

FAX MEMO

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TO: National Research Council  
Fax 952-6602  
Attn. Dr. Brian Andrew, Herzberg Institute

FROM:



REF: Unusual celestial sighting

15 June, 1994

I saw at 8.02 p.m. EST June 14th an unusual thing, likeliest re-entering satellite debris, but I thought you'd want to know if there's a 1% chance of its being a meteorite. This fax was drafted about 9 p.m. June 14, and we spoke by phone 8.30 a.m. June 15.

While driving on the Queensway in Ottawa, eastbound, at the Lynx baseball stadium, I saw in the sky what because of its movement suggested a crashing aircraft, then after a fraction of a second a pyrotechnic. It appeared about 10 degrees to my left i.e. on a bearing of about 080 degrees true. It fell (apparently) to earth extraordinarily fast (faster than an aircraft would dive) at about 10 deg. from the vertical. It was visible for less than two seconds, possibly only one second. The weather was clear, the sun (in the west) well above the horizon, blue sky, no clouds near the phenomenon.

What I actually saw was a short brilliant yellow streak travelling behind a falling fireball, brighter and apparently wider than its trail. Unexpectedly, in the short time it was visible the fireball flared up or glowed extra-brightly twice.

The main thing that impressed me was its apparent speed, first suggesting it was a pyrotechnic within a mile or two, and then its brightness. But even if someone wanted to fire a pyrotechnic in bright sunlight, no such gadget would be designed with such short-lived illumination, or to travel downwards so fast -- especially if it was 10 or 100 miles distant, not one. I suppose satellite debris is the likeliest cause.

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(613) 822-0734 PAGE.001