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THE MARFA LIGHTS

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Seguin, Texas 78155-4099 U.S.A.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Our cover this issue is copyrighted by James Crocker, a Marfa Lights researcher from Dallas, Texas. It is a time-exposure taken on a tripod about 10 miles deep into Mitchell Flat, south of the Highway 90 viewing spot mentioned in my lead article. The original was taken on color ASA 400 film using an SLR with a 50mm. f1.8 lens, exposed less than three minutes. The date was September of 1986, during Mr. Crocker's third visit to the area. He is offering color prints of the phenomenon for sale. An 8X10 is \$11, p&h paid, a 4X5 is \$6. His address is: James Crocker, 9552 Brewster, Dallas, TX 75227. The color prints come with an overlay of the state of Texas and photographic information. We hope the reproduction process shows up the fine tracery of the Lights Crocker captured on film. The broken straight line of lights on the right are automobile headlights. Our thanks for his allowing us to use the photograph on the cover of the Journal.

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THE MARFA LIGHTS

By Dennis Stacy

On the first weekend of October this year, Marfa, a small community in far west Texas between El Paso and Del Rio, celebrated its First Annual Marfa Lights Festival. The so-called "ghost lights" that flicker over Mitchell Flat south of Highway 90 and in front of the distant Chinati Mountains on the Texas-Mexican border, have been a part of local lore for more than a hundred years.

The first written report of the Lights dates back to at least 1883, when then 16-year old ranch hand Robert Ellison reportedly saw them after helping drive a herd of cattle through Paisano Pass, just west of Alpine and east of Marfa. To Ellison they looked like the campfires of hostile Apache Indians who still roamed the area. Surveying the site soon after his sighting, however, supposedly Ellison and other cowboys could find no signs of an Apache camp. Later collectors of Marfa Lights lore (see in particular *Tales of the Big Bend* by Elton Miles, Texas A & M University Press, 1976, pp. 149-167), found that the Apache and other local Indian tribes had their own legends to account for the Lights. Their traditions would seemingly rule out subsequent explanations of the Lights as merely automobile headlights coming through Shafter Pass on Highway 67 out of Marfa to Presidio, 60 miles to the south. However, they would not necessarily discount mirages or the refraction of astronomical bodies below the horizon, or "earthquake" lights, either, for that matter.

POPULAR PRESS

So much popular press has been given the Lights that it is often difficult to separate fact from fancy. As "tourist attractions" go, they are one of the few Marfa has to offer, aside from the state's highest golf course (4000 ft.), and its proximity to Big Bend National Park and restored Fort Davis, with the

nearby University of Texas McDonald Observatory. Because of the altitude, thin desert air and its remoteness from big city lights, the area is a popular astronomical observation site (Harvard also has a radio telescope in the immediate vicinity).

There is a local pride and protectiveness about the Lights that sometimes skews the search for answers. Newspaper reporters (and other obvious outsiders) should be especially wary of these tendencies when gathering reports. Asking any longtime local resident if he or she has seen the Lights invariably elicits a positive response. In several trips to the area I've spoken with approximately ten eyewitnesses, at least two of whom I would consider "doubtful" at the outset. But I've been fortunate to have local contacts, too, and for the most part to have been introduced to some of the more reliable "old-timers" around.

The best of the cases involved witnesses living directly in the "affected" area, who were most likely to notice any activity, and who in at least one instance were extremely reluctant to talk about their experiences. The husband of one couple, in fact, refused outright; his wife explained "that too many people were already tromping over their land, looking for the Lights," and that most of them failed to observe the smallest sense of common decency, omitting to ask permission to enter their land, leaving gates open, etc.

Unfortunately, this is a common discourtesy all too frequent among the average casual tourist and self-styled "anomaly investigator" alike. Have the good sense not to spoil the well from which others in your wake also have to drink. Although largely unpopulated and arid range country, Marfa and the surrounding environs are being increasingly invaded by weekend campers and large city run-off with little respect for private property. In addition, a popular "dude-ranch" near

Fort Davis includes the Lights on their entertainment itinerary. The Texas Highway Department has even established a roadside pull-over about five miles east of Marfa, marked by a prominent sign. This area looks out over the old abandoned Army Air Force base where pilots were trained during WW II, and southwest toward the Chinatis.

The guides for these excursions, of course, want their customers to be pleased. Consequently, they are not above tempting the bus passengers (I've seen as many as 40-45 people pile out on a single occasion and line the fence along the highway, oohing and aahing at every incidental light in the sky) to believe they've seen the "Lights" with every pair of headlights emerging from Shafter Pass.

If you do avail yourself of this vantage point, arrive shortly before dusk and familiarize yourself with the lay of the land. Directly to the southwest be on the alert for automobiles on the highway between Marfa and Presidio. These are the source-points most commonly mistaken for the Marfa Lights. If you see brilliant lights bursting suddenly into view slightly above the horizon in the SW, which then glide down and to the right and intermittently flare before disappearing, chances are excellent you've seen distant headlights twinkling in the clear air. If you see another set of lights (or light) repeat the exact same maneuver, you can be certain of it. Other familiar objects commonly mistaken for the "real thing" include bright blue ranch lights and red switch lights on the Texas Pacific railroad tracks south of the highway viewing area.

PHENOMENOLOGY

Most frequently, the Lights are reported as distant, starlike points of luminosity, usually a pale green or

yellow in color (as distinct from brilliant automobile lights). They may flare, fadeout, and then reappear over the course of a few minutes. They may bounce about like a phosphorescent Mexican "jumping-bean," again only for a few minutes at a time. Less commonly they appear as a glow or flash.

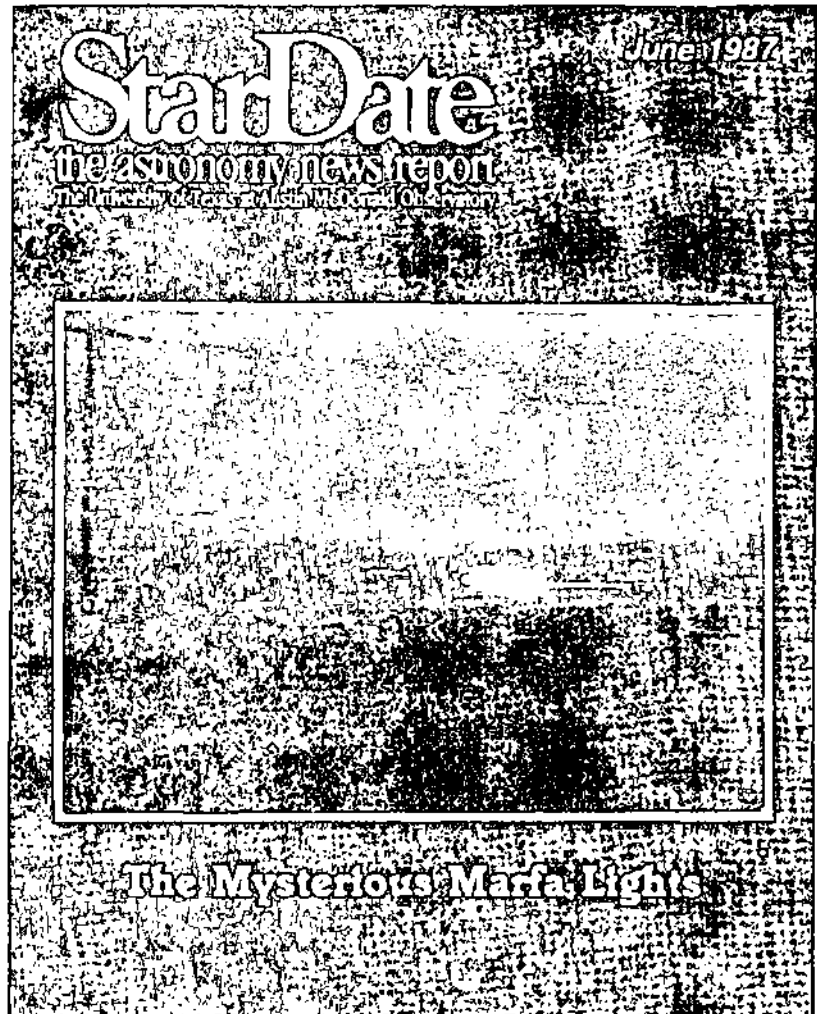
Their candle-power does not seem to be enormous, though there have been instances in which they reportedly lit up a small patch of countryside in their immediate vicinity. Less frequent, but none the less cropping up now and again, are stories in which the Lights seem to display "intelligent" behavior, responding to the witnesses' own activity, usually in an evasive fashion.

These activities are common in the collected folklore, as might be expected, because they make for more interesting tales. They involve mostly stories in which blizzard-blinded wanderers are led to safety by trying to approach the phantom lights, which hover and dart conveniently out of reach of capture. A few tales, although even more fanciful, hint of a dark side to the Lights' behavior, including left-over WW II legends in which they supposedly lured inexperienced pilots to their deaths in the surrounding mountains. These seem to reflect the adaptability of the storytellers, of course, more than the Lights themselves.

PICTURES

A slight, but fairly recent account of "behavior" on behalf of the Lights comes from "Tolbert's Texas," the *Dallas Morning News* column penned by the late Frank X. Tolbert. About 6 a.m. one morning, ten miles east of Marfa in a car caravan that included Wynn Anderson, then assistant to the president of the University of Texas, Tolbert saw a single bright light hovering above the southwestern horizon. Periodically, the light would go out and come back on. Tolbert doesn't say whether the light faded or winked out abruptly. But twice he stopped to take pictures, and each time the light went out as he reached for his camera.

Many so-called anomalistic or paranormal phenomena are purported to be "camera-shy." Some are said to



cause electromagnetic havoc with recording instruments, cameras included. But Tolbert's bad timing aside, the Marfa Lights phenomenon has been photographed on numerous occasions, James Crocker's cover-gracing example being one of the more auspicious. Two other still 35mm pictures were reproduced in the June, 1987 issue of *Star Date*, the monthly bulletin of the UT McDonald Observatory, published in Austin. On at least two other occasions that I know of they have been videotaped, once by a professional TV news crew. Although unconfirmed as of this writing, a report has it that the McDonald Observatory's visitor center has a documentary video on the Marfa Lights showing some of the taped footage.

The perfunctory *Star Date* article by contributing editor Diana Hadley ("The Mysterious Marfa Lights") fails to shed much light on the mystery. In fact, it represents the sort of "armchair" scientific "investigation" and summary

dismissal of such phenomena we're all far too familiar with, the sort one can serve up without (1) ever leaving the comfy confines of one's apartment (let alone actually *visiting* the site in question!); (2) without talking to any eyewitnesses, reliable or otherwise; and (3) by dogmatically accepting a second-hand scientific pronouncement from "on high," which neatly "explains" everything as some perfectly normal phenomenon country rubes are either too unsophisticated to recognize or understand.

In this case, Hadley writes, "The source of the Marfa lights turns out to be a rather interesting atmospheric phenomena (sic). The effect is exactly opposite to that which produces a mirage. The altitude of Marfa and the area to the east are 4700 feet and the plains to the southwest, the origin of the phenomena (sic), are a mile high, or 5280 feet.

"In this semi-desert high altitude country, on clear evenings when the

earth can radiate its heat rapidly, a layer of cold air forms along the ground. The boundary between this cold layer and the warm layers above is fairly well defined. When rays of light hit this boundary they are bent back toward the earth. This bending of the light is only a few degrees. This in turn means that the lights need to be a great distance — miles — from the observer so the bending of the light must occur about midway between the lights and the observer, and that both the observer and source of the lights need to be below the point at which the bending of the light occurs.

“Headlights of cars on roads south of the plains southwest of Marfa are normally not visible. However, when a layer of cold air forms over the southwest plains, the headlight beams are bent back toward the earth and thus visible to observers on highway 67 (sic) and Mitchell Mesa east of Marfa. Furthermore, the lights appear to be coming from the sky and will move around and change, both because the properties of the boundary layer are changing and because the cars are moving. Of course, any stars and planets near the horizon, to the south of Marfa will be affected in the same way.”

