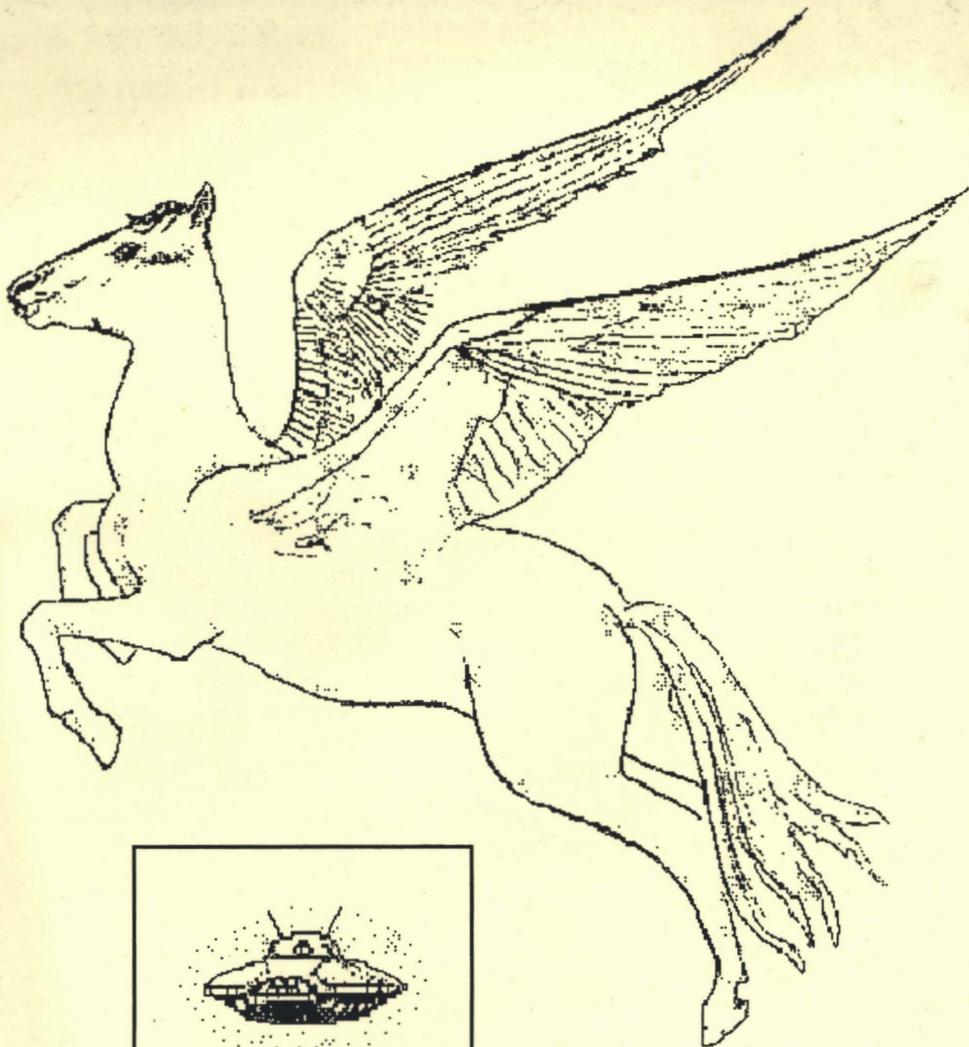


1814

PEGASUS



Surrey Investigation Group into Aerial Phenomena

PEGASUS

Volume 18, #4

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WHY SIGAP ?

At the heart of every significant centre of power on this planet there are a few men, and possibly also some women, who know beyond the shadow of a doubt that humans are not the only sentient beings in this universe, or even on this world we call our own.

Many years ago a decision was made jointly by these powerful people that international society as then constituted could not continue to function in ways they approved if this knowledge became widely known and accepted. Their secret was therefore to be defended, as the notice boards at Area 51 remind us, by lethal force if it was at any time threatened, and so it has been and still is.

But as Abraham Lincoln declared: *"You may fool all the people some of the time; you can even fool some of the people all the time; but you can't fool all of the people all the time."*

SIGAP, and similar groups world wide, is for the people who are not fooled. When the truth is out, as one day it will inevitably be, they may yet have a part to play.

G.M.

Following the recent passing of the British Freedom of Information Act, there have been a number of National newspaper stories featuring recently released or declassified UFO reports and documents. A selection is repeated below:

From the Daily Mail 25th January 2005:

Britain's X-Files – Revealed, UFO sightings kept secret for decades by Ministry of Defence

By Robin Yapp, Science Reporter

WHETHER you believe in UFOs or not, these are not the sort of witnesses you can easily dismiss as cranks.

