

NEW ZEALAND

Invasion of UFOs

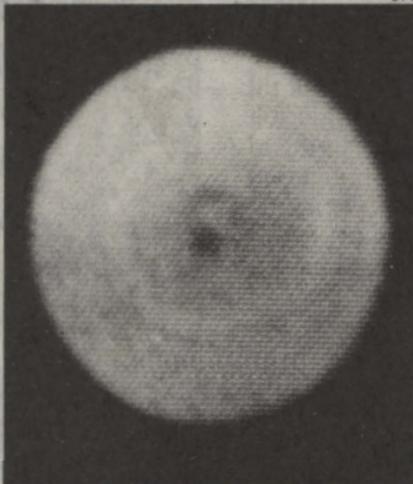
Or maybe very large fireflies?

Early last month it was the Italians who were excited about unidentified flying objects spotted over Milan and Rome; some saw a glowing disc of light and others "an enormous beam of green light" shooting across the horizon. Within a fortnight the mysterious objects had apparently circled the globe. This time the reports of UFOs streaking through the sky and even buzzing aircraft came from faraway New Zealand. Moreover, the New Zealand sightings were a first of sorts: the pulsating discs were tracked by radar and filmed by an airborne television crew.

First seen three weeks ago by cargo-plane pilots, and simultaneously watched on airport radar at Wellington, the white lights that "moved at tremendous

speed" stayed around long enough to be filmed. Shortly after takeoff one night, the captain of an air freighter carrying a TV crew saw lights that "kept accelerating to get close to us and then falling back." Ground control radar, said TV Reporter Quentin Fogarty, "told us we had one on our tail. Then it was joined by four or five more." The New Zealand air force sent aloft a plane, but the pilot saw nothing except the lamps of Japanese fishermen searching for squid. Then last week another TV crew filmed a brilliant object "like a volcano" that flashed a pulsating light across the predawn sky.

The widely differing descriptions of the "saucers" were hardly more confusing than the explanations offered by experts, who variously declared that the lights were birds heading inland to mate, ball lightning, the planet Venus or meteorites. The matter may or may not be resolved when Britain's House of Lords rouses to debate the flying saucer issue next week. ■



TIME "Saw 15, 78"

Geet Hansard 21 !!!