Since the author has obviously not been to the area in question, some of her directions are hard to follow in terms of fathoming her explanation. For starters, Highway 67 runs south out of Marfa to Presidio; the highway east of Marfa, from where the Lights are usually seen, is numbered 90. This same mistake is repeated throughout the article and could have been rectified or avoided simply by consulting any state roadmap. To make matters worse, the *Chinati* Mountains are referred to as the “Chianti Mountains,” which dispels some lingering doubts as to what beverage science writers have in mind when concocting their stories.

In the prior paragraph, Hadley says the bending occurs in the atmosphere midway between headlights and observer. How such a phenomenon could be replicated midway between a celestial object and a terrestrial observer goes unexplained.

I also call into serious question Hadley’s assumption that “headlights of cars south of the plains southwest of

Marfa are normally not visible.” Again, it’s hard to know the specific area or stretches of highway to which she is referring, but suffice it to say that automobile headlights are decidedly and easily visible on Highway 67 south of Marfa between Marfa and Shafter Pass. Admittedly, traffic along 67 is a trickle at best; the few widely scattered ranch roads on either side are even more devoid of traffic.

Finally, and this seems not to have made the slightest dent on our author’s attention at all, reports of the Lights’ activities date back to at least 1883, long before the coming of the Model-T. And as Hadley herself notes in the article, electrical lights only came to the area in 1911. But when one is explaining, of course, one need not necessarily be deterred by facts. Hadley could retort that stars and planets accounted for the Lights before the coming of cars, and that headlights have subsequently spawned sightings since.

Interestingly, at least one of the pictures reprinted with the article is captioned as “a time exposure just before sundown... (my emphasis)” which would again appear to short-circuit the explanation of refraction caused by rapid *nighttime* cooling. The same caption refers to “those weird, baffling lights above the horizon whose cause seems to have no source.” (My emphasis again.) But in this picture and the cover photograph taken by Kirby F. Warnock, the light sources are both clearly below the horizon.

My intention here is not to monger mystery, but to point out how sloppy so-called “science” itself sometimes is, especially when dealing with something it doesn’t really want to take the time or trouble to properly investigate when it can be so offhandedly dismissed. Technically, of course, I shouldn’t allocate human faults and/or attributes to abstract science, but to scientists themselves. I stand corrected.

THUMBNAIL HISTORY

A thumbnail history of the Marfa Lights follows. Most of the material is taken from the *Marfa Lights Extra*, four-pages of newsnotes published in association with the First Annual Festival and illustrated by local

cartoonist Gary Oliver (“Golliver”), whose work has previously appeared in the Journal.

Apache legends revolving around the Lights date to the early 1800’s. Several of these employed the usual lost “souls” format, particularly that of the bereaved lover wandering the wilderness in grief and longing for his/her deceased mate or lover. Others, more cosmological in nature, supposedly viewed the Lights as thunderbolts stored in the Chinati Mountains by the Great Spirit, or stars that had fallen to ground.

At least one set of stories, however, apparently involved actual events. Chief Alsate of the Chisos Apaches, and his tribe, were reportedly lured to San Carlos, Mexico, by the Spaniard authorities in a promise of peace. There they were either captured, or massacred, depending on the legend, with only Alsate and a few others escaping. The Lights were thus seen as the spirits of the Apache chief calling to his scattered tribe (The nearby Chisos, “Ghost” or “Spirit,” Mountains, by the way, form the spectacular crown of Big Bend National Park, a rugged, desert wastland left over, again according to Indian legend, after the creation of the world: If you want to wax metaphysical and or allegorical at this point, the Lights could be conceived as residual luminosity from the Big Bang!).

The first eyewitness written account (cowhand Robert E. Ellison, 1883) we’ve already touched on. In 1900, a Mrs. W. T. Giddens reported that her father was in very good condition after having been lost in a blizzard and subsequently guided to safety by the Lights. He thought he would freeze to death, said Giddens (see Miles, p. 153), when he saw the Lights flashing almost on top of him. “They ‘said’ to him (he could never explain how) that he was three miles south of Chinati Peak, off his trail, heading in the wrong direction.” They led him to a small cave, where he sheltered the night, the largest of the Lights hovering nearby.

Somehow he was “told” the Lights were ancient spirits that wanted to save him, and that he could sleep that night without fear. When he awoke in the

morning, the blizzard had abated and the Lights were gone. Giddens' father then easily found his way home. "I've seen the Ghost Lights all my life," she also added, "and can't remember their causing any harm other than fright. They like to follow you out in the pasture at night, seem to be drawn to people and stock, and animals don't seem to fear them at all."

A little later in the century, the Lights were often mistaken, or identified, as the pack trains of Pancho Villa's troops, marshalling their forces for an attack across the border into this country (as, in fact, actually happened). The propensity for "explanations" of anomalous phenomena to adapt themselves to prevailing cultural concerns and patterns has been commented on more than once by Vallee (*Passport to Magonia*) and others. Similar accretions occurred with the Marfa Lights. During WW II they were woven into the military activity (real and imagined) that took place in and around Marfa, including especially the old AAF training base for pilots, post-war revelations of the previously top secret atom bomb project conducted in nearby New Mexico, and fears that escaped German POW's, possibly including Hitler himself, theorized to have escaped into Mexico (!), were regrouping for a last-ditch invasion of the United States.

Curiously, this last bit of fanciful folklore had a remote connection to reality. German POW's incarcerated at Camp Demming, NM, and other prisoner of war camps scattered throughout the Southwest *did* escape on numerous occasions, more than 2000 total. The last of these, Dennis Whiles, alias Sgt. Georg Gaertner, of the famed Afrika Korps, escaped from Demming in 1945. Instead of joining up with fellow prisoners in Mexico (there was no evidence that such a crazed plot was ever actually hatched), Gaertner made his way by train to California. He surrendered September 11, 1985, to immigration authorities in Los Angeles, forty years after his escape, "Hitler's last soldier in America."

Despite the carnage, for some reason WW II continues to be romantically received by most

Americans. But no one could have been more "romantically" involved with the Lights than teen heart-throb James Dean, who spent a period of time in Marfa in 1955, during the filming of Edna Ferber's classic *Giant*, starring Rock Hudson and Elizabeth Taylor. Rumor, legend, or perhaps even fact has it that Dean became fascinated by the local lore and went so far as to set up a telescope on a fence post in hopes of catching a glimpse of the famous Lights. When Dean couldn't man the scope himself, he reportedly hired ranch hands to keep watch. If the ducktailed actor succeeded, he took the story of his success to his grave with him when he died a short time later in the crash of his Porsche.

Sportscars notwithstanding, the Lights have been reported in association with automobiles on numerous instances. In 1975, computer operator Samuel Whatley said he was returning home from his night job one morning when a rapidly approaching "car" turned into a globe of orange-red light that hovered outside his rolled-down pickup window. Whatley said he floored his accelerator, but the light stayed with him for two or three minutes.

In 1981, Joe Skelton, a Marfa service station attendant who lived in nearby Alpine, said he and his wife had been returning from the El Paso airport when he noticed in his rearview mirror "an 18-wheeler lit up like a Christmas tree." Skelton slowed to let the truck pass, but then, poof, it disappeared!

On another occasion, Skelton and a friend in separate pickups were returning from work on a ranch near Ft. Davis one night, when he observed flashing lights in the sky. Skelton said he picked up his CB microphone to inform his companion and the lights went out, a scenario that was almost immediately repeated. "I don't know what they are," Skelton told me, "but they've made good Christians out of people who've seen them who weren't before."

I first quoted Skelton in an article on the Lights which appeared in the April 5, 1985, Friday edition of the *Houston Post*. In retrospect, and somewhat wiser, I might caution against complete acceptance of his story, since it has the feel of a local

trying to accommodate an outside reporter. Still, it should be compared to columnist Tolbert's earlier account. And Tolbert himself may not be fully graced with objectivity; he was a lifelong "fan" of the west Texas area and achieved fame on his own as the father of the celebrated "World Chili Cook-Offs" held in the old ghost town of Terlingua, Spanish for "three tongues."

Remember that when it comes to the Marfa Lights there may be three tongues talking, too, and that at least one of them could be forked.

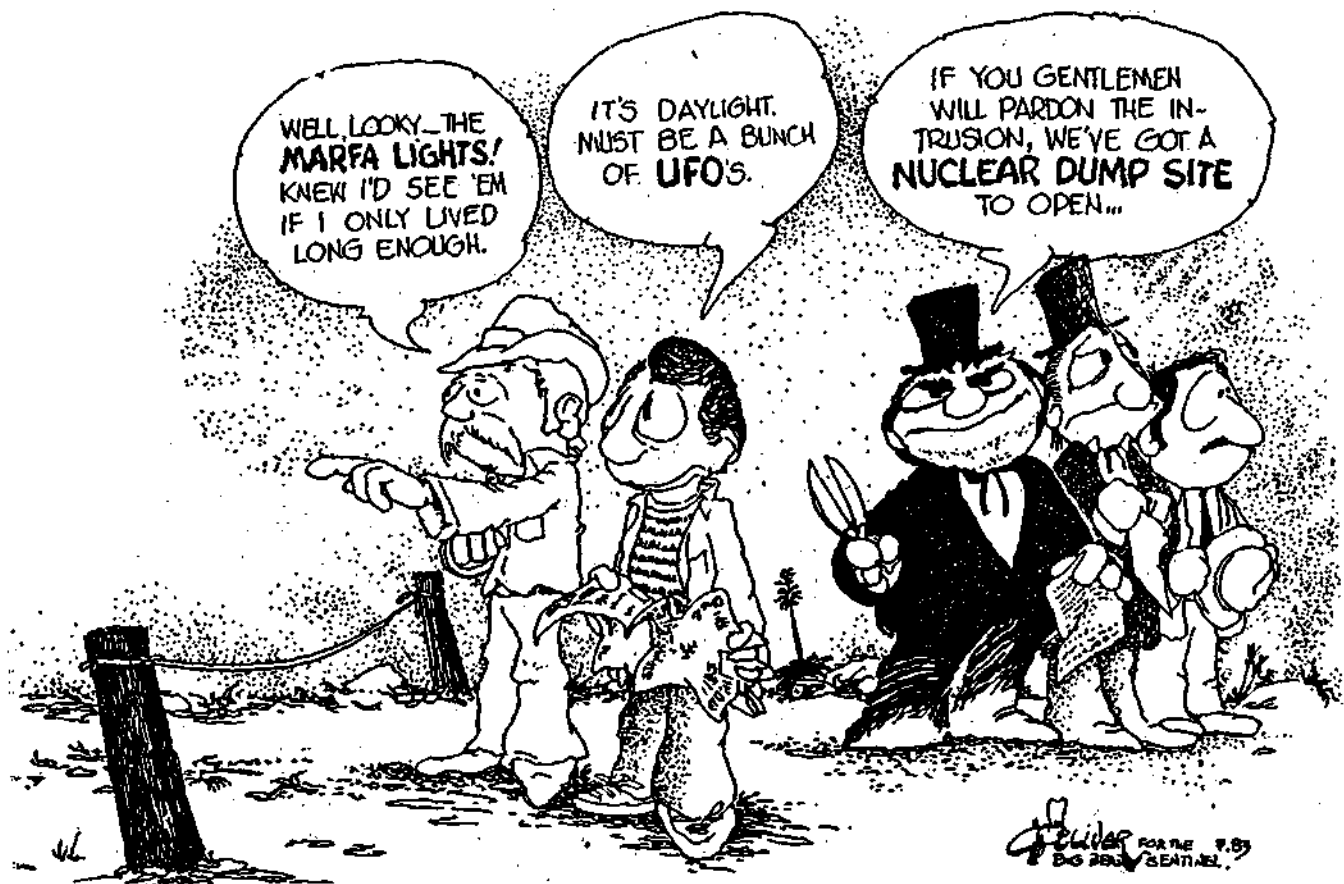
EPILOG

I collected a more reliable, firstperson and up-close account from Charles Cude, member of a well-respected San Antonio family active in politics and business. Cude himself has been with the Alamo Funeral Home since 1945. He called in response to a January 12, 1981 column I had written in the *San Antonio News*, which focused on the Lights.