An RAF lieutenant, a police superintendent and a British Airways pilot are among those whose close encounters are detailed in secret Ministry of Defence documents just released.

Britain's X-Files, as they are being referred to, have been published to comply with Freedom of Information laws which came into force on January 1.

Among thousands of sightings is the one reported by Flt Lt A. M. Wood and two non-commissioned officers at RAF Boulmer in Northumberland in July 1977.

They saw 'bright objects hanging over the sea' around three miles from the coast at a height of around 5,000ft.

'The objects separated,' says the report. 'Then one went west of the other. As it manoeuvred it changed shape to become body-shaped with projections like arms and legs.'

Men positioned at the RAF station were able to observe the objects for 1 hour and 40 minutes before they disappeared. The report describes Flt Lt Wood as 'sober and reliable' and shows that the objects were also picked up by military radar.

Earlier the same year, on April 8, a Superintendent Cooper, of West Yorkshire Police, reported seeing a UFO in the form of a 'bright, silver light' while on duty in a patrol car in Laisterdyke.

'At first I thought this was a bright star,' he says. 'It was low in the sky, a long distance away. Then I thought that this light was moving.' He continued to watch it as it moved over a series of rooftops before it

'suddenly vanished'.

There were no supportive sightings.

In July 1976 the captain of a British Airways Tri-Star on a return flight from Portugal told air traffic controllers of 'four objects - two round brilliant white, two cigar-shaped' 18 miles north of Faro.

Fighter jets were scrambled from Lisbon as a precaution and shortly afterwards Tri-Star crew on two other flights in the same area reported similar sightings.

Not all reports are taken seriously by MoD officials.

Sightings near Derby in 1977 were discounted because witnesses had been 'imbibing at the local hostelry'.

There is also a new perspective on one of the most widely discussed of all UFO incidents - the sighting reported by American airmen in a foggy Rendlesham Forest in Suffolk on Boxing Day 1980.

They reported an electronic wailing which they at first feared was a crashing plane or helicopter Lieutenant Colonel Charles Halt recorded what his men had seen as being 'metallic in appearance and triangular in shape' and illuminating the entire forest with a white light.

Witnesses said animals on a nearby farm went into a frenzy and USAF security patrolman Larry Warren described feeling nauseous as he saw three 'aeronaut entities' 3ft tall and resembling 'kids in snowsuits'.

Such was the excitement among UFO enthusiasts that the incident became known as 'Britain's Roswell' - in reference to the famous incident in New Mexico in 1947 when a flying saucer is said to have crash-landed in the desert.

But what documents just released by Suffolk Police reveal is that two years ago Kevin Conde, an airman at RAF Woodbridge in Suffolk, claimed he had faked the Rendlesham Forest incident as a practical joke on a friend.

He said he had turned a battered American police car into a spacecraft by sticking red and green lenses on it and driving around in circles in fog with a PA loudspeaker going and lights flashing.

Files on the Suffolk Police website reveal further details of what went on that night. They show that the airbase contacted the police command desk to report: 'We have a sighting of some unusual lights in the sky, have sent some unarmed troops to investigate, we are terming it as a UFO at present'

The following day a second report from officers at the scene states: 'We have found a place where a craft of some sort seems to have landed.'

But UFO spotters will be disappointed to learn that it adds: 'There were three marks in the area which did not follow a set pattern. The impressions made by the marks were of no depth and could have been

made by an animal.'

An MoD report sent from RAF Cosford on July 14, 1976, reported that a 66-year-old woman from Wolverhampton claimed to have seen a 'white, bar-shaped' object in the sky.

It added that she was married to a retired RAF pilot and he 'did not observe anything from his seated position'.

A man from Rotherham reported four sightings to his local radar station on August 7 and 8, 1976. But the MoD raises a metaphoric eyebrow with the comment: 'He evidently runs a UFO sightings club and has been logging UFOs for three years.'

MOD COMES CLEAN AT LAST OVER THOSE LITTLE GREEN MEN

By ROBERT MATTHEWS, The Sunday Telegraph, February 13th 2005

While the world celebrates the apparent rapprochement between Israel and the Palestinians, a glimmer of hope can be detected in the long-running dispute between another two factions: the scientific community and believers in UFOs.

