

Ancient Astronauts Modern Mysteries

JOHN A. KEEL

KNOW-NOTHING AIR FORCE

If you are a regular reader of SAGA magazine you know more about flying saucers than the U.S. Air Force. The reason is simple enough. The American public has not been telling the U.S.A.F. the truth about UFOs. And when a witness was bold enough to try to give the Air Force the details of his or her experiences, they were usually ignored or, as in the days of Project Blue Book, their report was consigned to the notorious "Crackpot file." But SAGA's many writers and investigators have listened carefully to UFO witnesses and recorded their experiences in these pages. Some of their stories have been, admittedly, far out . . . but UFOs are a far out subject and encompass all kinds of eerie manifestations which border on the supernatural.

In 1967 we reported that our own preliminary studies of sightings revealed a definite correlation between UFO "flaps" and fluctuations of the Earth's magnetism. The Air Force never bothered to investigate this interesting facet. Even the numerous private UFO organizations tended to ignore this finding, convinced that UFOs were from outer space and were in no way related to the Earth's own magnetic field.

Now, 7 years after our scientific scoop, Dr. C. Poher, a leading scientist at *Centre National d' Etudes Spatiales* in Toulouse, France, has published a formidable study comparing flying saucer sightings with geomagnetic disturbances. Using 635 French sightings from the year 1954 (there was a major UFO wave in France that October), he compared the UFO activity with the scientific data on the disturbances of the Earth's magnetic field for the same period. The peak magnetic disturbance in 1954 occurred simultaneously with the UFO wave! Or, as Dr. Poher put it in cautious scientific terms, "There was a good statistical correlation between disturbances of the Earth's field and UFO observations during one month in the remarkable year 1954 . . ."

In short, when the Earth's magnetism goes slightly off balance, UFOs begin to appear in great numbers. This does not mean that UFOs produce the magnetic disturbances, but rather that magnetic disturbances produce UFOs. There is already abundant scientific literature on the strange spheres of light which appear in the sky immediately before, during, and after major earthquakes. This is certainly a related phenomenon.

However, this is not an explanation for UFOs. They are not mere sparks of static electricity or plasmoid energies cast into the

sky by grinding earthquake faults or magnetic anomalies. There were scores of UFO landings in France in October 1954, and many occupant sightings. Entities clad in space suits would certainly not be generated by natural phenomenon.

It may be that UFOs become more visible to human eyes during magnetic disturbances; that the subtle forces of magnetism have a mysterious influence on some human brains.

MAGNETIC STORMS

At infrequent intervals, parts of the Earth are engulfed in magnetic storms that are often related to sunspot activity. These storms interfere with radio waves, telephone transmissions, and have even caused a number of major power failures. There is also a leap in lightning activity and a sharp increase in deaths by lightning during these storm periods. Some lightning bolts go from the Earth to the sky, blasting out holes in the ground at their point of origin. Because UFO activity also increases during these storms, some investigators mistakenly regard the lightning scars as UFO evidence.

As we have noted in previous columns, sudden increases in UFO sightings are frequently accompanied by equally bizarre serpents, tall hairy monsters, and even dinosaurs. Psychic phenomena also enjoys sudden upsurge during the magnetic aberrations. Poltergeists begin to move furniture around. Ghosts and goblins have a field day. Cemeteries in the affected areas are haunted by strange lights and weird noises. Obviously all of these things are interrelated in some mysterious manner.

During the mild magnetic storm of May 1973, the author's television set suddenly began picking up programs from Florida—1,000 miles away. UFO sightings increased dramatically in the northeast that month and a number of tall, hairy monsters suddenly appeared—and disappeared—around the country. Severe storms on the Sun perplexed scientists and were the subject of intense study by our Skylab astronauts. The storms were followed by the spectacular UFO wave of October 1973, with the activity occurring almost exactly 19 years after the great French October wave of 1954. A study conducted by the Bell Telephone laboratories a few years ago of the phenomena recorded by Charles Fort in the 1920s, found that Fortean events tend to recur on a large scale every 19 years.

PROJECT GARP

Beginning in 1966, scientists from Munich's Max Planck Institute have been

quietly collaborating with NASA on a project to map the Earth's magnetic field. Over the last decade hundreds of rockets have been fired into the upper atmosphere where they release huge clouds of barium gas. These gases become ionized and glow brightly as they drift along the magnetic currents like iron filings around a horseshoe magnet. Although the project has cost millions of dollars it has received remarkably little publicity. Barium rockets have been sent up from Australia, northern Sweden, Canada, and even from Easter Island off the coast of Chile. The experiments have produced very few spurious UFO reports because most witnesses think they are seeing some kind of natural phenomena . . . like the Northern Lights . . . or that they are watching fireworks.