Several years earlier (June, 1970), Cude had a nephew attending Sul Ross University in Alpine. At that time, and probably still so, "Light parties" were a popular weekend pastime among Sul Ross students. Couples would line the highway parallel to the old air base and no doubt sip suds and sneak a few smooches while waiting for the Lights to put in an appearance. "You've got to see them to believe them," the younger Cude kept exhorting his uncle.

Finally, the elder Cude arranged a family vacation to the area, and one evening found himself and his wife sitting in their car on the highway shoulder, surrounded by approximately 50 other cars. "The first two lights I saw," said Cude, "looked like an automobile racing across, going from east to west...and about that time one of these lights shot straight up. 'Oh, my gosh,' I said, 'that's what they've been talking about!'"

Thus far, Cude's account sounds very much like the highway headlights that can be seen between Marfa and Presidio, despite the allegation that one jumped straight up in the sky. But then, added Cude, "they started going in every direction and coming from every



Cultural Overlays Continue

direction. Finally, this one light came toward us and passed within 50-70 feet of the car."

About a hundred feet away was a row of post stumps blocking access to the end of the abandoned runway. The light zipped between two of these posts at what Cude estimated to be at least 100 m.p.h. "It gave me a very eerie feeling, I assure you," he said. Cude compared the light ball to a picture of the planet earth, "with the clouds swirling all around," he'd recently seen on the cover of *Life* magazine. "Well, that's exactly what this thing looked like, only the colors were pale green and yellow. It was about 18 to 24 inches in diameter." The experience, said Cude, left him with a good case of the "willies." "The unknown," he added, "kind of makes you afraid, period, you know? Even the hairs on the back of your neck stand up."

Unlike some of the episodes referred to above, Cude's account has a ring of authenticity to it. Specific details are mentioned, and it's difficult to see how the phenomenon under observation could be mistaken for

headlights on a distant highway, refracted astronomical objects, or any other of the more mundane explanations that have periodically been put forward (which include mica deposits glowing in moonlight, jackrabbits that have brushed against phosphorescent vegetation, "swamp gas," and so on). In addition, it compares favorably to similar reports of so-called "ball-lightning" glimpsed up close. In this regard, see in particular William Corliss's esteemed sourcebook, *Lightning, Auroras, Nocturnal Lights*, 1982, page 85: On November 10, 1940, in Coventry, England, L. Cumming was "working at the far end of (his) garden, the weather was normal, no rain, no signs of thunder. Suddenly, I seemed to be in the centre of intense blackness and looking down observed at my feet a ball about 2 ft. across. It was of a pale blue-green colour and seemed made of a mass of writhing strings of light, about 1/4 in. in diameter."

The light ball remained in place only about three seconds, before rising in the air, narrowly missing a poplar tree. It cleared some houses by 20 ft.

before landing at the rear of a public building a quarter of a mile away, exploding and causing considerable damage.

Dissimilarities in the two cases should be mentioned: Cude's object (s) remained in view for almost an hour, that of Cumming's only for a matter of seconds or minutes at the most. The latter light ball disappeared in an explosion, characteristic of ball-lightning; the former apparently vanished silently from view. And although it's not specifically stated, the Coventry light ball appears to have been relatively sluggish as opposed to the one Cude saw. Both observers report different, but similarly pale, colors. The diameters are almost exactly the same.

As a closing footnote, while this article was in progress Walt Andrus, MUFON's international director, had just returned from his own west Texas vacation, where he, too, reports an unusual light seen "high above the horizon."

TABOR LIGHTS

By Tim T. Tokaryk

Tim T. Tokaryk is MUFON's Provincial Director for Saskatchewan.

Ghost lights have been recorded since the turn of the century. Persinger and Lafreniere describe them as "remarkably consistent lights over long periods of time (1, p. 42-43)." Many have been connected to local Indian legends. However, a more recent explanation is the unusual refraction or atmospheric bending of lights from distant automobiles and towns (2, p.68).

Saskatchewan, like many Canadian provinces, has had its share of UFO reports and other strange phenomena. The small town of Nipawin reported unusual lights in 1933, which most locals thought to be "swamp gas." However, a few people decided to find the source of the light and came upon a disc-shaped object on the ground (3).

Five years later, another rash of reports came to life, 17 miles northeast of the small town of Esterhazy. The ghost lights are known as the Tabor Lights. The first published account surfaced November 30, 1938, when one gentleman, a ghost light skeptic, was reported as saying "I don't believe anyone has seen a light, and there is no such thing, ...it is all imagination."

He reportedly said this while waiting to see for himself if the lights would show up, and as soon as he finished his sentence, someone else said "there it is again" (4). This occurred on the 27, November 1938. The following night, 20 people observed four different lights at 15 minute intervals. One person even fired his 12-gauge shotgun at the light, but to no avail.

The phenomena has been described as "pinkish, flickering lights, glowing impishly from the shelter of Tabor's cemetery (5). Another

description has it as "the size of a two and half gallon pail...a kerosene light with no illumination from it...a ball of light" (6). After these comments made headlines in many Canadian papers, large crowds, as many as 80 people in a group, were out in the cold evenings, hoping to catch a glimpse of what some people also called "Old Faithful." One reporter even spent 24 hours at the Tabor cemetery to try documenting the ghost light, but he left with no proof. One lady, however, did not need a reporter to inform her whether the ghost light existed or not, as it followed her home one evening. With every step she took, the light took a step.

Reports continued into early December. A policeman driving along the Tabor cemetery road noticed what he thought was a "one-eyed motorist" taking the opposite route. But when he leaned out of his window to pull over the alleged approaching vehicle, the light "bounced right past him" (7).

Soon the Tabor cemetery where everyone waited to see the light closed. Officials said that a number of graves were desecrated by the visitors.

The Tabor light was also reported to have been seen 25 miles away, near another cemetery (8).

For about a week, the light was not seen. Then, on December 11, two carloads of people from two different locations saw it four times at half-hour intervals (9).

Reports were known to the locals to have existed as early as 1892, and they have persisted even after the 1938 incidents. The lights have also been reported from a number of adjacent areas, not just Tabor cemetery. One report even said it had followed a car around a curve of a road. The light has also been used as an instructional tool for new R.C.M.P. (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) officers assigned to the area (10).

A number of photographs have

been taken of the ghost light, but none of the negatives has shown any sign of this unusual phenomena. Also, no sound has accompanied the light.

Many theories were formulated at the time as to the cause of the light. The "decay of the bodies or decomposition of the blood of the dead, which through time, and by different elements working, forms a gas or an element something in the nature of phosphorous... It would seem this gas finds its way to the surface and spontaneously bursts into a small light and gradually into a larger light and then disappears" (6). Another theory was that the light was caused by swamp flies (11).

Comparisons can be made, using Corliss' identification, to will-o'-the-wisps ("softly glowing flames...usually associated with swamps and decaying organic material") (2, p.68). However, the playful nature of the Tabor lights and the disappearing and reappearing nearby, which is characteristic of ghost lights, seem to classify these lights as genuine ghost lights.

As for the Tabor light itself, more serious examination of current occurrences is required.

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MJ-12 JURY STILL OUT

By Jerome Clark

Jerome Clark is editor of CUFOS's *International UFO Reporter* and an associate editor of *FATE Magazine*.

The J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies (CUFOS) says the question of whether alleged secret government UFO documents are real is still open, despite a debunking organization's recent charge that the papers are fraudulent. The documents assert that in September 1947 President Truman directed that an Operation Majestic-Twelve ("MJ-12"), under the leadership of his scientific advisor, Dr. Vannevar Bush, be established to study the remains of a crashed UFO and its four dead occupants.

The Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP) has "failed to raise a single issue which cannot be explained by further examination of the evidence. Charges of 'hoax,' 'forgery,' and 'deception' are not only premature, but unscientific and emotional," says William L. Moore, who has led the investigation of the three documents in question:

- A September 24, 1947, executive memorandum from Truman to Secretary of Defense James Forrestal;
- A November 18, 1952, briefing paper for President-Elect Eisenhower reporting that the United States government possesses the remains of two crashed UFOs; and
- A July 14, 1954, memorandum from Robert Cutler (Special Assistant to the President) to General Nathan Twining regarding a meeting of the MJ-12 group.

The documents have been widely publicized in the U.S. and world media, including the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *London Observer*, and ABC-TV's popular "Night Line" program.

COVER-UP

A team of independent researchers, consisting of Moore, author of *The Roswell Incident* (Grosset & Dunlap, 1980), nuclear physicist Stanton T. Friedman of Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada, and TV producer/director Jaime Shandera of Los Angeles, state that there is overwhelming evidence--in the form of interviews with over 100 informants (31 of them first-hand witnesses), government documents, and other sources--that a strange vehicle crashed near Roswell, New Mexico, in July 1947 and that information about the crash was immediately and effectively covered up by the Air Force.

On August 20, 1987, CSICOP released a press statement, drawing on the work of aviation journalist and UFO debunker Philip J. Klass, who, Moore points out, has reviewed only a small fraction of the evidence available and has spoken with exactly none of the many witnesses to the 1947 UFO crash.

According to Klass, his research indicates that the Cutler memorandum, which is an onionskin carbon copy of an original, is "phony" for the following reasons:

- 1) The memo is unsigned; Cutler was out of the country at the time the memo was written, and thus could not have written it.
- 2) It is a "typed original," and not a carbon at all.
- 3) It does not bear a Top Secret registration number.
- 4) It carries the classification "Top Secret Restricted Security Information," a term which, according to Klass, "did not come into use until more than a decade later."
- 5) The typeface of the document is not the same as that on other Cutler memoranda obtained by Klass.
- 6) The onionskin paper does not

bear the "characteristic Eagle watermark" that Klass claims is found on "all government onionskin paper."

According to Moore, "None of these arguments hold water upon careful examination." The facts are these:

1) Cutler was indeed out of the country at the time. As a memorandum found in the Eisenhower Memorial Library attests, however, he left instructions to his staff to keep material moving out of his in-basket. This memo is only a notification of a slight change in plans for a classified briefing on the "MJ-12 Special Studies Project" and certainly would have been handled by Cutler's staff in response to any request by Eisenhower. The memo is unsigned because Cutler was not there to sign it. Unsigned memoranda--especially carbons--are common among government documents of this era. That Cutler was no exception is borne out by the discovery of one other unsigned memorandum from him in the files of the Library of Congress, this one classified "Top Secret Security Information" and bearing a 1953 date.

2) Klass's statement that the memo is a "typed original" and not a carbon is based solely on the fact that impressions of the typewriter keys can be seen on the reverse side of the document. This is a normal circumstance with onionskin carbons, and can be tested by anyone with a manual typewriter. Klass fails to mention that the type on the carbon is blue, not black, and is clearly consistent with the sort of reproduction produced by a worn blue carbon.

3) The memo does not bear a Top Secret registration number. Neither do two other Top Secret Cutler memoranda from the same era (one of which is also Cutler to Twining) that were located among General Twining's papers on file with the Library of Congress. One of these contains

language very similar to the memo in question (see attachments).

4) The memo does carry a two-line classification caveat that reads "Top Secret Restricted" on the first line, and "Security Information" on the second line (see attachments). But Klass's allegation that this caveat was "not in use until more than a decade later" is not based on his research into the matter, but rather stems from a statement made by the National Archives in a "Reference Report on MJ-12" letter, dated July 22, 1987. This letter says that the caveat "Top Secret Restricted Information" did not come into use at the National Security Council until the Nixon Administration, and goes on to state that information from the Eisenhower Library "confirms that this particular marking was not used during the Eisenhower Administration."

Independent research by Moore, Friedman and Shandera, however, shows that the caveat "Top Secret Security Information" (on two lines) was commonly used throughout the early 1950s. In addition, the caveat "Top Secret Restricted Data" had been in use since 1946 for certain types of information connected with atomic energy. (General Twining, in a September 23, 1947, letter about UFOs, had clearly indicated a nuclear connection.)

The issue, therefore, centers on the unusual use of the word "Restricted" following "Top Secret." Close reading of the National Archives' statement on this matter shows that it ignores two key points:

a) it limits itself to caveats in use at the time only by the National Security Council (MJ-12, as a "black" project, may have had some special caveat of its own);

b) it addressed itself to the alleged non-use of the caveat "Top Secret Restricted Information" -- the word "Information," however, is not a part of the caveat on the Cutler-Twining memo.