For more than half a century the debate over UFOs and whether they really are alien spacecraft has been characterised by wild-eyed zealotry and a refusal to listen to reasonable argument -- and that's just the scientists. Those who believe that UFOs really are alien spacecraft show a preference for conspiracy theories over critical reasoning.

Part of the problem has been the official attitude towards reports of UFOs, which has been decidedly sniffy. It is now clear that this has been a bit of a pose. Following a request made under the Freedom of Information Act, the Ministry of Defence last week released the details of more than 80 UFO reports made by military personnel and members of the public in the last year.

The MoD pointed out that it has thousands more reports on file - thus confirming the long-standing claims by UFO buffs that "the authorities" knew far more than they let on. It has to be said that the reports are risibly mundane: "strange lights in the sky" over Whitstable, a saucer-like object over Stoke on Trent, a "bright light" over Barry, South Wales. Indeed, some UFO enthusiasts now claim there is a new conspiracy in which only the ho-hum sightings are released, while the MoD keeps the juicy stuff to itself. Rather more interesting, however, was the official statement accompanying the release of the documents, in which the MoD declared that it remained "totally

open-minded" towards the issue of aliens and UFOs.

This seems a long way from the attitude of the Government working party which in 1951 dismissed the idea of taking UFOs seriously as "a singularly profitless enterprise". The new receptive attitude is in line with that taken by the authorities in a growing number of countries, including Belgium, Chile and France.

There are signs that the scientific community might also be getting over its aversion to the notion of aliens visiting Earth. In recent years, a number of academics have made public their frustration with the dismal level of debate on the subject, and have sought to rectify it. An independent group of American scientists is responsible for the first paper arguing for the existence of UFOs to appear in a serious academic journal in 25 years.

Writing in the *Journal of the British Interplanetary Society*, the group claims that advances in scientific knowledge have made the case for alien visitation stronger than many might think.

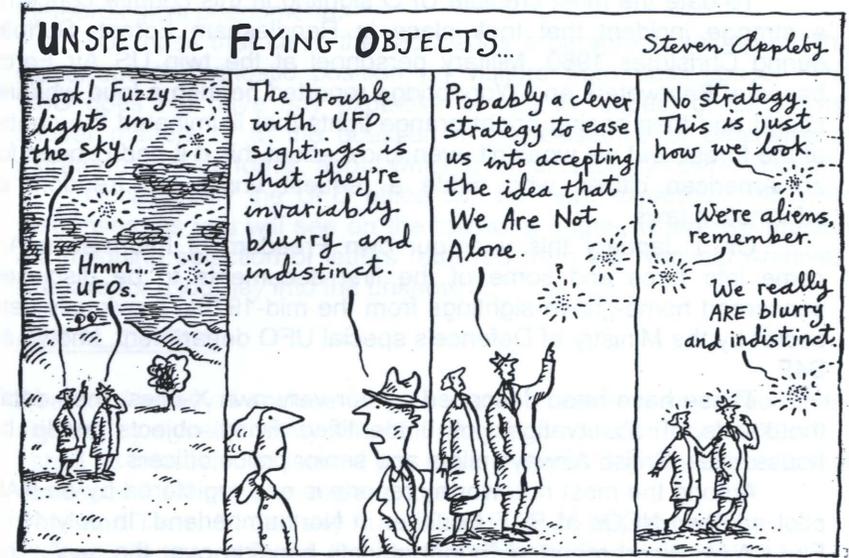
For example, sceptics have argued that, while life may well exist elsewhere in the universe, the probability that it is both intelligent and relatively close to Earth is extremely low.

Yet, as the authors of the paper point out, since the mid-1990s, several methods for faster-than-light travel have been put forward in serious physics journals, thus undermining the argument that the sheer size of the universe makes alien visitation implausible. The authors concede that while possible in principle, no practical scheme for faster-than-light travel has yet been put forward.

Even so, some advanced civilisation could have succeeded, which prompts the authors to point out another recent discovery. Last year a team of astronomers showed that stars capable of supporting life in our galaxy are typically a billion years older than the Sun. If so, this could mean that aliens may be as far ahead of us as we are in comparison to primordial bacteria. None of this proves that UFOs are real, of course, but it does show that some of the standard arguments used by sceptics do need sprucing up. Even so, for those of us taking a broadly agnostic stance the fact remains that there is still no compelling evidence that UFOs are alien craft.

Yet in the most disconcerting of all their arguments the authors of the JBIS paper claim that all those dodgy photographs and spooky encounters may be yet further evidence for the reality of aliens. They argue that all those brief encounters of the third kind may be part of a deliberate long-term strategy by the aliens to ease us all into accepting that we are not alone. Some scientists have argued that the proof of the existence of aliens could be very traumatic for human society.

