

Scientists doubtful about tale

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COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — While scientists are skeptical about tales that a 9-foot-tall, three-eyed extraterrestrial made a 16-year-old Soviet boy disappear and reappear, a Columbus researcher says it may be true.

The Soviet news agency Tass reported last week that an alien landed recently in the city of Voronezh, adding fuel to the debate over whether aliens from outer space are fact or fantasy.

The account of the three-eyed alien's confrontation with a terrified teen-ager was "confirmed" by a newspaper in the area, Tass reported.

Columbus UFO researcher Don Jernigan, however, says there's a good chance the Soviet story is true, and that it is one of the thousands of times aliens have visited Earth.

"Nobody's been listening" to UFO researchers' claims, but that will change now, said Jernigan, who is also president and founder of the Phenomenon Investigation Committee.

"I think this Soviet report will give credibility to this phenomenon," Jernigan said. "People will have to give this a lot more serious attention because Tass is the Soviet Union's official news agency, and they don't have a reputation for playing jokes. So I would assume this incident has a pretty good basis."

But Paul Kurtz, chairman of the Buffalo-based Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal, discounts the report.

"What's happening in the Soviet Union since glasnost lifted press censorship is a National Enquirer-type mentality setting in there," said Kurtz, who visited the Soviet Union in July.

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