CONFUSION

Some confusion has occurred because "Restricted" had been a separate classification in itself until it

was phased out in 1953. "Restricted" (as opposed to "Top Secret Restricted") documents fell in between Unclassified and Confidential on the security scale and should have no bearing on the matter of the Cutler-Twining memo at all. Unfortunately, some individuals (including apparently, Klass) have confused the two terms, thus fueling what should not be a controversy in the first place.

One other point to be considered here is the distinct possibility that the word "Restricted" is meant to apply to the distribution of the memo (i.e., not through the usual channels) rather than to the classification of the data contained therein.

As far as Moore, Friedman, and Shandera are concerned, so far the evidence presented on caveats remains insufficient to resolve the matter.

5) Preliminary examination of the typeface on the Cutler-Twining memo indicates it was typed with a manual Remington-Rand typewriter of proper vintage. Such machines were commonly used by government offices of the time. An examination of other declassified Cutler memoranda from the same era shows a variety of type styles. In such a situation, pronouncements about typefaces that are based on comparison of the Cutler-Twining memo to only a few of the many thousands of documents generated by such offices are meaningless.

6) The absence of an "Eagle" watermark on the onionskin paper is also not unusual. Government offices at that time used a number of different types of onionskin, some of which bore no watermark at all. Indeed, Jo Ann Williamson of the National Archives staff in Washington, D.C., has stated that the Archives has "only a fraction of the documents from the 1953-54 time period" and that she "know(s) very well that they cannot make the statement that all government documents from that time bear the Eagle watermark, or that Mr. Cutler's office prepared correspondence only on Prestige Onionskin when Mr. Cutler was away."

MJ-12 FILES

Klass interprets remarks by the

National Archives and both the Truman and Eisenhower presidential libraries that they were unable to find any identifiable record concerning either "Majestic 12" or "MJ-12" as meaning that no such files exist. But Ed Reese of the Military Reference Branch of the National Archives told Moore, "We only have records here that have been retired to us by various government agencies. No doubt there are a large number of files and records pertaining to the so-called black projects and other highly classified programs that we have never heard of because they are still in custody of whatever office or agency is responsible for them. This could well be the case with your Majestic 12 group."

Moreover, James Layerzopf of the Eisenhower Library has indicated that "We've found numerous indications of selected material having been pulled from files before we assumed custody of them."

Another key document is the already-mentioned September 24, 1947, executive memorandum purportedly written by (and bearing the signature of) President Truman. This short, two-paragraph document, stamped "Top Secret Eyes Only," is an authorization by Truman to then-Secretary of Defense James Forrestal to undertake "Operation Majestic 12," in concert with Dr. Vannevar Bush and "the Director of Central Intelligence," who was then Admiral R.H. Hillenkoetter. Hillenkoetter subsequently went on public record a number of times with statements that the U.S. government should tell all it knows about UFOs.

Klass alleges that this document is a "forgery created by superimposing a fake message on a photocopy of an authentic Truman letter." Klass offers no evidence to support this claim and in fact no such evidence exists at this point. A print made from the original negative of the briefing document included this short memorandum as "Attached A." It shows no sign of any superimposition. The document bears an authentic-appearing Truman signature and is in correct form for such memoranda.

Klass characterizes the document as "counterfeit" because it does not fit

the correct format of "an authentic Truman letter" which, according to Klass, would contain the name and address of the recipient in the lower left corner.

The document, however, is not a "letter" but an executive memorandum, the style and format of which, according to one expert who claims to have handled virtually all of the unclassified and declassified Executive Orders from that era, "looks absolutely authentic." Indeed, nothing about this document suggests that it is not authentic—including the date of the memorandum and the typeface used. Moore, Friedman and Shandera say they have strong additional evidence concerning the authenticity of this memorandum and will publish it at a later date.

A third item the debunkers attempt to explain away is the seven-page "Top Secret Eyes Only" Eisenhower briefing paper to which the Truman document was attached. Klass claims that it describes a 1947 UFO crash in New Mexico as if Eisenhower had never heard of it. That judgment cannot be reached on the basis of the data in the document, especially if, as was the case, the primary custody of these materials resided with the Office of the President. Even if Eisenhower had been informed of the crash, he would not have known all the details. Eisenhower had already made a public announcement (with presidential approval) in June 1947 (prior to the alleged crash/retrieval) that he would assume the presidency of Columbia University around the end of the year. The named members of the Majestic 12 group were all high-ranking scientists, intelligence officers, and technology experts. There is no reason at all why General Eisenhower, despite his many military achievements, would have been considered for membership in such a group. To suggest that the document is "phony" on this basis, instead of the basis of any mistaken information in it (of which there is none), is to engage, at the very least, in conclusion-jumping.

ROSWELL INCIDENT

The CSICOP press release also

does not mention the detailed investigation conducted well before this document was either received in December 1984 or released. (The documents were sent anonymously to Shandera on 35mm film.) This effort by Friedman and Moore established, on the basis of interviews with nearly 100 different persons coupled with extensive travel, documentation and other legwork, that an unknown object with extraordinary characteristics had crashed outside Roswell, New Mexico, in July 1947; that an announcement to this effect was made by the government; that a cover-up was instigated within 24 hours of that announcement; that alien bodies were found; that material was sent to Wright Field in Ohio for analysis; and that civilians were debriefed and warned to change their stories to conform to official pronouncements.

Five individuals involved in the Roswell event, including the Air Force officer who led the original retrieval, have testified that strange symbols were attached to portions of the crashed vehicle. These symbols are mentioned in the MJ-12 document. Klass does not mention that the 12 persons named as members of Majestic Twelve all had high-level security clearances and close interlocking of past activities.

In summary, none of the many questions raised thus far concerning the alleged Eisenhower briefing papers and accompanying documents leads inevitably to the conclusion that they are counterfeits. At least one former U.S. senator (and presidential candidate), Barry Goldwater of Arizona, has stated on the record that when he attempted to find out the truth about UFOs, he was "denied this request" and that the matter "is still classified above Top Secret." The senator said he had heard that a plan was underway to "release some, if not all, of this material in the near future."

Mark Rodeghier, scientific director of the J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies, made the following statement about ten MJ-12 documents: "The Center for UFO Studies has not yet concluded that the documents from Moore and his colleagues are either authentic papers or a clever hoax. We,

in fact, are currently seeking an independent, unbiased, investigation of the documents' authenticity. We do claim, however, that no evidence (of which we are aware) exists that conclusively proves the documents to be false, and we encourage further investigation of these extraordinary papers."

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JAL: KLOSS DISPUTED

By Lindy Whitehurst

I have been looking into the claims made by Philip Klass and comparing them to the transcripts of the pilots and to the FAA reports on the Japan Air Lines flight 1628 over Alaska. The following represents what I have found and what I have not seen in print.

1) Klass claimed Jupiter and/or Mars were in the precise direction of the two bright UFO's at the time of the sighting. Using my computer programs to reconstruct the location of the sighting (Alaska latitude and longitudes), time, date, and directions of Jupiter and Mars, I have found large deviations from Klass's claims.

At the initial sighting of the UFO, the JAL flight was at Longitude 144 degrees West and Latitude 67 degrees North about 2:14 am GMT or 6:14 pm Alaska Standard Time. The pilot reported the UFOs at the 11 o'clock position while the 747 was on a course of 220 degrees southwesterly. The 11 o'clock position then places the UFO at an azimuth of 185 degrees (azimuth is measured from north at 0 degrees eastward with east being 90 degrees, south 180 degrees, and west 270 degrees). At that time, Jupiter was at Azimuth 141 degrees and Mars was at azimuth 159 degrees according to my computer program (program by Zephyr Services: oldest and most widely used amateur astronomer software).

This means Jupiter was 44 degrees away from the UFO in an eastwardly direction and Mars was 25.5 degrees eastwardly of the UFO, both being a significant difference. As the 747 did a 360 degree turn over Fairbanks, it took up a heading of 200 degrees toward Anchorage. The 747's last sighting of the UFO came at 2:51 am GMT or 6:51 pm Alaska time. The UFO was described in the 8 o'clock position which translates to an azimuth of 75 degrees. At that time Jupiter was at azimuth 144.5 degrees and Mars was at 163 degrees. Allowing for the course

change and the westwardly motion of the planets during the ensuing 37 minutes, Jupiter and Mars moved 3.5 degrees westwardly while the UFO moved 70 degrees eastwardly!

I saw many clippings from newspapers around the country accept Klass's Jupiter/Mars position claims without checking them out. Even the amateur astronomer magazine, "Astronomy," accepted the claim in a brief mention; examples of a gullible "take-it-at-face-value press" simply because Klass is a recognized quotable source.

2) The pilot described the two UFOs as of equal size and brightness. Jupiter at the time was at magnitude of -2.1 while Mars was +0.2 (each integer of magnitude represents a difference of 2.5 times in actual brightness, therefore the difference in brightness between the planets was 5.75 times, with Jupiter being the brighter of course.

3) If Jupiter and Mars were putting on such a show, why didn't the United flight and the C-130 pilots see it also? Both planets didn't set until several hours later. It would be an odd coincidence for such an unprecedented "natural" atmospheric show to end in the two or three short minutes between the last sighting by the 747 and the initial sighting of the 747 by United Air Lines flight 69.

4) Klass claimed the JAL pilots were seeing the UFO while the United pilots could see the entire volume of airspace around the JAL and saw no UFO. He failed to mention the JAL pilots claimed the big UFO vanished shortly before the United Air Lines came into range, which timing can be verified with the FAA transcripts sold to the general public.

REFRACTION?

5) Some newspapers published the pilot's sketch showing the two objects with the numerous individual lights

arranged in rows and columns with a dark gap at each one's center, but most papers didn't. Klass claims Jupiter/Mars were at the right altitude to have been what the pilots saw as their UFOs. This intimates one or both of the planets refracted through the dense part of the atmosphere low on the horizon, causing them to appear to dance about, change colors and confuse the pilots. When stars and bright planets are near the horizon, this certainly happens, but they show up only as fuzzy, indistinct blobs.

The key here is that the atmosphere acts as a lens when bright objects are low to the horizon and diverges the light, with the turbulent atmosphere causing them to move about erratically. However, the atmosphere does not have a second lens to focus the image to show any kind of structure at all, such as the distinct rows and columns of lights. Just to be sure, I asked a number of members of the Houston Astronomical Society, all with over 20 years experience observing, photographing, building, and selling telescopes whether it was possible for any low-horizon bright object to show structure through the dense atmosphere. All agreed, it just isn't possible.

6) Klass comments that only the JAL captain saw the huge dark globe and not the other two crew members. The dark globe was visible only from the captain's window on the left side of the aircraft. It did not fly in front of the cockpit as the two smaller objects did. At the Washington, D.C. MUFON symposium, a few of us were asking airline captain John Lear about that. One guy said if he'd been up there, he would certainly have gotten up to lean over the captain's shoulder and look out his window. I was wondering about that, too.

Then John Lear told us we have to understand the oriental mind and their society's discipline. Those were JAL

pilots, and they have instilled in them a large devotion to duty. He said neither of the other two crew members would have even suggested getting up to look. They would just continue monitoring their systems. Lear said an atomic bomb could've gone off out there, but the other two probably still would have waited to have a look until the captain told them to.

RADAR

7) Concerning the two smaller objects not appearing on radar; they were probably too small, but most likely their curved cylindrical shapes represent those inherent to radar-foiling "Stealth" technology. Essentially, sharp edges, flat surfaces, and especially hot engine exhausts cause strong radar returns while curved surfaces do not. The giant UFO simply was too big to not show up at least periodically on the FAA, USAF, and 747 radars. The globe shape with no-visible hot exhausts made it difficult to reflect radar beams. Together with modern radar-absorbent materials, the prospect of a strong radar image is made even more difficult. The transcripts also stated the color weather radar onboard the 747 showed the huge globe in green, symbolic of the weakest kind of reflection. Red would be the strongest.