Frankly, it is not half as worrying as discovering we are the target of a cosmic campaign run by little green spin doctors.



From *The Independent* On Sunday, 17th April 2005:

Introduction by Robert Verkaik, National Archives research by Daniel Poole

The British X-Files – Revealed at last the truth about the day aliens paid a flying visit to suburbia.

They've been locked away for years. Now the Freedom of Information Act has allowed access to a mountain of remarkable documents detailing UFO sightings across Britain. From the ambassador who spotted a pear-shaped object trailing golden sparks, to the engineer who saw an aerial circus' above next door's bungalow, we present extracts from our very own X-Files

Unidentified flying objects are still regarded as an American phenomenon. Stephen Spielberg's films *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and *ET* are born out of a culture deeply rooted in stories such as Roswell in 1947, when an alien spaceship is supposed to have crashed and its occupants captured by the US military.

In Britain we remain more sceptical about such things. The truth may well be out there but we want to see some pretty compelling

evidence first before we can say we are truly not alone.

To date the most credible UFO sighting in this country concerns a strange incident that took place in Rendlesham Forest, Suffolk, during Christmas 1980. Military personnel at the twin US Air Force bases at Bentwaters and Woodbridge reported hearing a loud whirring sound and then seeing bright orange lights that illuminated the centre of the forest. But we wouldn't even know about this if it hadn't been for an American citizen who made a request under US freedom of information laws.

On 1 January this year our own Freedom of Information Act came into force and some of the first documents to be disclosed concerned home-grown sightings from the mid-1970s, previously kept secret by the Ministry of Defence's special UFO department, known as S4F.

These have been described as our very own X-Files; they detail thousands of observations of unidentified flying objects made by housewives, British Airways pilots and senior police officers.

Among the most noteworthy reports is one registered by an RAF pilot and two NCOs at RAF Boulmer in Northumberland. In July 1977 Flt Lt A.M. Wood reported "bright objects hanging over the sea". The file adds that the officer said the closest object was "luminous, round and four to five times larger than a Whirlwind helicopter". The UFOs were reported to be three miles out to sea at a height of about 5,000ft.

The officer, whose report is supported by Cpl Torrington and Sgt Graham, said: "The objects separated. Then one went west of the other, as it manoeuvred it changed shape to become body-shaped with projections like arms and legs." The men who were positioned at the lookout post at the RAF station were able to observe the strange objects for 1 hour and 40 minutes.

At the same time a radar station detected the objects in exactly the same position as the men had observed them.

The MoD report describes Flt Lt Wood as "reliable and sober". It adds: "Two contacts were noted on radar, both T84 and T85, at RAF Boulmer. They were also seen on the Staxton Wold radar picture which is relayed to West Drayton... On seeing the objects on radar the duty controller checked with RAF West Drayton as to whether he could see the objects on radar supplied from RAF Staxton Wold."

Not all of the reports sent to the MoD are quite so credible. Many have an apologetic tone, perhaps conveying the observer's own sense of incredulity about what they believe they have seen.

In turn, officials working at the Ministry of Defence's UFO department courteously answer all enquiries with a standard letter reminding the author of the report that most unidentified flying objects

can be explained as weather balloons, falling satellites or unusual meteorological phenomena.

For those that can't, the MoD adds a paragraph setting out the Government's agnostic position on visitors from outer-space: "The MoD does not have any expertise or role in respect of UFO/flying saucer matters or to the question of the existence or otherwise of extraterrestrial life forms, about which it remains totally open-minded."

Occasionally the UFO office can be more expansive still in its responses, as you will see on the following pages, where we present an intriguing selection of letters retrieved from the National Archives. Prepare for a journey into the unknown...

AERIAL CIRCUS

Dear Mr Appleby: I enclose for your interest, details of an extraordinary sighting by myself and my wife on Friday night, 31 January [1975].

I shall be interested to learn if you have received any other reports that correspond with my own experiences.

Date and Time: 31 January from 22.20 to 22.25 approximately.

Place: 6 Richmond Road, Caversham Heights, Reading, Berkshire.

Weather: Clear moonless night, stars only visible. No ground wind, temperature falling but no frost.

Observers: (i) Mr Alan Edwin Lott, C. Eng., FIEE, FEERE, Civil Servant, AWRE, MOD (PE), Age 52.

(ii) Mrs Clarice Doreen Lott, Housewife, Age 50.

