

THEY'RE HEERE!

By JANE FURSE

Beam me up, Boris!

The Soviet news agency Tass yesterday reported a close encounter of the communist kind — a UFO sighting about 300 miles southeast of Moscow.

"Scientists have confirmed that an unidentified flying object recently landed in a park in the Russian city of Voronezh," the report said.

The official Soviet news service even announced that the scientists "also identified the landing site and found traces of aliens who made a short promenade about the park."

Witnesses described the space creatures as being between nine and 12 feet tall and resembling humans, "but with very small heads."

No indication on whether the space things were capitalists or communists.

The fact that the official Soviet news agency — which has been encouraged recently to become more adventurous — reported a UFO sighting seemed as remarkable as the pin-headed extra-terrestrials themselves.

"It's a definite change," said Michael Luckman, director of the New York Center for UFO Research.

"Ten years ago they used to say UFOs were a capitalist trick or device," he said.

But in a telephone interview yesterday with American reporters, a Tass duty officer stood by the story.

"It is not April Fool's today," he said.

Other examples of glasnostmania abound in other official publications, including sightings of other UFOs, abominable snowman-type creatures, and a tale about a young mystic who goes into a trance and flies about the cosmos.

A rash of mystics and ESP-artists also have invaded Soviet state television.

Even the Soviet military has gotten in on the act.

A major story, published recently in the magazine Soviet Military Review, discusses at length the concern over a UFO inadvertently starting a nuclear war between the United States and Soviet Union.

Yesterday's Tass report — believed to be the first published by the news service — resembled a story last summer in the daily newspaper Socialist Industry, which reported an encounter by a milkmaid and an alien in Central Russia's Perm region.

Soviets report several sightings of UFOs



ALIEN NATION: Can the Soviet Union expect to see an onslaught of alien abductions of young Russian lasses — or an onslaught of campy science-fiction flicks? Stay tuned, comrade — if you dare!



The report in Socialist Industry quoted a UFO specialist as saying a 26-foot-wide patch of burned ground near southern Moscow was probably caused by the landing of a UFO.

But in July, Tass disputed the report, saying firefighters believe a haystack simply caught fire and scorched the ground.