In the summer of 1974, scientists from 66 nations participated in a massive new project on the Earth's equator. Scores of ships laden with scientific equipment, and specially designed research submarines and airplanes, fanned out over thousands of square miles of ocean to study the Earth's magnetism and atmospheric phenomena. Known as the Global Atmospheric Research program (GARP), the project involves the launching of special satellites, cloud studies, and underwater exploration to a depth of 5000 feet. It cost \$53 million.

Like the barium cloud experiments, Project GARP has received very little publicity. But obviously many nations, and countless scientists, are deeply concerned with our magnetic and atmospheric problems. We have spent—and will continue to spend—enormous amounts of tax dollars on these semi-secret explorations of the Earth's hidden mysteries. Even the Soviet Union kicked in \$18 million for GARP.

For years Chester Gould's *Dick Tracy* comic strip carried an incongruous little box containing the words, "The nation that rules magnetism will rule the universe." Perhaps Gould knew something we don't.

WHY WE SEE UFOS

Why do we see flying saucers? Because, like Mount Everest, they are there is the usual simplistic answer. Unfortunately, it isn't that easy. Some people see several UFOs during their lifetime. Others living in the same geographical area never see anything. According to various surveys and polls, about 15 percent of the population also see ghosts and strange phantoms. The UFO phenomenon is just now being explored statistically by a handful of scientists, but it is apparent that an equally small percentage

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ANCIENT ASTROS

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see UFOs or have the ability to see them. This does not mean that UFOs are hallucinations in the sense that the pink elephants that hound drunks are hallucinations. They may be hallucinations of a more complex order, created in certain minds by unusual magnetic conditions. Our brains are, after all, only biological radio receivers. Some people enjoy exceptional reception and experience extrasensory perception. It is possible that an outside force can tune into some minds, bypass the normal visual and auditory channels, and broadcast images and voices directly to those minds. When the

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people who have such minds are standing in an unusual magnetic field they may be particularly receptive to paranormal impressions and experiences. So we have to learn to separate such experiences into 2 categories: the objective and the subjective.

A subjective experience is when a person is alone in a field in some remote area and sees a saucer land and discharge a 10-foot-tall monster with 4 arms (there have been such reports). Neither the monster nor the object leaves behind any footprints or other traces. We just have the witness's subjective report.

An objective report consists of a clear sighting made by several different people scattered over a wide area. They all see and report essentially the same thing. The object is picked up on radar and may even be pursued by an Air Force plane or a police car.

Actually, in my personal investigations in some 20 states, I found that truly objective reports were exceedingly rare. The majority of all low level reports are subjective.

In 1967, I expressed my concern in SAGA that the ground level evidence (holes, burned areas, and so on) had been grossly neglected by the UFO investigators who were primarily concerned with proving the extraterrestrial origin of the objects. Since then a few people have made an effort to collect and study such evidence, but it is still disappointingly inconclusive.

As a private pilot I have been particularly interested in the numerous radar sightings of UFOs. I have visited, at the Pentagon's invitation, huge military radar installations,

and have interviewed radar operators at many airports. You have probably seen one or more UFO reports that mentioned a radar sighting by a meteorologist who was using radar to plot weather fronts. These are especially puzzling since weather radar sets are tuned to pick up clouds instead of solid objects. Apparently some of our UFOs have the consistency of clouds. Hardly strong evidence for visitors from outer space.

Since the phenomenon is magnetic, or is produced by a magnetic stimulus, it is not surprising that it can produce radar and radio manifestations, and, like the induced hallucinations of some human witnesses, such manifestations cannot be accepted at face value.

Dr. J. Allen Hynek, an astronomer, has said repeatedly that UFO witnesses themselves should be carefully tested and studied. Today a number of medical doctors, psychiatrists, and parapsychologists are conducting such studies. Other scientists have been working to determine the effects of electromagnetic waves on the human body and mind. Eventually these qualified investigators may succeed where a generation of astronomers and physicists have failed. They may solve part, if not all, of the fascinating UFO mystery. Their solution will surprise a great many people but SAGA readers can nod sagely and say, "Oh, I read all about that years ago." ★