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Professor MacDonald recorded his talk in Sydney on a recent visit to Australia, New Zealand

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and Tasmania to investigate UFO sightings in this part of the world.

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Professor James E. MacDonald.

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I suppose one good place to begin with my remarks on the UFO problem is to tell you

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briefly why I happen to be down in Australia and New Zealand and Tasmania, why I've been

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studying this problem of the Australian UFO sightings.

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It comes to this, I've spent about 12-13 months in the States in interviewing witnesses in

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key cases attempting to unravel this very puzzling and very intriguing mystery.

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One of the questions that keeps coming up is the question of are there sightings of

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essentially the same type in other parts of the world?

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Well it turns out that there are large numbers of reports in the publications of various

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private UFO investigating groups in England, America, Australia, France and so on that quite

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clearly indicate that but certainly as a scientist I am not entirely happy with taking hearsay

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evidence and I've been down here in Australia interviewing witnesses to find out for myself

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in direct face-to-face or in some cases phone interviewing exactly what happened in individual

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cases and what the credibility of the witnesses is, how witnesses may be and thoroughly the

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cases have been checked and so on down the line.

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And just to very briefly indicate what I've found in that investigation, it's this, the

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picture in Australia with respect to UFO sightings, observations of unconventional objects,

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maneuvering sometimes quite close to ground, sometimes within tens to hundreds of feet of

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very credible, reliable observers is just not appreciably different in Australia, New Zealand

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and Tasmania from what it is in the States, very strong similarity.

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There's just a little bit of evidence that indicates to me there may even be a few more

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sightings per square mile or per capita here than in the States but I wouldn't stand firmly

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on that feeling that I've gotten.

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One thing I have noticed is that lots of witnesses after 15 or 20 or 30 minutes of interviewing

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them bring up the point that several other friends of theirs have also seen objects at close range.

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Sometimes I've been able to check these, sometimes I just put it aside as evidence that there

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are other reports.

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The thing I've been doing is taping, I have about 10,000 feet of tape I noticed while

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I'm listing up and have interviewed about 70 Australians or New Zealanders.

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I've been down to Hobart, Tasmania, some extremely interesting cases in Tasmania and the problem

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is to try to find out what has happened in these cases.

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There's a great deal of reluctance to report them, that's exactly the same in the States

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as it seems to be down here.

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People have been ridiculed and made fun of by official groups, by press and radio and television

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and scientists too.

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There's been a great deal of completely unbiased, I emphasize that, scourning and scoffing about

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this problem and that's driven the problem underground, just the same kind of comments.

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You ask people, did you ever report it to the United States Air Force or down here, did you

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report it to the RAF?

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And the answer is typically no.

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Did you report it to the press?

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Well sometimes it did and one woman that I interviewed not so long ago pointed out that she

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described the case in some detail and reported her after why she didn't use more water in

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what she's been drinking.

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She was quite incensed and I would agree with that.

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This whole attitude of vertical has been engendered and I'm afraid greatly encouraged by the

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American Air Force investigation, Project Blue Book, which has been in operation for about

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14 years and which is presented certainly within the States and I've learned down here,

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regarded quite highly in other parts of the world and that's completely unjustified.

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I've taken an extremely good look at the official Project Blue Book investigation and to put

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briefly, it's been done superficially and by persons of extremely low scientific competence.

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It has to be regarded as essentially zero.

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It is not a scientific investigation.

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For instance, when I got started looking at this problem intensively about a year ago and

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got in there, it became a great surprise to me to find out that Project Blue Book, the

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American UFO investigation headquarters project consists of a major, a sergeant and a secretary.

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Imagine that.

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When you contrast that with the kind of press releases that are put out about the great

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expertise that's used, the thorough investigations and the indications that only 2 or 3% of

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unknowns and probably those would be explained, the Air Force insists, if they had a little

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more data.

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When you contrast the pronouncements, the assurances that there's nothing to it, with

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the very low level of which it's actually been investigated, when you compare the official

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explanations with the details of the reports and then go back and check them yourself as

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I've done, you end up, as I have ended up, with a conclusion that this problem has been

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completely lost sight of in America and perhaps it's not unjustified to suggest that in other

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parts of the world, the large amounts of money that seem to be at the disposal of our Air

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Force are misconstrued as indicating we've probably done a very large, very extensive,

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very thorough study of the problem.

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That is absolutely incorrect.

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Well, the type of sightings that are on record, thousands of cases in the U.S. involves cigar

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shaped objects, discs, hovering, sometimes at very low altitude.

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There's a wide range of other phenomena.

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It won't take time to give you all the details.

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There are many inexplicable, scientifically inexplicable baffling phenomena, very high

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accelerations, sometimes high speed objects moving without any obvious sonic booms, though

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I hasten to interject that sometimes there are unexplained sonic booms that could be UFOs.

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Many peculiar luminous phenomena and some of them down in Australia will really baffle

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every scientist who ever takes a look at these.

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It's the same thing in the United States, but mainly cigar shaped objects and disc shaped

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objects, and maneuvering in our airspace.

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And written off by official groups as non-existent, just as if it was a lot of nuts seeing things,

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a lot of people who can't be trusted.

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When you go out and talk to the people, you find that yes, there are some, you know, some

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incompetent people who have seen something and haven't quite identified it.

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There are certainly nuts.

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Certainly in the United States there's a very annoyingly visible cultist crackpot friends

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that's grown up around the problem and that discolors it and puts a lot of scientists off.

