of (d), it would be far better to say that the "more extraordinary the claim, the more substantial the proof required." The term "extraordinary" in reference to proof presents some problems (eventhough I coined that phrase) since we don't mean anything like "paranormal proof." It also makes clearer that what we mean is that proof needs to be commensurate with the degree of extraordinariness rather than actually somehow equalling it in some form of equation.

I hope these small changes are in line with your own thinking and meet with your approval. I think we both want to have a document that we can urge others to sign.

Finally, re the matter of the membership on the Conference Committee. I do not really object to the composition you suggest. I would indeed like to have both Hynek and Klass on it. I just think it unlikely that Hynek

would agree to be on with Klass. Nonetheless, I am quite willing to urge Hynek to join it. But the important thing is that I do not want to have his refusal to join (if he does not) to be then trumpeted as a sign of his somehow unscientific spirit. Frankly, knowing how Klass has acted in the past, I fear that Hynek's refusal might be then used against him, and that is definitely contrary to the spirit in which I am proposing this whole thing. The simple, unfortunate fact is that Hynek perceives Klass as being a guy who does not play fair ball. Right or wrong, Hynek sees Klass as unethical, and Hynek has in the past been unwilling to legitimate Klass as a responsible adversary as he would do if he agreed to be on debates with him, etc. (the only exception I know of was the Smithsonian debate and that was a very special situation given the auspices).

The additional problem for Hynek, I would think, is that Hynek probably perceives Klass-Oberg-Sheaffer as a solid coalition whereas he knows he has disagreements with Hendry and Maccabee. He would start out with a house divided against a solidified opposition. So in a sense, Hynek would probably see the cards as stacked against him.

One possible resolution would be to make it a 7-person committee which might include a 7th person who might be respected by both sides. Perhaps someone like Carl Sagan or, better yet, some extremely conservative ufologist who agrees with the legitimacy of the UFO problem but is slightly more conservative than Hendry (who really is not that different than, say, Sheaffer, when you look closely). Sagan is probably too busy and is really not that respected by Hynek, but there might be some good astronomer who is thought of as "open minded" by Hynek but still skeptical. Perhaps Philip Morrison would be a good person.

My final reservation concerns Maccabee as a choice. Would it not be better to get someone who is a high officer like President of a major UFO organization like MUFON? Who does Maccabee speak for except Maccabee? I am not really against him, and perhaps Hynek and Hendry would want him. But I think I would prefer to let Hynek and Hendry choose their third person. And perhaps their threesome plus Klass's threesome could then jointly pick a 7th member.

Having 7 members makes tie-breaking much easier. Maybe we don't really want that if what we are after is consensus. What do you think?

Anyway, as I have said, if you make the small changes in the "manifesto," consider it signed by me. If not, I will probably still sign it but would like your views on my suggested changes first.

The constitution of the committee is independent of the "manifesto," so I presume we can still deal with those issues. If the six parties you propose are all agreeable, there is no issue. I raise my reservations because I have doubts they will all join up together. I really hope I am wrong since in principal, I am for this.

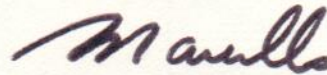
Finally, I think we should let the six proposed members see and perhaps amend the "manifesto" since that might maximize their willingness to both sign and join. In other words, let's get their informal reactions before seeking signatures for the "manifesto." Otherwise it will perhaps

look like we are trying to coerce them into signing up. OK?

I hope this prompt reply to you compensates a bit for my delay with my last letter.

Let me again commend you on what I think is the essentially constructive tack I think you are taking with all this. I really hope you can pull this off, and I will do what I can to help.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Marcello". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M".

Marcello Truzzi

P.S. I presume you finally got the CSAR application form. You remain a welcome applicant but presumably have some reservations about it.

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October 31, 1982

Dear Marcello,

Enclosed is my latest draft of the Statement, employing your suggestions. I also transposed (e) and (f) in section one, to render a more logical flow.

The introduction to section two states that "Some of us are of the opinion that UFOs do not exist". This statement accurately reflects the opinion of Klass-type skeptics, who thus cannot be expected to "acknowledge" at this point that there remains a residue of unexplained UFOs (new definition). Accordingly, I felt the necessity to change part (e), which I had too hastily penned in my effort to accommodate your wishes. I hope you find the new version to be acceptable (still open to discussion).