Details of observation: After spending a quiet evening at home I left the house at 22.20 approximately with my dog for a short walk. The dog stopped just outside the front gate and I casually looked around the firmament. I was surprised to see very bright lights in the sky to the east beyond the bungalow next door (No. 4) and after studying them for perhaps 10 or 15 seconds realised that I was watching something extraordinary.

I immediately returned to the house and told my wife to come outside and whilst she put on a coat I obtained a pair of 8x40 binoculars. I suppose that about half-a-minute elapsed between entering the house and coming out again.

On looking for the lights I discovered that they were moving slowly in a straight line almost exactly East to West and were now directly above my house.

It was clear to the naked eye that there were three extremely bright lights of an orange/yellow colour arranged as a large equilateral triangle. There were two other very small lights, one red and one white.

See Fig. 1 [pictured below]. All of the lights were steady with no flashing.

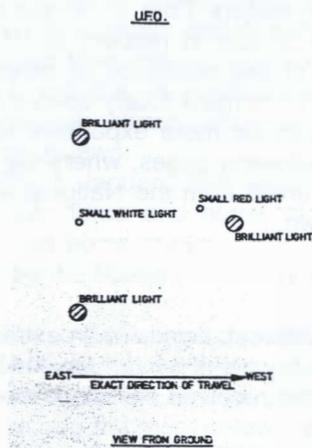


Figure 1

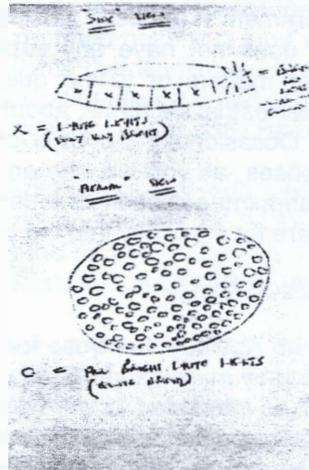


Figure 2

There were no beams of light as with searchlights, just the steady brilliant glare.

My wife continued to watch and I then trained my binoculars on the display. I was unable to see anything through the binoculars additional to that seen by the naked eye. I was most surprised at this; I had expected to see the dark outline of an aircraft with perhaps fuselage lights and perhaps efflux from a jet engine.

The separation of the lights suggested a very large body flying very low but the UFO was travelling so slowly that it could not have been any conventional aircraft. The sighting from start to finish lasted about five minutes, whereas the aircraft we see here are usually out of sight in about 15 seconds.

We watched the whole apparition steadily float into the distance and vanish silently behind houses and trees further down Richmond Road. I looked at my watch and it was 22.25.

The dog took no interest but sat waiting to be taken for his walk.

Comment: As a casual amateur astronomer I can categorically state that this was not any form of "heavenly body" or satellite.

Also, having lived at the above address for 18 years, I am fully conversant with all the types of aircraft that infest the airspace at Caversham and their appearance and sound.

I am quite unable to account in any way for this "aerial circus". It was quite unlike anything I have seen.

A. E. Lott

Atomic Weapons Research Establishment
Aldermaston, Reading, 3 February 1975

FRIGHTENING EVENT

Dear Sir: I am writing to you to report a rather strange happening which occurred on Friday, 31 October 1975.

Before going into detail I would like to say that I have written a letter to you before concerning the same subject. This was back in July (28th) 1975, but although it seemed a strange happening I accepted your explanation and thought no more of it.

However, since then I sometimes take a quick "glance" through my binoculars on a fine clear evening just to see if anything strange is around.

On Friday I was glancing at the night sky when I suddenly noticed a bright red light. It moved so erratically and so fast that there was no way in which it could be classed as an aeroplane.

Then quite suddenly the red light seemed to turn in flight as if to reveal its top. As this was in progress it changed to a mass of white lights.

Now it is hard to explain what this resembles, but if you can imagine an aerial view of one of those fairground merry-go-rounds with masses of light bulbs glowing, then this would be very much like what I saw.

I enclose a few rough sketches [figure 2]. I hope you will reply to this letter. I am a sensible married man. I am no space-mad "crank" or any other sort of fool. I would just like to know what on earth this frightening event could be.

Essex, 3 November 1975

INEXPLICABLE BLIP

Dear Sirs: I was advised by *name withheld* of the Information Branch, RAE Farnborough to write to you for information concerning anomalous radar returns (possibly) at the time and place stated below:

Time: 12.15 hrs

Date: Friday 23rd January 1976

Location: Watford Road, Wembley, Middx.