Weather radar operates on a longer wavelength than air traffic control radar. Consequently, it doesn't have the capability of showing up ordinary-sized aircraft. It's function is to show large cloud masses in order to avoid rough weather enroute. Only those objects as large as a cloud would show up; aircraft carrier-sized, stealth-shaped flying objects certainly being roughly of cloud size. If 747's carried air traffic-type radar systems capable of detecting small aircraft, we would already have the often-in-the-news elusive "collision avoidance system", only in the initial stages of experimentation. They only carry weather radars.

8) Klass claimed the reason for the radar image on the 747's scope was the radar refracted off one of the big

mountains below. Naturally most people know Alaska is full of tall mountains, including North America's tallest, Mt. McKinley at over 17,000 feet above sea level, so that explanation sounds logical. However, plotting the JAL 747's course over a Sectional Aeronautical Chart showing contoured terrain reveals the majority of the terrain below the 747 during the time of its sighting is low. The only mountain range crossed was about a hundred miles northeast of Fairbanks whose highest peaks rose to 5000 feet above sea level. Subtracting off the ground elevation left highest peaks only in the area of 4000 feet above ground level; hardly tall enough to have an effect on the 747's radar and clearly an explanation that stretches it badly.

9) I also read a newsclip quoting Paul Steucke, FAA Administrator, as saying he had gotten several letters advising the FAA how to scientifically interrogate the pilots, but he said he wasn't going to ask any scientific questions; that it wasn't FAA's responsibility to probe any further. It seems incredible to admit to the press that they weren't going to make an attempt to ask any really meaningful questions.

I have tried to bring out only points I have not yet seen in print, with emphasis on refuting public statements made by Philip Klass.

KLASS CONCERNS

By Budd Hopkins

Budd Hopkins, a leading researcher in UFO abductions, is the author of *Missing Time and Intruders*.

Dear colleagues: At some time in the past each of us has probably had the misfortune of encountering one or two UFO investigators who were simply incompetent — ill-informed, filled with zany preconceptions, laden with theory, unable to read the evidence correctly. And when this has happened

we have, I hope, done the only thing that these circumstances demand — we have avoided that individual, refusing to allow ourselves to become entangled in any way. It should be clear to everyone by now that Philip Klass is such a man — an incompetent investigator. We must recognize that fact and from now on decline to cooperate with him in any way.

Klass has announced that he is writing a book on UFO abductions. Without any doubt a subject as

complex as this demands thorough investigation, probing, face-to-face interviews, psychological testing and so on. In this arena an author will inevitably be judged by his investigatory methods, not his opinions. Now, a few months ago I appeared on the Oprah Winfrey television program with two women abductees, both of whom are intelligent people of good will. Philip Klass also appeared on this program, a circumstance which provided him with a perfect opportunity to research his

book by interviewing the two abductees. I was stunned when he made no attempt to do so either during or after the show. A woman in the audience stood up and began to recount her abduction experience, thereby providing our author with yet another opportunity for an interview after the program. He declined to do so and instead told the woman this: "Speak to Budd Hopkins." The implication was unmistakable: Hopkins might actually interview people making this sort of claim, but he, Philip Klass, would surely not waste his time doing so.

During the recent MUFON conference in Washington, D.C., Klass observed the panel on abductions and photographed each of the abductees as he or she spoke. One of these was "Kathie Davis," the central figure in my book *Intruders*, a work which Klass has said he is attempting to refute. Yet after the panel and for the entire next day he avoided asking so much as one question of Kathie or any of the other abductees who had spoken. So far as I know Klass has never conducted a single face-to-face investigative interview with any abductee, the individuals about whom he plans to write with authority.

KLASSICAL METHODOLOGY

His methods of investigation, however, are clear. He easily "solved" the Frederick Valentich disappearance over Australia's Bass Strait by simply announcing to Dr. Richard Haines, the leading authority on the case, that Valentich must have been a dope dealer who concocted his own disappearance and then stole the aircraft!

Now Klass, so far as I know, never visited Australia. He never met or interviewed any of Valentich's family, teachers or colleagues, never, apparently, acquired any first-hand knowledge of the event before pronouncing such a scandalous "solution". There is precisely the same amount of evidence that Philip Klass is, say, a child molester, as there is that Frederick Valentich is a drug smuggler — namely, none whatsoever. My analogy, of course, is designed to underline the gratuitous cruelty of such

off-the-cuff theorizing.

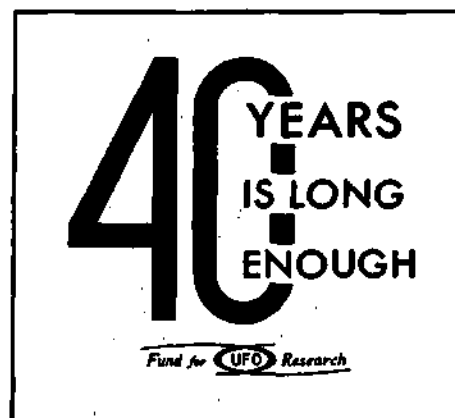
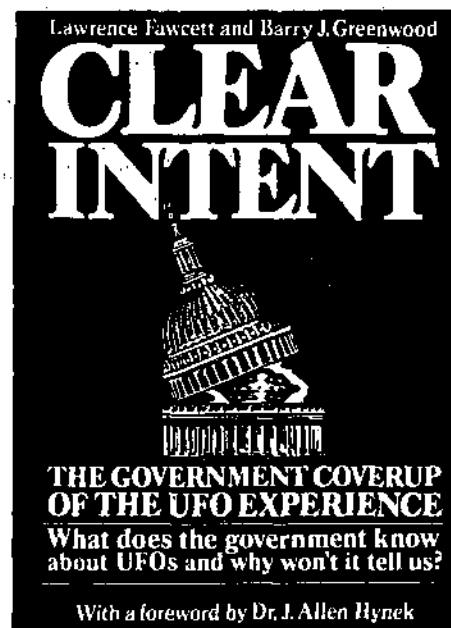
For investigator Klass, interviews with men and women reporting abduction experiences are obviously irrelevant to a book on abduction experiences. The answer comes first, ready-made: since UFOs don't exist, UFO abductions can't exist either. Why bother looking into the reports when it is so much easier just to write a book denouncing them? According to Philip Klass anyone reporting such an experience is by definition either a liar or somehow mentally disturbed, so why trouble oneself by conducting an inquiry?

If these points illustrate Klass's "investigative methods" and his ethical sensitivities, another well-known incident reveals his sense of fair play. When the University of Nebraska hosted a conference on unexplained phenomena in 1983, Klass phoned Robert Mortenson, the University's Director of Conferences and Institutes. According to Mr. Mortenson, Klass stated that many UFO investigators believed the U.S. government was not telling the truth about the UFO phenomenon. Therefore, Klass went on, by promulgating distrust of the U.S. government, UFO investigators were lending support to the Communist movement! Klass's despicable tactic is vintage McCarthyism, but apparently effective; The University of Nebraska had declined to host any more such conferences.

SOLUTION

The solution to our problem is now self-evident. Klass must be treated the way one treats any other grossly incompetent investigator. He must be totally ignored. The day after the Washington conference I made the decision that I will never again receive his phone calls and I will return his letters unopened. I will not appear with him on any television or radio program. I will simply treat him as someone with no competence to speak about UFO investigations. The sad truth is that Philip Klass is to UFO research as Lyndon LaRouche is to political discourse. Conspiracy-theorists, whose strange ideas are set in cement, just cannot be dealt with.

As a corollary, I would like to suggest to the many objective, non-fanatic, gentlemanly members of CSICOP that I will be pleased to talk to those among your membership who are genuinely interested in investigating the UFO abduction phenomenon, no matter what your preliminary hypotheses. Surely the majority of your members must disavow Philip Klass's behavior as strongly as we, from another point of view, would disclaim such unethical and mindless fanaticism emanating from one of our own. All of us, from whatever point of view, should welcome fair criticism and careful, knowledgeable investigation — and condemn bigotry and intellectual intimidation wherever it occurs.



ETH: A RE-EXAMINATION

By Dr. Allen Tough

Dr. Allen Tough writes and teaches in Toronto about potential human futures and advanced extraterrestrials. He is the MUFON consultant on future studies. He presented a version of this paper at the Fourth International UFO Congress (London, July 1987).

ABSTRACT

During the past 40 years or so, has anyone actually seen an extraterrestrial being or spacecraft?

A "yes" answer to this question has been called the Extraterrestrial Hypothesis (ETH) for explaining various reports, claims, experiences, and phenomena in the UFO field.

What is the current status of this hypothesis? We will first look at today's compelling reasons for a "yes" answer. We will then turn to the compelling evidence and alternative explanations that support a "no" answer. The conflict between these two answers indicates the need for some fresh projects. Five suggested projects are now particularly high priority in order to settle the question one way or the other.

YES

During the past 40 years, has anyone actually seen and reported a genuine extraterrestrial being or spacecraft? Here are the major reasons for seriously considering a "yes" answer.

1.) Highly advanced beings and civilizations have probably evolved elsewhere in our galaxy. Among the many scientists interested in discussing and searching for extraterrestrial intelligence, there is general consensus that advanced civilizations have developed at least a few times among the billions of stars in our Milky Way galaxy. Any extraterrestrial

civilizations that are still flourishing today are probably 10,000 or even 500,000 years ahead of us. They therefore possess various capacities far in advance of ours (Tough 1986), including the capacity to travel to this Solar System if they choose to.

2.) Some or all of these extraterrestrial civilizations are probably motivated to observe and study other civilizations, for their own protection if nothing else. They may also be motivated to provide various sorts of help to humankind (Tough 1986). In short, advanced extraterrestrials may possess the motivation as well as the capacity to visit our civilization.

3.) Thousands of reliable, sensible, sober people in many parts of the world have reported seeing unidentified flying craft that execute advanced maneuvers, such as very rapid acceleration and right-angle turns, and have sometimes reported seeing alien occupants as well. The emotional responses of many witnesses indicate that their experience continues to feel very real to them. Some sightings are reported by several or even many witnesses. Animal reactions, electromagnetic interference with vehicles, radar images, photographs, and physical traces at the site (imprints, residues, damaged trees) often confirm the interpretation that the visual sighting involves a real physical object, apparently a highly advanced spacecraft.

4.) Stories of abductions and sometimes medical procedures by extraterrestrials have been recounted by well over a hundred people, often under hypnosis. Some aspects and details in the stories told by unrelated individuals have been remarkably similar, even before these details appeared in print.

5.) James McCampbell has demonstrated that pulsed microwave radiation may well explain a variety of

phenomena that are reported in some UFO sightings, such as low-pitched humming sounds, high-pitched whistles, certain smells and tastes, radios going dead or tuning to a different station, and vehicles stalling and sometimes spontaneously restarting (McCampbell 1973, 1983, 1985, 1987). Microwaves could conceivably be emitted by the propulsion or anti-gravity system of an advanced spacecraft. If McCampbell's work turns out to be correct, it supports the notion that some UFOs are advanced spacecraft.

6.) A few documents purportedly from U.S. government and military files suggest that the U.S. government continues to study UFOs seriously and classifies them as "top secret" or higher. Additional evidence suggests that the British and Canadian governments may be doing the same thing.

7.) Various individuals have claimed firsthand or secondhand knowledge of U.S. military retrievals of crashed extraterrestrial vehicles and bodies (Stringfield 1985). Prominent scientist Robert Sarbacher recalls his secondhand knowledge of such retrievals in Bletchman (1986).

8.) A variety of individuals receive messages, supposedly from extraterrestrial beings, while in a trance state. The term "channelling" is commonly applied to this phenomenon.

NO

Let us turn now to the other side of the picture. Several persuasive reasons for supporting the extraterrestrial hypothesis have just been presented, but there are also several reasons for rejecting the various claims concerning extraterrestrial visits and messages during the past 40 years.

1.) Although some advanced extraterrestrials probably do have the capacity and motivation for observing

us, they might reject a long spaceship trip and choose a cheaper or quicker method, such as a robot probe or radio messages. They might even have developed some quick and easy method of distant surveillance that we have not yet achieved: they may be able to observe us somehow without approaching the Solar System.

