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UFO? Pilot saw Jupiter, ice crystals, expert says

WASHINGTON (Reuter) -- An unidentified flying object sighted by a Japan Air Lines pilot in November probably was a cloud of ice crystals and the planet Jupiter, a veteran UFO investigator has concluded.

"This case is likely to become a classic in the UFO inventory because many people assume that a senior airline captain could never mistake a bright planet or other prosaic object for a UFO," said Philip Klass, retired senior editor of Aviation Week and Space Technology, who has investigated UFO reports as a hobby for more than 20 years.

Klass' findings appear in the summer issue of the Skeptical Inquirer, a publication of the

nonprofit Committee for Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal.

Klass' investigation was prompted by published reports that Capt. Kenju Terauchi saw a giant UFO while flying a Boeing 747 cargo airliner to Anchorage, Alaska, from Paris on Nov. 17.

The sighting seemingly was confirmed at the time by officials of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), who said their radar had picked up an unidentified blip in the 747's vicinity.

But the FAA also disclosed that Terauchi is a so-called "UFO repeater," who had reported two UFO sightings prior to Nov. 17 and two more in January, Klass said.

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