Regarding Hynek's possible refusal to participate--- I would not necessarily infer an "unscientific spirit", but that would be at the top of my list of explanations. I acknowledge that Hynek claims that Klass is unethical, and not a responsible adversary. Ron Westrum made similar claims in his correspondence with me, although he could not, in my opinion, substantiate them. Also, when I met David Jacobs at one of his UFO lectures, he promised to become my source of information regarding the legendary errors, falsehoods, and unethical deeds of Phil. Jacobs, too, never delivered. And in your own recent correspondence with Phil, you make similar charges, failing to offer specific examples, much less substantiating evidence.

On the other hand, it is Hynek who lies to the entire nation on Good Morning America when he pretends that a film of Venus is in reality a UFO. Or on numerous other nationally-televised programs, when he seemingly endorses CE-III claims, in order to encourage more interest in UFOs, and more money for CUFOS. You have acknowledged to me your own "infuriation" at times about this behavior.

But my opinions of Hynek's ethics do not prompt me to exclude him from our proposed Committee. He is, after all, the titular head of the pro-UFO movement, and without his participation, the Committee, in my opinion, would have no *raison d'etre*. I therefore not only encourage his cooperation, I would insist upon it.

As for your reservations about Maccabee, I would be willing to see who Hynek and Hendry would prefer in his place. And I would consider a 7th member along the lines of Jim Moseley, assuming the notorious CSICOP 3 would be agreeable (although as you note, we are demanding consensus, not tiebreaking) (also assuming the CSICOP 3 agree to participate, which I have yet to determine).

When I began this project, you and Phil had not yet begun to explore the possibility of presenting Hynek's "Top 5 or 10" to the NAS for review. But now this proposal is on the table, and I assume that you are urging Hynek to provide a list of cases for study. If he were to be unwilling to submit such a list to NAS, he obviously would also refuse such a request for the Committee. Under those circumstances, I again would see no purpose to be served by the Committee, since its first goal must be to deal with a few of the most convincing of the tens of thousands of cases on file. What purpose would be served by studying Case A, perhaps reaching a negative consensus, only to have Hynek protest that he had never considered that case to be particularly important in the first place?

I think the NAS idea is a superb one, and perhaps it pre-emptes the need for our Committee (although personally I feel that it would be preferable to at least make a bipartisan attempt to adjudicate the issue internally, employing the scientific method, prior to seeking outside arbitration). But perhaps the other interested parties disagree. And perhaps the NAS scientists might choose to adopt our Committee as their own. Our Statement could easily be amended to reflect the new circumstances, and some sort of statement indicating the signatories' intention to abide by the findings of NAS could be added. I seek no personal glory in this venture, and would welcome NAS participation in getting to the bottom (if possible) of the UFO controversy, once and for all.

The rest of my letter deals with issues that, in the spirit of harmony, I had placed on the "back burner" for a while. But since your postscript suggests (correctly) that I have some "reservations" about becoming associated with CSAR, I feel that an open and honest discussion in the following vein is appropriate at this time.

Getting back to Allen Hynek for a moment, the more I think about it, the harder it is for me to imagine him accepting the Statement, with its emphasis, at your suggestion, of the scientific method. Does he believe that his evidence provides scientific proof that any of his top cases represent extraordinary phenomena, to the exclusion of prosaic alternatives? He may believe that UFOs are real, but does he think he can prove it scientifically? I think not, but we shall see.

I wish to make it crystal clear at this point that whether either our Committee, or an NAS study, should come to fruition, the matter to be studied is UFO reality, not skepticism of UFO reality. In other words, any individual case under review would have to be studied in a manner similar to the following: "Resolved---UFO Case 'X' represents a genuinely perplexing and scientifically important phenomenon" (the precise wording is negotiable). The point, however, is that, as you have emphasized, the burden of proof is on the claimant, and not on the skeptics. Clearly, the extraordinary claims under study are those of the proponents.

The proponents must prove their case beyond a reasonable doubt. The skeptics need only raise reasonable, rational, logical, feasible alternative explanations. They need not prove that UFO 'X' was not what the proponents claim it was. Accordingly, there would be no place for the following type of statement: "Although the evidence failed to establish to the Committee's satisfaction that Case 'X' must represent a genuine UFO, to the exclusion of the offered prosaic alternatives, the skeptics were equally unable to prove to the satisfaction of the proponents that the case could not have represented a genuine UFO."