2.) People often perceive reality incorrectly. Indeed, the amount of misperception, distortion, optical illusion, fantasy, and wishful thinking among human beings is astounding. Hendry (1979) repeatedly found these phenomena, such as a very strong tendency to perceive domed spacecraft when actually viewing an advertising airplane or a natural phenomenon. One part of our brain may be capable of creating lifelike experiences for us at certain times. Perhaps we do not recognize that the experiences during a daydream or semi-awake fantasy are manufactured by our brain, just as night dreams are. People sometimes have vividly dramatic psychological experiences that do not jibe with outer reality; some psychological mechanism seems capable of producing similar experiences in various unconnected individuals (Grof 1975). Given our knowledge of bizarre mental and psychological phenomena, in any given year we might expect one person in a million to "experience" a realistic close-up encounter with an alien being or spacecraft: this source alone translates into 300 UFO "encounters" per year.

3.) Several UFO reports, photographs, and documents have turned out to be hoaxes. People have a fascinating diversity of conscious and subconscious reasons for wanting to fool others.

4.) Because of the high incidence of distorted perception and deliberate hoaxes, a "yes" answer to our question would require very convincing evidence of an extraterrestrial visitor or spacecraft. In fact, no single (thoroughly studied) UFO case is highly convincing to most of the people who study it carefully. I cannot think of any single case that I would want to defend vigorously in front of a group of well-informed skeptics.

5.) Civilian researchers who study UFO claims are poorly funded and

sometimes insufficiently trained. Usually only one or two individuals investigate a case, rather than a highly trained team with a wide variety of skills ranging from penetrating interview techniques to sophisticated soil sampling. Consequently one worries about the validity of most UFO data.

6.) Too many UFO researchers have a closed mind about the ETH. For them it should be called an extraterrestrial belief or faith — not a hypothesis. Several times I have seen UFO "researchers" pass up an excellent and easy opportunity to collect data that might *disconfirm* the ETH: they fervently believe in an extraterrestrial explanation and therefore have no desire to check out whether they are right or wrong. In a praiseworthy attempt to improve the objectivity and validity of future interviews, one prominent UFO leader has pointed out the weaknesses of past interviews: "Far too many of us simply have an attitude problem: To find a meteor in what at first appeared to be an anomalous event is viewed as somewhat a failure, a disappointment and waste of time... Because of investigator bias and sloppiness, inadequate preparation is made before the interview; improper settings are selected; exaggerated body language by the interviewer elicits hyperbole in the retelling; ineffective listening causes important points to be missed or misconstrued; ...leading witnesses with either-or questions and references to the 'craft' or the 'UFO' affirms a preconception" (Wright 1985, 4).

7.) There are no photographs of UFO occupants. A UFO has never been clearly photographed by two persons independently. There are extremely few close-up photos of alien craft, and I do not know of one that has passed rigorous laboratory scrutiny of the negative. Angelo (1985) has pointed out that we lack irrefutable physical evidence of alien visitors and spaceships; we have only "soft" human testimony (eyewitness reports) rather than "hard" technical and scientific data.

CONCLUSIONS

Has any human being actually seen

and reported an alien being or spacecraft? Is the extraterrestrial hypothesis correct for at least one person's experience or report?

The correct answer might well be yes. As we have seen, in our galaxy there probably are highly advanced extraterrestrials who have the capacity and motivation to observe us. Over the past 40 years or so, many reports of alien spacecraft and occupants have survived preliminary investigation by UFO researchers. Few people who have examined a large portion of the serious UFO literature with a reasonably open mind would estimate the "yes" probability as less than 10 or 15%. A more appropriate estimate might fall somewhere between 20% and 70%. The evidence is convincing enough that one cannot reject all of it with an extremely high level of certainty and confidence — by assigning a probability of only 2%, for instance.

At the same time, however, the evidence for extraterrestrial sightings and encounters is, not highly convincing, especially when the points spelled out in the "no" section are taken into account. It certainly does not support an 80% or 90% probability that the ETH is correct. It would not convince a knowledgeable hard-headed skeptic nor does it add up to extraordinarily convincing evidence to support an extraordinary claim.

The established facts do not yet permit us to either accept or reject the extraterrestrial hypothesis for UFO reports, concluded Greenwell (1980) in *The Encyclopedia of UFOs*. He also commented that "much emotion has predominated these debates since the 1940s... The emotional commitment on the part of those speculating on the ETH, positively or negatively, is not likely to diminish as long as UFOs continue to be reported."

If at least one person during the past 40 years had glimpsed an alien spacecraft or interacted with a being from another part of the galaxy, a stunningly important event has occurred. Surely anyone interested in the broad sweep of human history and the human future, anyone interested in our potential interaction with alien civilizations, would agree with the significance of such an event. Yet we

simply do not know whether such a fundamental event has occurred or not. We have a vast accumulation of claims and counter-claims, an impressive variety of confirming and disconfirming data. We have not yet, however, reached the stage at which we can accept or reject the ETH with a high level of confidence, let alone with complete certainty. At present, we simply cannot be sure either way.

TOP PRIORITIES

How, then, can we move toward a definitive answer? How can we try to permanently settle the extraterrestrial hypothesis, one way or the other?

Clearly we need some new approaches and fresh projects. Let me suggest five projects that could be especially crucial for achieving this goal.

1.) Form a small working committee composed of UFO writers, researchers, critics, skeptics, and enthusiasts along with one neutral social scientist and one neutral physical scientist. Encourage a thoughtful, open-minded dialogue among all members. The committee's task: decide what sorts of evidence would be highly convincing to everyone for a genuine sighting of an extraterrestrial spacecraft or occupant. Then modify the UFO field investigators' training and instructions or take other steps to increase the chances of collecting such evidence. Either this committee or a separate one should perform the same task for abduction cases.

2.) Select the seven or ten most promising recent and current cases (including at least one or two abduction cases) that might support the ETH. For each case, mount a thorough broad-gauge investigation by a small but varied team of 1-2 skeptics and 2-3 other UFO researchers, each of whom is dedicated to discovering the truth about that particular case, no matter what the truth turns out to be.

3.) In several key countries, insist on full and honest disclosure from the armed forces, security agencies, and national government about any past or present UFO evidence. Insist on an ironclad promise of immunity from all consequences for any employee or former employee who talks freely,

reveals documents, or produces other evidence. (Today's major military secrets could not be revealed, of course, nor espionage methods that have not already been described in print.) An ironclad amnesty would soon settle once and for all whether any government knows more about alien visitors than the rest of us know.

4.) Encourage two or three sympathetic scientists and two or three knowledgeable skeptics to independently pursue the McCampbell line of thought and experimentation. Again, it should not take long to achieve a conclusive outcome, one way or the other.

5.) Psychological explanations are a key foundation in the skeptic's refusal to accept the ETH. We need sophisticated psychological studies of misperception, distortion, fantasy, archetypes, and perinatal symbols in order to test whether the skeptic's reliance on psychological explanations is well founded. (For example, to be truly scientific, researchers would conduct a whole series of experiments to compare the detailed stories of mock abductees and witnesses with those that are "real.") In fact, even a thorough and sophisticated review of the relevant existing psychological literature would be useful.

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NASA NEWS

A suborbital sounding rocket carrying a scientific experiment to measure the density of helium in the interstellar medium (the extremely thin gas which fills the space between the stars), a measurement that has never been made before, was launched from White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico, Sept. 28, according to officials at NASA's Goodard Space Flight Center, Greenbelt, Md.

A part of a continuing NASA study of our own Milky Way Galaxy, the rocket carried a University of California at Berkeley Telescope and an extreme ultraviolet spectrometer. Extreme ultraviolet radiation falls between visible light and the x-ray band and is strongly absorbed by the Earth's atmosphere; hence, any studies at these wavelengths must be carried out above the atmosphere.

The objective of the flight was to determine the density of helium in the interstellar medium and to compare this with the density of hydrogen in the same region. These two elements are the main components of the interstellar medium. Spectroscopic observations were made of a very hot star, the White Dwarf G191 B2B. According to Dr. Stuart Bowyer, principal investigator from the University of California at Berkeley, "We know what the star is doing even though it is hundreds of light years away from us, and we are measuring the absorbing effects of the

(continued on page 22)

NEWS'N'VIEWS

IN REMEMBRANCE

Mrs. Jean Fuller, State Section Director for Smith County, Texas died on October 29, 1987. Funeral services were held November 2, 1987 at the Burkes-Walter-Tibbet Funeral Home in Tyler, Texas. Jean had attended the majority of the MUFON UFO Symposiums, since their inception in 1970 and will be sadly missed by her many friends in UFOlogy.

-Walt Andrus

VATICAN VIEWS?

From London's *Evening News* (July 21, 1987), via Timothy Good, comes this uncorroborated, unbylined story:

"Vatican theologians have acknowledged that there could be life on other planets.

"Now they plan to train missionaries capable of working in space and meeting aliens.

"The strange and historic decision was taken after Vatican theologians decided that future developments would make the training of space missionaries of prime importance.

"Jesuit scientists at the Vatican observatory in Frascati, near Rome, have reported moving lights and other unidentified phenomena in the sky.

"Vatican theologian Father Pierre Thorel said that special courses concerning future missionaries in space and first contacts with alien races would be held by Austrian Professor Resch who was responsible for the new chair at the university's Alfonsian Academy.

"Fr. Thorel said: 'I am surprised that there should be enthusiasm over missionaries in space or the Christianization of alien races.

"Their existence is hardly certain. however, the main worry of the Church is to keep up with the times and this

means neither ignore space exploration nor the possibility of meeting other living creatures."

ELECTROMAGNETIC INTERFERENCE

A NICAP report on Electromagnetic effects associated with UFOs, dated June 1960 provided an interesting accumulation of reports of automobile motor and light failure while in the area of a UFO.

In 1957 Ruppelt characterized the 1957 electro-magnetic cases "as a whole new dimension to the UFO investigation." The NICAP report quotes Leonard Hardland, Chief Engineer of the National Inventors Council, as saying "a device capable of disrupting the operation of motor vehicles and other mechanical equipment is one of the things the armed forces would like to see developed."

The report cites a number of EMI cases. Some of these are as follows: A car motor and headlights failed on November 2, 1957, when a UFO was encountered on the road near Seminole, Texas. Four instances of car motor and light failure the same day only near Levelland, Texas. The motor failed and the lights went out on a speeding car near Hobbs, NM on November 5, 1957. Several car motors failed when near a UFO in Cachoeira, Brazil on November 15, 1957. Many more such cases have been reported. Other problems such as radio failure, TV interference, clock failure, and heat affects on humans are also noted.

Now in 1987 lightning is showing a similar problem with newer cars. Sandy Chinn reported to the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* that her Cadillac dashboard digital display went dark while she was driving in a thunderstorm near Southern

Illinois University. Mrs. Chinn is the daughter of KMOX radio personality Bob Hardy. When Hardy used his radio program to describe the incident he received a call from Bob Kisslinger, technology branch chief at McDonnell Aircraft Company, with a possible explanation.

Kisslinger said the incident was due to electromagnetic pulsations from the lightning, even though none actually hit the Chinn car. He hypothesized that the current from a nearby lightning strike rode along the car's wiring until it found the weakest point, probably a computer chip in the dash. The induced current could overwhelm the chip and burn it out.

Metal would normally shield the weak components from induced current, but newer cars use the more susceptible electronics and a lot more plastic than metal.

Bill Draper of Delco Electronics says it is extremely rare for automobile electronics to be knocked out by nearby lightning strikes. Much like the UFO effects on automobile systems, the experts seem to think lightning effects can't happen. What this really means is that eyewitness accounts are usually discounted by the experts, rather than finding a rational explanation for what really happened.

Kudos to Bob Hardy and Bob Kisslinger for their attempt to get to the bottom of the problem rather than pretending like it did not happen.

-John Schuessler

COLLECTORS' SYNDROME

They discovered the existence of UFOs during their teen years and at once developed a lifelong interest in the phenomenon. They read all the books they could find on the topic, perhaps without much selectivity; and as the years went by and their position in life was established, they became more and

more active in the investigation.