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Very true.

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And there are completely sincere misidentifications of, you know, planets and balls, wall lightning,

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fireballs, luminous phenomena one type another, even aircraft and so on.

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And experienced investigators such as those that have been working in Sydney and Melbourne

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and Tasmania and other parts of the world, these are private investigating groups, not

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the official groups.

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The official groups, it's very hard to know what to say about them.

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They come out with such outrageous, absurd explanations that one is really hard put to

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know how to sort that out.

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But these are sightings that are being investigated include a lot of quite unconventional phenomena

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that are not any product of our technology or Australia or Russian or English technology.

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They are not plasma phenomena.

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They are not sun dogs and pelicans and all the rest of the things that one hears about.

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They are beyond the present pale of science and they're being ignored by science, being

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ignored by official groups.

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And that has got to change very, very rapidly.

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Question arises, what are these UFOs, the ones that passed the test of not being put

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aside as fireballs and planets or what could they be?

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And that of course is the ultimately important question.

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Not easy to offer an answer.

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One can only consider hypotheses, guesses, big gifts in front of all of them.

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But when you look at these various hypotheses, psychological, advanced technology, hoax,

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fabrication, fraud, poorly understood, geophysical phenomena, you run through all of those.

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This is certainly what I've done in the past year of checking.

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You find yourself ending up with the seemingly observed, seemingly improbable hypothesis.

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These things may be coming from somewhere else.

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And just where that is is a great, big question mark.

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All that we know about the astronomy and planetary meteorology of the solar system seems to argue against

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a planetary, as an intra-solar system, origin of the objects.

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All that we know about the structure of the galaxy makes quite clear that the next nearest source

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of origin is quite an embarrassing number of light years away.

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And when you confront that distance and look at it in terms of present-day terrestrial technology of propulsion,

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we're just beginning, of course, so to speak, we're just beginning in that business on Earth.

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And that has to be kept in mind.

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But when you look at it in terms of present-day or foreseeable propulsion techniques,

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it's very, very baffling, essentially not possible to explain how any kind of objects, surveillance probes,

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or what have you, could be got into the Earth's environment from an extra solar,

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that is, across interstellar distances.

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But the rub there, the thing to keep your eye on seems to me, is the proviso in terms of our present knowledge,

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or foreseeable technology.

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You've got to realize, and actually I find many laymen, I really find laymen more aware of this than some fellow scientists,

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they are more sensitive to it, you have to realize that given another 100 years or 1000 years,

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terrestrial technology will be an entirely different thing from what it is now,

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it's a safe extrapolation because you have only to look back 100 years,

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things like radio, television, lasers, nuclear fusion, fission,

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countless other technological devices and systems that we take for granted now,

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or of course incredible, 100 years ago, and 100 years is just nothing,

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just a twinkling of an eye in galactic, even geologic time standards.

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So it is entirely conceivable, like it's almost probable,

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that elsewhere in the galaxy are advanced civilizations.

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In fact, this is very, it becomes very respectable to say this nowadays,

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it's generally granted by astronomers that far from here in the reaches of the galaxy,

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there must be other societies that are essentially sentient beings,

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whose technologies have swept far beyond ours,

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but what nobody grants, and what everybody stalls on and blocks their further thoughts on,

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with respect to UFOs, is nobody thinks they can get here.

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Well, I don't have any answers to that, I certainly want to emphasize that,

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I'm the slightest idea how anything would get here from say,

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Talsy to I or Epsilon or Ribbon I or anything, 10 or 15 light years away.

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But I'm afraid in looking at the situation, looking at Australian, American and other sightings,

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examining the credibility of the observers, looking at the content of these observations,

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I'm afraid that it boils down to craft of some kind, machine-like objects that have been around for 20 years,

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ignored by all of us scientists, swept aside and ridiculed,

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and nobody has any good knowledge of this problem.

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All these years have been wasted scientifically, we've got to get at this right away,

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we've got to get on a global scale,

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and with the best scientific talent, not just in the United States or not just in Australia,

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but the world's best scientific talent has to get on that.

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I spoke along these lines only a short time ago, this summer,

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in the United Nations at the Outer Space Affairs Group,

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presented a statement to the Outer Space Affairs Group,

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urging immediate UN action on the problem,

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was very pleased to see that it had some effect,

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by the way, also sent copies of that statement to about 60 embassies in Washington,

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64 embassies, care of their scientific attachés,

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hoping to stimulate more interest in any and all parts of the world.

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I didn't get a chance to talk to Utat, I had a date to see him,

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but it was right in the middle of the US,

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and he had a security council crisis and he couldn't see me, I'm going to try again to see him,

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but only a very short time ago, a very interesting statement was made by Utat to Drew Pearson,

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saying that the problem of the UFOs,

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now this is the Secretary General of the United Nations speaking,

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saying that the problem of the UFOs is the greatest international problem,

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second only to the present one of the Vietnam War.

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I think that's very interesting, I tabled him from Australia when I heard that,

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by long distance phone call from San Francisco,

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I cabled Secretary General Utat and strongly endorsed his statement,

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except I expressed disagreement in my opinion,

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the UFO problem is the greatest scientific problem,

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the greatest international problem that stands before us,

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and I'm hoping to see it elevated to that status in a very great hurry.

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We've been listening to the American physicist Professor James E. McDonald at the University of Arizona.