

HINDENBURG'S GHOST

By MICKEY McGUIRE

The pilot and crew of a charter jet flying from New York to Paris has reported an eerie encounter with the *Hindenburg* — the dirigible destroyed in a fiery explosion in 1937!

The jet's badly shaken pilot reported that he and his three-man crew maintained visual contact with the shimmering ghost ship for 11 minutes as it drifted aimlessly over the North Atlantic, 700 miles east of New York.

It's the second time in little more than three years that the ghost of the *Hindenburg* has been encountered over the Atlantic waters that it crossed for the last time more than a half-century ago.

At precisely 7:23 p.m., May 6, 1937, the great German airship exploded in flames as it docked at its mooring mast in a light rain at the U.S. Naval Air Station at Lakehurst, N.J., killing 35 of the 97 people aboard.

That nightmarish tragedy spelled the end of the dirigible's use for transatlantic passenger service and the magnificent zeppelins faded into history.

But in an exclusive report in

its issue of March 11, 1986, *The NEWS* reported that the cockpit crew of a New York-to-Rome cargo jet had sighted "a silvery cigar-shaped object" which they positively identified as the *Hindenburg*! And

just three weeks ago, charter pilot Marc Hersant, in a sworn statement to French aviation officials, reported that he and his crew had encountered the *Hindenburg* in the same area where the 1986 sighting was

made. "At first we thought it was a flying saucer or some kind of experimental aircraft," Capt. Hersant said. "It was night, but there was a good moon and as we got closer we could make out certain details.

"We could see very clearly that it was a dirigible . . . an enormous dirigible that could only have been the *Hindenburg*. After our first pass, we circled for another look.

"This time the identification was confirmed. It had a Nazi swastika on the tail and the number D-LZ129 on its side. That number was assigned by the German government to only one airship — the *Hindenburg*."

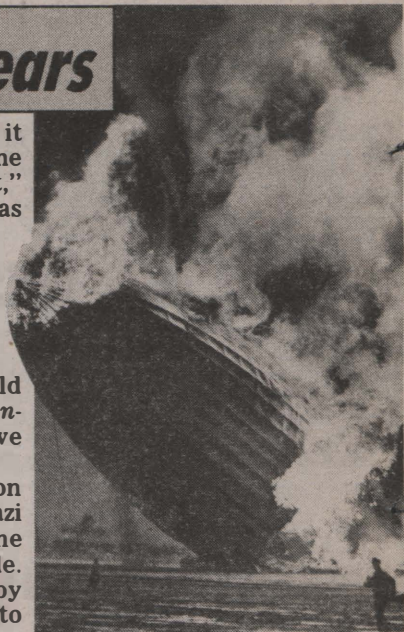
Hersant said he immediately tried to make radio contact with the FAA control tower in New York but got no response to his repeated calls.

"For some reason which I cannot explain, our radios were dead," the 51-year-old veteran pilot said. "They remained that way for about 15 minutes after we lost sight of the *Hindenburg*, then they resumed normal function."

Hersant said he, his copilot, engineer and navigator observed the spectral airship for about 11 minutes before it

SIGHTED OVER THE ATLANTIC!

... for the second time in 3 years



IN one of history's most spectacular disasters, the great German airship exploded on May 6, 1937, in Lakehurst, N.J.

slipped into the clouds and vanished.

"We cruised around the area where the *Hindenburg* should have emerged from the cloud," he said, "but we didn't see it. It just went into the cloud and stayed there. I have never believed in ghost ships, either on the sea or in the air. But I know what I saw that night . . . and what my crew saw."