

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1969

# Air Force Cuts Off UFO Probe Office

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Air Force today officially closed Project Blue Book, the agency which for 21 years has been investigating unidentified flying objects.

Secretary of the Air Force Robert C. Seamans Jr. said continuation of the agency "cannot be justified either on the ground of national security or in the interest of science."

(Dr. James E. McDonald, professor and senior physicist at the University of Arizona's Institute of Atmospheric Physics, was strongly critical of the decision today.

McDonald, long an outspoken critic of government probes of Unidentified Flying Objects (UFO) termed the action "the final move" in "22 years of ut-

terly inadequate Air Force response to the UFO problem."

McDonald said he would urge that the Air Force at least keep Project Blue Book files safely archived so they will "be accessible for scientific study by investigators such as myself who continue to take the UFO problem very seriously.")

Closing of the office was suggested earlier this year in a report prepared by the University of Colorado and later endorsed by the National Academy of Sciences.

That report, which cost the Pentagon \$539,000 and involved an 18-month study of flying saucer reports, concluded that little if anything had resulted from investigations of UFOs over the past two decades.

The Colorado report, compiled under the direction of Dr. Edward U. Condon, asserted there was no justification for further extensive study of UFO sightings in the hope that scientific knowledge would be advanced.

The Air Force says Project Blue Book's conclusions based on investigations since 1948 are that:

— No UFO reported, investigated and evaluated by the Air Force has ever given any indication of being a threat to national security.

— No evidence has ever been submitted or discovered by the Air Force that UFO sightings represent technological developments beyond the range of present day scientific knowledge.

— There has been no evidence indicating that UFOs are space ships from other planets.

The Air Force said Project Blue Book records would be placed in the Air Force archives at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama.

Officials said Air Force headquarters in the Pentagon would continue to handle requests for information on UFOs.

Closure of the office involves only three people, including Lt. Col. Hector Quintanilla Jr., who has been chief of Project Blue Book. He has an officer as assistant and a secretary.

The Air Force said it was unable to estimate how much money had been spent investigating UFOs the past 21 years "because money is not appropriated specifically for this purpose."

Under Project Blue Book's operation reports of UFO sightings were forwarded to the office by various Air Force bases.

## Nixon Firing U.S. Attorney For N.Y.

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Nixon announced today he is firing Robert M. Morgenthau as U.S. attorney for the southern district of New York.

To succeed Democrat Morgenthau, who was his party's candidate for governor of New York in 1962, Nixon will nominate Republican Whitney North Seymour.

Press Secretary Ronald L. Ziegler acknowledged that Morgenthau had not resigned from the position. His term normally would have expired June 11, 1971.

At this point, Ziegler said, Morgenthau has the option of submitting a letter of resignation or a letter will be sent to him informing him that Sev-

ministrations of Franklin D. Roosevelt, has served as U.S. attorney since 1961, except for a brief period when he resigned to run for governor.

Morgenthau's ouster comes four days after his successful prosecution of former Manhattan Democratic leader Carmine G. De Sapio on bribery conspiracy charges stemming from a scheme to bribe a former city official and extort contracts from Consolidated Edison utility.

The firing also comes five days after a federal jury found attorney-financier Roy M. Cohn, former aide to the late Republican Sen. Joseph B. McCarthy, innocent of bribery-conspiracy charges.