

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration



Goddard Space Flight Center
Greenbelt, Maryland
20771

OCT 24 1990

Reply to Attn of: 100

Dr. Gary P. Posner
Tampa Bay Skeptics
6219 Palma Boulevard #210
St. Petersburg, FL 33715

Dear Dr. Posner:

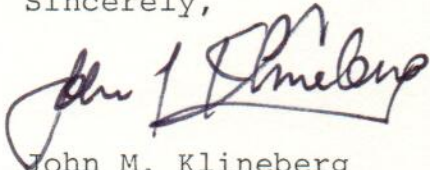
NASA is engaged in some of the most stimulating and challenging missions of our times. We are on the cutting edge of technology, and many of our scientific ventures deal with highly theoretical subjects. By the very nature of our work, controversy is a constant companion, whatever the results. That is the way our free "open forum" system works. One expert makes a statement, someone else challenges it, another investigator offers evidence and still another refutes... until either some very convincing evidence is found (which we sometimes call proof) or the ideas are submerged in the image of other open doors or else relegated to the scientific back burner.

After many missions by ourselves and the Soviets, Mars remains one of the most intriguing planets for further exploration. NASA's next mission to Mars is an Orbiter planned for launch in 1992 when we will gather new evidence about the state and history of Mars. No doubt this will precipitate a whole new chapter of conflicting ideas that will have to be sorted out.

My introduction of Mr. Hoagland at Lewis Research Center is certainly of insufficient gravity to be quotable. I have no insight into Mr. Hoagland's interaction within the executive branch of the government. I believe he was a colorful speaker who we invited to help develop a public dialogue among those who are interested in the subject of Martian exploration.

If you wish to persue this subject further, I suggest you write to Dr. Gerald Soffen who was the Project Scientist for the Viking Missions in 1976 and who now works at this Center in the Office of University Programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John M. Klineberg". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J" and a prominent "K".

John M. Klineberg
Director