Perhaps as a result of their earlier reading, or maybe because of their education, which many times developed in the direction of the soft sciences, their conception of research was muddled.

They surmised correctly that the phenomenon was too complex and varied to be attacked by the conventional methods, and that the key could be statistical analysis (hence the hint of competence in the soft sciences). And they started their collections.

Every case of which they heard one way or the other was dutifully written in their notes. Perhaps a pioneer was Guy Quincy in France, whose listings have become legendary, although they were never published and circulated among the "buffs" only in manuscript form. And in the fullness of time, the collections grew, accumulated large numbers of cases and even saw the black and white world of printing. And the collectors become myriad.

WHAT'S MISSING?

But all the collections have one thing in common: there is something essential missing. The lack of a basic design, of a grandiose scheme behind the project, is too much in evidence. The cases they offer us — indeed in good faith and with no malice — are full of holes, based many times only on inaccessible references to obscure provincial papers, or worse still, qualified by the word "private" as the source of information. Or, in innumerable instances, relying shamelessly on the testimony of a single observer without even a wisp of corroborating evidence. But perhaps the worst offenses are those fantasies created from a single letter written by a presumed actor in a UFO event, which have been entrenched in the literature for years.

It is now almost useless to attempt to track back to the reality behind the information, as the trail has become cold with the passage of time. The tracker finds himself going from one to another of those catalogues, ending inevitably in the original two lines of a

newspaper clipping which lack substance and/or information.

The curious thing is that the collection impulse seems to be epidemic and very contagious. I have already found myself asserting "We have x number of cases in UNICAT," as if it had deep significance. Some prominent ufologists contracted the disease in an early stage of their careers and the catalogs remain behind to do the damage. Without the shadow of a doubt, the most monumental effort and example is UFOCAT, an intractable monster today.

Their shortcomings should be obvious to anyone with some degree of ufological sophistication. Yet the catalogs have been used for years and years — perhaps for lack of a better tool

— to obtain all kinds of conclusions about the phenomenon: time distributions, geographical incidence and many others. But it is self-evident that all of those conclusions cannot be any better than the material on which they were based. Here may lie the root of the lack of progress in Ufology for so many years. We can only hope that the arrival of UNICAT to the scene marks the beginning of a new era in UFO research.

-Willy Smith

Dr. Willy Smith is head of Project UNICAT, a computerized UFO data base.



No, Not Martians, General Motors

The Sunraycer, General Motors' entry in the first World Solar Challenge, in downtown Adelaide, Australia, yesterday approaching the finish line. The nearest rivals were about two-and-a-half days behind in the 3,000-kilometer race for solar-powered cars, which started last Sunday. The Sunraycer was on the road for 42 hours 50 minutes and averaged 44 miles an hour. The race attracted entries from the United States, Japan, Denmark, West Germany, Switzerland, Pakistan and Australia.

LOOKING BACK

By Bob Gribble

FORTY YEARS AGO—November 1947: On the afternoon of the fifth, crewmen aboard the oil tanker *Chipola* sighted eight disc-shaped objects flying through the air less than half a mile away as the ship moved through the Persian Gulf off Saudi Arabia. As the crew watched the discs climbed out of sight gaining altitude while in echelon formation.

THIRTY FIVE YEARS AGO—November 1952: Two observers in the control tower at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, observed an oblong-shaped object over the airfield (date unknown). The object—which was being tracked on base radar—was between 15 and 18 feet tall and stationary, and was in view about six minutes. The UFO then veered away and followed an Air Force transport plane for 14 miles before turning away and fading from the radar scope...During the first week of November residents of Witwatersrand, South Africa, observed several enormous, cylindrical-shaped craft which held stationary at high altitude, and then moved away at incredible speed when jet fighters were sent to intercept.

THIRTY YEARS AGO—November 1957: Marion Smith said the strange object he saw off the highway nine miles north of Levelland, Texas, on the night of the second "was bound to have humans in it." He described the craft as about 200 feet long and shaped like a dirigible. Smith said his and about a dozen other motorists' cars "just quit on the highway as he was passing the thing. It was gun-metal in color but when it took off it turned into a ball of fire. Some of us went over where it had rested and could feel the ground was warm. There was a smell of ozone in the area."...That same night, between 10:50 PM and 1:30 AM, witnesses reported ten independent UFO sightings in and around Levelland. All of

the cases involved EM effects. Seven of the incidents involved landings of objects reported to be 100 to 200 feet long.

At 3 AM and 8 PM on the third, a huge oval-shaped object—estimated to be 200 to 300 feet long—"nearly as bright as the sun," was spotted hovering about 100 feet over the bunkers used in the first A-bomb explosion. The sightings were made by two different two-man military police patrols on the White Sands Proving Ground, New Mexico. The four soldiers agreed that it seemed to amount to the landing and take-off of some controlled device.

James Stokes, 45, a missile engineer at the Air Force Missile Development Center at Holloman Air Force Base, Alamogordo, New Mexico, said ten autos were stalled on U.S. Highway 54, ten miles south of Orogrande, at 1:10 PM on the fourth by a "brilliant colored egg-shaped object." Stokes said his car radio faded and quit, then his engine stopped. "I saw a brilliant egg-shaped object making a shallow dive across the sky," Stokes said. "Then it turned and made a pass at the highway and crossed it not more than two miles ahead. Then it moved away towards White Sands Proving Grounds. As it passed...I could feel a kind of heat wave, like radiation from a giant sun lamp. There was no sound and no visible portholes. When I got back to my car and checked the engine, I found it intact but the battery was steaming."

Stokes said he had sunburn that night but that it vanished by the next morning. The engineer estimated the UFO to be about 300 to 500 feet long and traveling twice the speed of sound. It was visible for about three minutes. Lt. Col. John McCurdy, public information officer at the Missile Development Center, said he was convinced Stokes had sighted such an object after lengthy questioning.

The U.S. Coast Guard cutter *Sebago*, on patrol in the Gulf of Mexico—about 200 miles south of the mouth of the Mississippi River—reported visual and radar contact with a brilliant UFO on the fifth. Radar contacts were made at 5:10 AM, 5:13 AM, and 5:20 AM. Radarman James Moore said the UFO was moving about 1000 MPH when contact was first made and about 3300 MPH on the next radar track. Ensign Wayne Shockley agreed with Moore's estimate.

At Long Beach, California Air Force Base, Major Louis F. Baker, head of the meteorological unit, and Airman Joseph Abranvage and William Nieland witnessed six flying discs that afternoon at 3:50 PM. "They were circular and resembled spun aluminum," said Abranvage. "They changed course instantaneously without loss of speed...directly over the airport."

On the same afternoon, Reinhold Schmidt's car was supposedly stalled near Kearney, Nebraska, by a UFO about 100 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 14 feet high. He also reported seeing occupants. About the time of the alleged landing, Capt. Irving S. Kravitz, Trans World Airline pilot, reported he saw "a brightly lighted" object going faster than a jet, moving through the sky over the Kearney area. Also, Duane Nickel, 30, was driving near the reported landing site when his truck engine stalled about the same time that the landing was reported. A serviceman had to repair the truck's electrical system. That night several discs maneuvered over Los Alamitos Naval Air Station, almost continuously between 6:05 PM and 7:25 PM. "They weren't stars or airplanes," said Lt. Richard Spencer.

On the sixth, Col. Dean Hess, Korean war ace and Air Force public information officer in Los Angeles, sent a letter to the Secretary of the Air Force demanding a thorough investigation of the recent rash of UFO reports. "The failure of the Air Force to acknowledge these reports questions the integrity of those calling them in. I am sure the American people would be receptive to information as to whether these objects are of terrestrial or extraterrestrial origin."

At 7:30 PM, six air policemen in

three locations on the sprawling Edwards Air Force Base, California, spotted an "orange ball" which hovered about 200 feet over the super-secret rocket engine test area.

At 11 PM, Olden Moore, 28, was driving near Montville, Ohio, when he noticed a large, bright, shining object descending from the sky. He stopped his car when the UFO landed nearby. He walked to within 200 feet of the circular object that measured about 50 feet across, between 20 and 30 feet tall, and had a small cone-like top on top of it. Moore said he could hear a ticking sound and that the object appeared to be standing on legs of some kind. The landing area was investigated by the sheriff and Kenneth Locke, Lake County Civil Defense director. Locke said he "picked up radio-activity of 150 Roentgen—pretty strong" in the field where Moore said the UFO landed. "We found prints, too," Locke added. "They had a sort of heel print, then some little holes in the ground—like golf shoes would make."

Truck driver Malvin Stevens, 48, said he and a passenger saw an egg-shaped object laying across Highway 19—about 100 yards in front of his truck—near House, Mississippi, about 7:30 AM on the seventh. He stopped his truck about 20 feet from the craft, got out and walked toward it. A door opened from the center, and three "pasty white" persons, two men and a woman, emerged. Stevens said one of the men in the machine walked over to him and put both of his outstretched palms over Stevens' hand. The occupants were dressed in gray, had dark hair, and were about four-and-a-half feet tall. Stevens said they were "friendly and acted like they wanted to talk, but I couldn't understand their chattering."

The driver said the three went back into the craft "after what seemed an eternity" and the object took off straight up and disappeared. The company mileage chart of Stevens' truck indicated he stopped for two minutes between Philadelphia and Meridian and had been driving 33 MPH when he applied his brakes. Fellow workers said the father of three was "white as a sheet" when he reached Meridian. A storekeeper at House,

George Hosey, said a school boy saw a "balloon-like object" before Stevens had related his story.

About two hours later, at 9:20 AM, a family of three adults were driving near Orogrande, New Mexico, when the speedometer on their car began to register erratically. The 22-year-old member of the family said: "The speedometer needle suddenly jumped over to 110 (as far as the needle could go). The needle kept skipping back and forth between 60 and 110 and making a clattering sound. While the needle was jumping around, dad pointed toward the southwest and said, 'I suppose you think that is something.' And it was something. It was cylindrical in shape, silvery, and moving... We traveled some 15 miles before the speedometer corrected itself, and we had no trouble during the rest of the trip. Strangely, the needle kept wavering to the side where the object was instead of toward the zero mark on the speedometer."

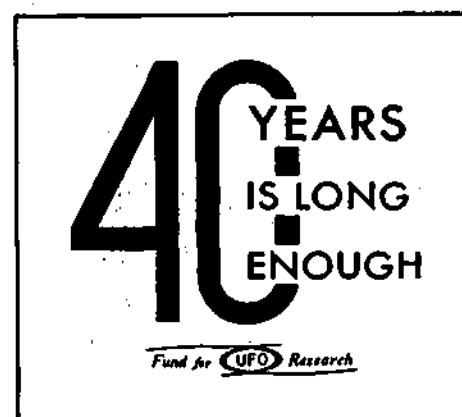
That afternoon, the man who headed the Air Force UFO investigation (Project Blue Book) from 1951 to 1953, Edward J. Ruppelt, said there was sufficient evidence of their existence to warrant further investigation. "These recent reports by skilled observers should add a whole new dimension to the UFO investigation. We presented our evidence to seven top American scientists in 1953. They reached no conclusion about UFO origins, but did recommend greatly increased expenditures for an intensified investigation." That ran head-on into a governmental economy drive, Ruppelt said, and the Air Force then adopted the position that UFOs do not exist. On the heels of Ruppelt's statement, an Air Force spokesman said it costs approximately \$10,000 for each major UFO track-down, including sending out investigating personnel, paying transportation expenses, sending planes aloft to investigate intruders and taking pictures—plus administrative work.

TWENTY FIVE YEARS AGO—November 1962: In an address to the American Rocket Society, Dr. Carl Sagan, distinguished astronomer, stated that: "Earth may have been

visited many times by various 'galactic civilizations' during geological times and it is not out of the question that artifacts of these visits still exist." Asked if he believed in UFOs, Sagan said, "I do believe there are objects that are unidentified."

TWENTY YEARS AGO—November 1967: Carl Farlow slammed on the brakes when the radio and lights in his truck suddenly cut out. Then he gasped in terror as a bright green, disc-shaped object swooped from the sky and hovered over the roadway only 50 feet away. As he watched, too scared to move from his seat, a 15-foot disc launched a small, dull grey box from its undercarriage. Two arms extended from the box and began moving in a sweeping motion over the road near Fordingbridge, England on the sixth. About three minutes later the disc retracted the box and sped away at high speed.