The above having been stated, I must admit that not only have I doubts about Hynek's willingness to subject his livelihood to such dissection, I remain doubtful about your own ability to abide by such rules. This is not to say that I have found you to be anything but cooperative, reasonable, and genuinely helpful in our negotiations. But I am disturbed by your record of having been unable, in the past, to render negative judgements (on the basis of the scientific method) regarding certain anomalous claims because the skeptics had been unable to prove conclusively the non-existence of the phenomena in question.

One striking example that comes to mind is the concept of "mixed mediumship", upon which you expounded in your 1980 J. of Parapsychology article entitled "A Skeptical Look at Paul Kurtz's Analysis of the Scientific Status of Parapsychology". Although you "personally believe that these women were consistent frauds...(you are) forced to recognize that not all the evidence produced for their 'powers' has been neatly explained away by critics. Thus, reasonable scientists may differ in their overall conclusions."

In the above example, as on numerous other occasions, although you profess "skepticism", your attitude reflects skepticism of skepticism (rather than adherence to it). And although you profess allegiance to the scientific method, your conclusion declares that the extraordinary claim in question remains a legitimate one about which "reasonable scientists may differ" because the skeptics failed to prove that the mediums cheated all the time (not just some of the time).

As I remarked in one of my two letters to you of Sept. 16, your usage of the term "skeptic", although true to the original, ancient usage, is not true to modern-day usage as skepticism relates to the scientific method. Although Hynek (see my letter of Sept. 3) has "O" skepticism toward the question of UFO reality, in your lexicon he is a "skeptic" because he is skeptical of the skeptics of UFO reality.

It is true that unless CSICOP-type skeptics can prove the negative, the possibility remains (however remote) that the phenomenon in question could conceivably turn out to be genuine. But the scien-

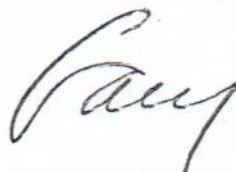
tific method dictates that unless the proponents can prove that the phenomenon is genuine, one must remain highly skeptical of its reality. By labeling the proponent of the phenomenon as a "skeptic" (because he is skeptical of the solutions offered by the real skeptics), you render the term meaningless, and invite the suspicions of Klass et al. regarding your sincerity, and your allegiance to science.

Neither "scientific" nor "skeptical" describes one who declares neutrality, or (as Klass calls it) "Truzzi skepticism", and bestows upon the proponents of unproven "anomalies" (such as UFOs, ESP, God, Bigfoot, Nessie, ghosts, fairies, spontaneous human combustion, etc.) "scientific" status equal to that of the skeptics (who reject on scientific grounds the claims, because they fail the test of scientific methodology). Again, this is not to say that it is impossible that one or more of these claimed phenomena are real. But until such phenomena are established, by the scientific method, to be real, the skeptic and the scientist are obligated, when pressed for an opinion as to the reality of the phenomenon, to answer with a qualified "No" (i.e. "No, since no scientific proof has been offered to cause me to say "Yes"). To answer otherwise, such as: "Maybe...why not? We must be fair to everyone" is to exhibit disregard for the scientific method of determining fact from fantasy.

Certainly Hynek does not answer with a qualified "No" when queried about UFO reality. Nor, I think, do you. As I remain to be convinced that you and CSAR appreciate the subtleties of scientific methodology and skepticism as expounded upon in this letter, I do indeed have reservations about having my name listed as one of CSAR's consultants. Circumstances may change, but such are my feelings at this moment.

I hope that despite our fundamental philosophical differences, we may continue our joint effort, by use of the scientific method, to "remove the aura of mystery of UFOs by endeavoring to discover the nature and scientific importance of the reports, wherever that endeavor may lead."

