

U.F.O. Landing Is Fact, Not Fantasy, Russians Insist

By ESTHER B. FEIN
Special to The New York Times

MOSCOW, Oct. 10 — It is not a joke, nor a hoax, nor a sign of mental instability, nor an attempt to drum up local tourism by drawing the curious, the Soviet press agency Tass insisted today in discussions of what it called an extraterrestrial visit to southern Russia.

Residents of the city of Voronezh insisted today that lanky, three-eyed extraterrestrial creatures had indeed landed in a local park and gone for a stroll and that a seemingly fantastic report about the event carried Monday by the official press agency Tass was absolutely true.

"It was not an optical illusion," said Lieut. Sergei A. Matveyev of the Voronezh district police station, who said in a telephone interview that he saw the landing of the U.F.O. on Sept. 27.

Lieutenant Matveyev confessed that he had not actually seen the aliens, but said he saw the spaceship and "it was certainly a body flying in the sky," moving noiselessly at a very high speed and very low altitude.

'Anything Is Possible'

To be honest, Lieutenant Matveyev said, he was a little skeptical himself when he first saw the object. "I thought I must be really tired," he said. "but I rubbed my eyes and it didn't go away. Then I figured, in this day and age, anything is possible."

Using the sensationalist tone that has lately infected the once-staid Tass, the press agency today provided more details of the U.F.O. landing in Voronezh, a city some 300 miles southeast of Moscow.

According to Tass, and a report today in the newspaper Sovetskaya Kultura, two boys and a girl from a local school — Vasya Surin, Zhenya Blinov and Yuliya Sholokhova — were playing in a park on the warm evening of Sept. 27 when suddenly, at half past six, "they saw a pink shining in the sky and then spotted a ball of deep red color" about 10 yards in diameter. A crowd

'In this day and age, anything is possible.'

gathered, "and they could clearly see a hatch opening in the lower part of the ball and a humanoid in the opening."

A Stare Silences Boy

The three-eyed creature, about nine feet tall and fashionably dressed in silvery overalls and bronze boots and with a disk on its chest, disappeared, then landed and came out for a promenade with a companion and a robot.

The aliens seemed to communicate with each other, producing the mysterious appearance of a shining triangle, and activated the robot with a touch.

Terrified, a boy began to scream, but with a stare of the alien's shining eyes, Tass said, the boy was silenced and paralyzed.

After a brief disappearance, the three returned, but this time one of the "humanoids" had "what looked like a gun" by his side — a tube about two feet long that it directed at a 16-year-old boy. The boy, whose name was not given in the report, promptly vanished, but reappeared after the alien embarked in the ball.

Vladimir A. Moiseyev, director of the regional health department, said in a telephone interview that despite reports of widespread fear in the city, none of the witnesses had applied for medical help. But he said that "certainly we are planning to examine the children." There was no explanation why, with the passing of two weeks, such an examination had not yet taken place.

Mr. Moiseyev, like other authorities in Voro-

nezh, the editors of Tass, and indeed many of its readers, treated the report as a serious scientific phenomenon. No extra men are assigned to patrol the area because the department is short-handed, said the duty officer at the local Interior Ministry department, who identified himself only by his last name, Larin, but he said troops would be dispatched "if they appear again."

The Tass correspondent covering the case of the mysterious visitors to Voronezh, Vladimir V. Lebedev, seemed insulted that anyone would treat the story with anything but the full seriousness that it was given by the agency.

In a telephone interview, Mr. Lebedev described conversations with dozens of witnesses and with experts who had examined the evidence and spoken to the children. He said there were about three landings of the U.F.O. between Sept. 23 and Sept. 29.

In the latest development, not yet reported by Tass, Mr. Lebedev said that Genrikh M. Silanov, head of the Voronezh Geophysical Laboratory, today asked the children to draw what they had seen.

Drawings Said to Be Similar

Though isolated from one another, he said, the children all drew a banana-shaped object that left behind in the sky the sign of the letter X. Such descriptions, Mr. Silanov said, were reported as typical of U.F.O.'s in a 1976 article in the now defunct American magazine Saga. Mr. Silanov said today that a rock that was reportedly found at the site and described as being not something found on earth was actually a form of hematite, which is found in various parts of the Soviet Union.

While not a witness himself, Mr. Lebedev said he had visited the site. "The traces were still seen," he said. "I could see holes of a clear shape that resembled the footprints of an elephant."

He said his reports from Voronezh would continue.

NY Times 11 Oct 1989 Jim Riecken

NY Daily News 10 Oct 1989

Close encounters of the Soviet kind

By JOHN IAMS
The Associated Press

MOSCOW — They've got giant bodies, tiny heads and, according to the official news agency, Tass, "They're heeere!"

Tass reported yesterday that scientists have confirmed the landing of an alien spaceship in the Russian city of Voronezh, 300 miles southeast of Moscow.

It was the latest strange tale to emerge from the official Soviet media, which under the policy of *glasnost*, or openness, have recently told of other sightings of unidentified flying objects and alien creatures.

"Scientists have confirmed that an unidentified flying object recently landed in a park in Voronezh," Tass said in a dispatch.

"They have also identified the landing site and found traces of aliens who made a short promenade about the park."

A robot, too

Tass said residents saw a large shining ball or disc hovering over the park. They reported that the UFO landed and up to three creatures similar to humans emerged, accompanied by a small robot.

"The aliens were 3 or even 4 meters (9 to 12 feet)

tall, but with very small heads," the news agency quoted witnesses as saying.

The report, which did not give the date of the purported landing, said onlookers were "overwhelmed with a fear that lasted for several days."

The report was similar to a story last summer in the daily newspaper Socialist Industry, which told of a purported close encounter between a milkmaid and an alien in central Russia's Perm region.

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— Tass quoting witnesses

OCT 10 1989 NY Daily News Jim Riecken

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