Alan Pool said an object shaped like an inverted soup bowl landed in one of his paddocks a few feet from him on the 15th. It was so close he was unable to fully open the door of the vehicle in which he was sitting. Pool was in a paddock near Yerecoin, W.A., Australia, when he heard a loud humming sound about 6:30 PM. "I saw this thing approaching rapidly from the east. It landed next to the Land Rover." It was a grey metal color, about 12-feet in diameter and about six feet high. "I partly opened the door and got one leg out of the Rover when the object took off, vertically. I lost sight of it in two seconds."



MESSAGE, Continued

\$3.50 which includes the mailing cost.

Robert D. Boyd has extended the deadline for submitting names and addresses of people involved in the UFO phenomenon community till December 31, 1987 for entry in the first edition of the "Annual UFO Phenomenon Who's Who." He is also taking advanced orders for the book. New entries or inquiries for purchasing the book should be mailed to P.O. Box 66404, Mobile, AL 36606.

The MUFON 1987 International UFO Symposium Proceedings (222 pages) is available from MUFON for \$15 plus \$1.50 for postage and handling. It contains all of the papers delivered by the featured speakers that were received for publication before the proceedings went to press on June 1, 1987. The theme is "International Symposium on Unidentified Aerial Phenomena: 1947 - 1987."

NASA, Continued

material between the star and our solar system. By carefully analyzing the character of the absorption, we can determine how much helium and hydrogen are present between the star and us."

The extreme ultraviolet spectrometer was launched aboard a NASA Nike Black Brant Sounding Rocket at 6:00 a.m. EDT. The two-stage rocket is approximately 44 feet long and 17 inches in diameter. The 685-pound payload was recovered from the desert and will be refurbished for future experiments.

This scientific mission is part of the overall NASA sounding rocket program, which is managed by Goddard's Wallops Flight Facility, Wallops Island, VA. The program consists of approximately 40-45 sounding rockets a year that are launched from various worldwide locations.

MUFON

THE NIGHT SKY

By Walter N. Webb
MUFON Astronomy Consultant.

DECEMBER 1987

Bright Planets (Evening Sky):

Venus, shining at magnitude -3.9 in the SW, continues to pull away from the Sun's glare, not setting until about 6:15 PM in midmonth and about 7 PM at month's end. Our neighbor planet pairs up with the slim crescent Moon on the 22nd, both objects being separated by only 2° that evening.

Jupiter, in Pisces, resumes direct or eastward motion on the 16th. The bright giant gleams at magnitude -2.6 and lies in the SW by 9 PM.

Bright Planets (Morning Sky):

Mars, shifting from Virgo to Libra, is in the SE at dawn, rising shortly before 4 AM in mid-December.

Jupiter sets north of west about 1:45 in midmonth.

Meteor Showers:

The Geminid meteors achieve their maximum unfortunately coincident with the presence of the last-quarter Moon on the morning of December 14. But the shower does occur in lesser numbers from about the 7th to the 15th. Geminids are bright, white, and slow with short paths. The less spectacular Ursids can be seen in moonless skies, peaking on the 22nd and 23rd at about 15 per hour. These meteors radiate from near Ursa Minor (Little Dipper).

Moon Phases:

Full moon--December 5
Last quarter--December 13
New moon--December 20
First quarter--December 27



The Stars:

About 8 PM in mid-December we can see the sky symbols of three seasons all at once--the Summer Triangle just above the NW horizon, the Great Square (autumn) high in the SW, and Orion the Hunter (winter) in the ESE. Also rising at that time in the ESE is the brightest of nighttime stars (and a prime IFO culprit!), Sirius the Dog Star.

December offers an excellent opportunity to view another naked-eye variable star in action. (See September *Night Sky*.) Algol the Demon Star crosses the celestial meridian near the zenith at 9:30 PM in midmonth. Algol, the "winking" eye of the serpent-haired Medusa (whose severed head Perseus holds aloft), normally shines as a 2nd-magnitude star. However, once every 3 days it drops a whole magnitude in brightness over the space of only 4½ hours and then bounces back to 2nd magnitude in another 4½ hours. Algol is really two stars

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MESSAGE, Continued

the new chart which you may insert into your F.I. Manuals as page 78a. A copy of page 79 is also included, titled "Dial-A-Map Selector," which you may cut out and construct your own dial per the instructions provided to show the sky at any time of the year on the monthly maps on pages 80 through 91.

With the promotion of **Dan Wright** to Deputy Director of Investigations on the MUFON Executive Committee, a vacancy now

exists for Central Regional Director on the MUFON Board of Directors. Dan will continue to fill the position of Investigative Coordinator in his new capacity. An election will be conducted in early 1988 to elect a Central Regional Director by the members in the Central States, composed of the following states: ND, SD, NE, KS, OK, TX, MN, IA, MO, AR, LA, WI, IL, IN, MI, KY, TN, AL and OH. Any current member desiring to be a candidate should contact your own State Director so that he/she

may submit your name in nomination. All candidates' names must be received by MUFON headquarters by January 30, 1988. A primary election will be held if over six candidates are nominated with the ballot being enclosed in the MUFON UFO Journal. The term of the new Board Member will be 4 years. (State Directors may nominate themselves if they so desire.) Nominations are now being accepted.

The MUFON 1988 UFO Symposium will be held at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln on June 24, 25, and 26, 1988 hosted by MUFON of Nebraska (Fortean Research Center). **Ray W. Boeche**, State Director for Nebraska and **Scott Colburn**, Asst. State Director will chair the host committee. **Walt Andrus**, in conjunction with the host committee, will extend invitations to the featured speakers.

In another item of business at the MUFON Annual Board of Directors meeting in Washington, DC, **Richard H. Hall** volunteered to revise the 1982 edition of the MUFON Corporate Bylaws and submit same to the Board for their approval or further revisions.

Mr. Jean Sider, 17 rue Ferdinand Buisson, 92110 Clichy, France has published a booklet (380 pages) softbound on the famous "1897 Airship Wave in USA." Anyone interested in obtaining a copy of his ten year study of the mysterious airships should contact Mr. Sider directly.

George D. Fawcett, 602 Battleground Road, Lincolnton, NC 28092 has published a four-page listing of 58 sources for UFO information from the USA, Canada, England and Australia as part of a special project during the "3rd Annual National UFO Information Week" observances on August 10-17. This list may be obtained from Mr. Fawcett by mailing him a long self-addressed envelope with a 39¢ stamp attached plus a check for \$2.00 to help defray the cost of printing for this service.

Dan Wright, 228 South Fairview, Lansing, MI 48912 still has a supply of his 23-page, 8000-word booklet titled "Interviewing the UFO Witness" for

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(signed) Walter H. Andrus, Jr.
 Publisher

NIGHT SKY, Continued

revolving about each other almost in our line of sight. Periodically the larger and fainter companion partly eclipses the visible one, causing the 9-hour change in brightness. This gradual effect can be noticed with the naked eye or binoculars.

Algol is located between the "W" of Cassiopeia and the Pleiades cluster; it normally is the second brightest star in Perseus and is about 10° above the constellation's brightest luminary, Mirfak or Algenib.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

by
Walt Andrus

1987 continues to be an exciting year in UFOlogy with UFO sightings currently being reported, abduction cases surpassing available investigators, and new UFO books arriving in the stores on a monthly schedule. And yes, the MJ-12 "smoking gun" is still with us. The MUFON UFO JOURNAL has been and will continue to publish the latest factual information in the quest to determine the authenticity of these controversial papers or documents.

If they prove to be credible, it will not only confirm the Roswell Army AFB crash and retrieval of four bodies, but provide solid evidence of the status of the UFO phenomenon under Presidents Harry S. Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower. However, if evidence is forthcoming and discloses that the memos are nothing more than a clever fraud precipitated upon the UFO community and general public, UFOlogy, as a science, will suffer serious repercussions. The search for the "smoking gun" goes on....

The MUFON 1987 International UFO Symposium in Washington, DC was a major turning point in worldwide respectability for the UFO phenomenon. The number of competent and academically qualified volunteers joining MUFON has significantly increased during the past few months.

We are extremely proud to announce that C.L. "**Chuck**" **Brooks**, an accountant in Sioux Falls, has accepted the position of State Director for South Dakota, thus completing all 50 states. **Richard D. Seifried**, State Director for Ohio, has revised his state organization to provide improved annual coverage by appointing **Fred W. Hays**, of Kettering, Ohio as his Co-State Director.

New State Section Directors Volunteering their services during the past month are the following: **Eugene**

A. Maron, M.S. for Nassau County and **Ivan White**, D.D. for Seneca and Cayuga Counties in New York; **Bill Pitts**, former State Director for Arkansas, for Sebastian, Crawford, Scott and Logan Counties and **Jerome D. "Jerry" Blackburn** for Pulaski and Faulkner Counties in Arkansas; **John D. Aultman**, M.A. of Hattiesburg, Miss. for Forrest, Lamar and Perry Counties (John is also an amateur radio operator KA5UBL); and **Richard A. Holmes** of Belfast, Maine for Waldo and Knox Counties.

Other new State Section Directors are **Paul L. Bailor** (WD800B) for Eaton and Calhoun Counties and **Charles L. Pine** for Kent County in Michigan; **Michael L. Broyles**, M.S. for Dallas and Collin Counties in Texas; **John F. Grace** for Clark County in Nevada; and **Harold Hartig** for Vanderburg County and **Glenn L. Conner** for Bartholomew County in Indiana.

New Consultants who are making their expertise available in helping to resolve the UFO enigma are **Michael Grosso**, Ph.D. (Riverdale, N.Y.) Consultant in Philosophy; and **Kimble A. Traeger**, D.M.D., (Seguin, Tex.) Consultant in Oral Surgery.

Two new artists have offered their talent to the MUFON UFO JOURNAL, both from the Houston, Tex. area. They are **Karen M. Pennison** and **Dan A. Marshall**. In addition to the new Consultants, the following people have been appointed Research Specialists in the fields so indicated: **Debra Moy**, M.S. (Culpeper, VA) in Medicine; **Evelyn M. Frick**, M.A. Ed., (San Antonio, Tex.) in Education; **Daniel Alberto Perisse** (Capital Federal, Argentina) in Statistics; and **S. Peter Resta**, M.A., (Clinton, MD) in Clinical Psychology. Mr. Perisse was a featured speaker at the MUFON 1987 International UFO Symposium.

As an international UFO organization, we welcome the following

two new national representatives: Sra. **Zitha Rodriguez de Chaves** (Zitha Rodriguez Montiel) of Mexico City as our new Representative for Mexico. A Journalist by profession, she was the founder of Centro Internacional de Estudios Espaciales and served as President in 1984. Zitha has been investigating UFO sighting reports since 1969. She was highly recommended to MUFON by **Richard W. Heiden**.

Darush Bajkeri, living in Tehran, is the new Representative for Iran. He is the Director of P.R.R. and a researcher, writer and student.

It is also a privilege to welcome **Loren E. Gross**, 690 Gable Drive, Fremont, CA 94538 to the MUFON Staff as Staff Historian. Mr. Gross has earned a reputation as one of the finest UFO historians in the world with his detailed and thorough research. Over the past few years, he has published a compilation of UFO sighting reports from all known sources available to him in a series of softback books titled "UFO's: A History." Eight books now cover the period of January 1950 through August 1952. If you have been enjoying Bob Gribble's column in the Journal titled "Looking Back," you will find that Loren's work is a definitive history for the period involved. His footnotes and indexes are superb as references for the sources. Please write to Mr. Gross if you are interested in purchasing these books.

The "Bright Planet Location Chart (1982-1987)" on page 78 in the 3rd Edition of the MUFON Field Investigator's Manual (1983) will soon be obsolete as a reference. At the request of **Ray Fowler**, **Walter N. Webb**, MUFON Astronomy Consultant, has prepared a current chart for 1988 thru 1993. This issue of the MUFON UFO JOURNAL contains

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