Sincerely,



Zetetic Scholar

An Independent Scientific Review of Claims of Anomalies and the Paranormal

Marcello Truzzi, *Editor*

Nov. 6, 1982

Prof. J. Allen Hynek
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Dear Allen:

As you know, from our conversations, I have long felt strongly that Ufology should attempt to represent a more bipartisan effort at learning the truth about UFOs. That is, I have argued with you that people like Philip J. Klass and other UFO critics should really be considered Ufologists since a science is determined by its method and the variables it seeks to explain and not by the particular beliefs held towards those variables by the investigators. Similarly, critics of psi are really functionally acting as parapsychologists; and many parapsychologists recognize that this is the case. I think that in general you have agreed with me about this but simply did not want to include those like Klass in CUFOS because you felt that they often did not act like responsible scientists but like vigilantes, i.e., more interested in debunking than really finding out what the facts are. Similarly, alas, Klass has sometimes attacked your and others' motives. All of this has turned people into antagonists in a public debate rather than into peers in proper scientific dialogue.

Despite all this, as I have pointed out to you before, there are major areas of agreement between even you and Klass, to say nothing of Oberg and Sheaffer. Thus, Klass -- still sticking with his analysis in his first book on UFOs -- contends that a residue of unexplained cases really exists which he seeks to explain as due to an extraordinary kind of plasma activity. Since most plasma specialists would disagree with Klass, I think, about such plasmas, you both end up with a residue of unexplained UFO reports. (In this regard, again as I have mentioned to you before, you are actually agnostic about this residue while Klass is putting forward an extraordinary claim and is therefore actually more radical in relation to ordinary science than you are.) Also, Klass does indicate that it would be worthwhile for science to investigate what he believes are these plasmas since they might have real value for weather studies. So, even Klass seems hospitable to investigation into a UFO residue which he conjectures are plasmas. So, by another name, he is not actually trying to close the scientific door on investigations.

All this brings me to what I hope you will find an important and congenial but cautious proposal. I have been corresponding with Phil -- not usually very pleasantly I perhaps should add -- and he has come up with a proposal which I got him to modify and which now strikes me as both reasonable and progressive. I hope you will seriously consider it as I now describe it to you, and as it has been hammered out and modified. In describing it here, I have made some very slight

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adjustments in what I myself am proposing to you, but I think Phil would find it agreeable in the full spirit of his original offer. Here are the steps as I propose them to you:

- (1) You, on behalf of CIUFOS, will agree to come up with 6 (or less, if you prefer) of what you consider the soundest (most unexplainable through prosaic current scientific knowledge) UFO cases in the United States. Please note that at this stage you are not actually naming your cases for Klass. You merely agree to come up with a list of such cases. (This is because coming up with your actual list is contingent on Klass fulfilling the next step of his proposal. You are definitely not doing this simply for Klass to play with as he chooses. We all fear that Klass might otherwise publicly offer pseudo-explanations that would not really settle anything but which might further mislead those unfamiliar with all the details of these cases.)
- (2) Klass will contact the National Academy of Science, armed with your promise to produce the above cases for their examination, and will recommend to them that "a panel of scientists without any prior involvement in the UFO issue," be named by the NAS to examine and report on them.
- (3) If and when the NAS agrees to in fact conduct this examination, and if you and Klass both agree that the scientists chosen fit the above criteria, you will turn over to the NAS the list of the 6 (or less) cases you want them to examine and report upon.
- (4) Once the NAS agrees and has the list, both proponents and critics for these cases (especially your and Klass's constituents) must be allowed to present their arguments and evidence to this panel prior to their reaching their judgement.
- (5) The NAS panel will make a public report of their findings on these "best" UFO cases. For each case that they judge, they must consider a case "explained" only if it is, in their view "explained beyond a reasonable doubt." On the one hand, we don't want them to simply classify things as absolutely explained or unexplained. We don't want them to classify something as unexplained merely because not every single element in the case is neatly accounted for; on the other hand, we don't want them to classify something as explained merely because some of the facts suggest an explanation while other facts are clearly incongruent with such an explanation. At bottom, we are seeking to have them tell us whether a legitimate (and possibly important) puzzle exists for science in any of these cases they examine.
- (6) If the panel finds all these cases explainable in prosaic terms, you and CIUFOS will simply have to accept that finding as their finding. It does not mean that you or other ufologists concede these cases publicly. You may disagree with the panel as do many lawyers disagree with judgements by our courts. But I think we all would agree that probably most scientists would be impressed by this

adjudication process and these particular cases would probably be rejected. Also, the opinion of many neutral observers would surely be greatly swayed if these "best" UFO cases were to be discredited by such a panel. (Originally, Klass wanted more from you should this be the result, but he has since agreed to withdraw his other demands which were far more penalizing.)

- (7) If the panel finds even one (1) out of the six (or less) cases can not be explained in prosaic terms within our existing scientific framework, Klass agrees to "publicly recommend a major Government funded UFO investigation."

As I see it, the above is a most reasonable proposal. It is all really contingent upon the National Academy of Science agreeing to create such a panel. Without that, there would be nothing beyond your and Phil's request for such a panel. But even that request from both of you would be a great step forward. Once the panel is put together you could both present your cases. I think the outcome is likely to be favorable to you, but if not, that is something we must know, too. I think we would both agree that proponents of any extraordinary claims have the burden placed on themselves to convince the scientific community, and I presume we would agree that a UFO constitutes an extraordinary claim.

I recognize that you --like many ufologists-- argue that it is not merely a matter of individual or "best" cases but that there also is a matter of pattern in these events that argues for the reality of UFOs. Nonetheless, most scientists --as we both know-- will not accept the "bundle of sticks" argument that the bunch may be stronger than any single stick. Since there is no agreed upon pattern in this area, as there was when such an argument was instrumental in getting meteorites accepted, the pattern argument seems to me to be a weak one. As with psi research, most scientists want to see critical case studies to convince them. I hope you might agree about this.

So, there is my proposal to you. It may be that Klass will find some of my changes above objectionable. For example, he did not originally have your releasing of the critical cases to be examined contingent upon NAS agreement. I must say that I would have preferred that that contingency not be necessary, but I can understand your likely fears (expressed by friends of mine who are pro-UFO and with whom I have discussed this proposal) that Klass might take your list of cases and perhaps not live up to his part of the bargain in getting the NAS involved. It is a shame that we can not start out this bipartisan arrangement with more mutual trust, but I know that it does not yet exist. Perhaps working together on this can help produce more trust between sides. That would certainly help matters. I think you have much to gain from all this. NAS agreement to examine the cases would help legitimate the protoscience of UFOs since they would in effect be agreeing that a prima facie case for a real puzzle exists simply by their willingness to examine the cases. Both you and Klass claim to want scientific method to adjudicate matters. I say, let us all put our faith in that method --however the chips may fall-- by endorsing this proposal. At worst, neither your nor Klass can lose that much by all this, and science could gain a great deal from it.

Of course, I may be missing some serious problem with my proposal. Either you or Phil may see problems with the above that would force your declining the proposal. But if that is the case, let me know those reasons and let's see if we can not work them out into some sort of reasonable compromise.

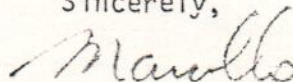
I realize that even if you both accept my proposal (I say my proposal because I have amended Klass's original proposal, not because I wish to take any credit away from Klass for initiating this thing; the end result will be our proposal), it may come to naught. The NAS may refuse. And of course, Klass's recommendation for a government study--should the NAS come out in your favor-- is unlikely to in itself produce such a study. But it would certainly be a step in the right direction. And, who knows, some other bridges between critics and proponents might get built in the meanwhile. We don't all have to be friends to be scientific partners in this venture.

At the same time that Klass and I have been corresponding about the above, Dr. Gary Posner and I have quite independently tried to work towards a truly bipartisan committee proposal which I hope to soon send you. Like the above proposal, I hope you will judge this new proposal on its own merits independent of the people involved. I hope you will agree with me that the time is coming when we must put personality issues behind us and concentrate on trying to get bipartisan consensus where we can reasonable do so. Anyway, when Posner and I hammer out our differences on the matter, I will be in touch with you about that still embryonic effort of ours.

To facilitate matters, I am sending a copy of this letter to both Klass and Posner. I will also send a copy to Jerry Clark. Please feel free to circulate this letter and get the views of your constituents on it.

I look forward to getting your reactions to all this. And, of course, I hope your reaction will be generally favorable.

Sincerely,



Marcello Truzzi

P.S. I have not yet received your comments on Martin's article which I sent you. I still hope you will reply to him for the ZS readers. There will be some other replies to him in ZS#10, but I would still like your comments for ZS#11.

cc.: Klass, Posner, Clark.

Encl.: Letter to Klass regarding all this.