Object Seen: Large rotating ovoid hovering at approximately 1,000m.

I would be grateful if you could provide information that might explain the appearance of an object [pictured below].

27 March 1976



DIPLOMATIC INCIDENT

LOOSE MINUTE UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS

1. Attached is a copy of a letter, passed to us by the National Air Traffic Services, from the Air Attaché in Berne, enclosing a UFO report made by the British Ambassador to Switzerland and a news cutting.

2. Although the report expresses doubt as to whether the incident occurred on 14th or 15th of October, the report made by the Ambassador to RAF Manston, which was passed on to us, referred to the incident as being on 14th October. The news cutting refers to a sighting on 15th October by a Mr Frear, who did not make a report to S4F.

3. Although we do not normally undertake to advise observers of the possible identity of the object seen, we will in this case have to respond to the Ambassador's specific request to the Air Attaché to obtain comments. I should be very grateful therefore if you could suggest a possible explanation of this phenomenon.

Miss S. J. Jamieson

MOD, Whitehall, 22 November 1911

SIGHTING OF AN UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT (UFO)

At 6.45pm on the evening of either October 14th or 15th -- I regret that I cannot be more precise about the date -- I was driving from my house along Wassail Lane near the village of Rolvenden Layne in Kent when through my car windscreen I sighted, to the north of me, an object in the sky, at an inclination of some 18 or 20ft above the horizon, travelling fast from south to north and shaped somewhat like a flattened avocado pear. The blunt and leading end seemed to be rimmed horizontally by some sort of phosphor or bronze metal which shone quite distinctly. The general body of the object was emitting a pronounced bluish light and from the tapering or trailing end there was a stream of golden sparks. The whole sighting took only a matter of one or one-and-a-half seconds but my impression of what I had seen was so vivid that when a few minutes later I entered the "Ewe and Lamb" public house in Rolvenden Layne (for a well-deserved pint of

bitter after a hard day's work in the garden), I immediately announced to the landlord, Mr Joe Hoad, that I had just seen my first UFO.

I did nothing further about this until I saw a report about it in the *Kent Courier* of 28 October.

My interlocutor was polite enough but took care to say that I should not necessarily expect to hear anything further from the RAF. I can well understand why RAF Duty Officers say this to people who call in with reports of sightings of UFOs, e.g. because the report is a hoax or because the person making it is an unreliable witness or dotty or drunk. However I was certainly not drunk at 6.45 in the evening, nor am I dotty nor an unreliable witness. I should therefore be grateful if you can follow this strange story up a bit and see whether we can extract any comment from the competent authorities.

A. K. Rothnie, *British Embassy, Berne, 8 November 1977*

IT WAS SWIFT, IT WAS LARGE

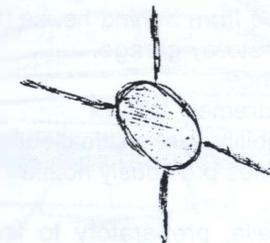
A report, 29 November 1976 early hours of Monday morning, about 3 a.m. It was barely light.

I awoke in my bed, facing the window (in the front bedroom of the house), and saw what I took to be the moon, and I thought -- what a bright moon; I then realised I had never seen the moon in this part of the sky before.

It was a quarter moon, then I saw it was moving.

It moved nearer, overhead in Guildford town direction. Coming from the right of the cathedral site. It wasn't all that high in the sky.

I heard a "high drone" as it neared. It was swift, it was large. It was round in body structure and *very brightly lit underneath*. I tried to absorb as much as possible before it passed from my view to the back of the houses.



The "underneath" from my view point looked like this [pictured above]. I could discern long thin legs from the body structure. It was very large. It was no plane. As it passed overhead, there was a flurry of air or

cloud around it. Next day I phoned the police, in case it had been reported to them. But no one had seen anything. I *did* see it.

Mrs J. H. Cleghorn, Guildford, Surrey, 9 December 1976

Dear Mrs Cleghorn: I am writing to thank you for your letter of the 9th December and the detailed account of the unidentified flying object which you saw during the night of the 28th and early morning of the 29th November.

As I explained, we cannot undertake to pursue our research beyond our defence interests.

You may, however, wish to know that over the past number of years sightings are considered to originate, in the main, from aircraft or the lights of aircraft being seen under unusual conditions, balloons and various meteorological phenomena as well as astronomical sightings, space satellites and space "junk".

I am sorry that I cannot assist you any further with any account on what you actually saw.

J. McBlane, MOD Main Building, London, 23 December 1976

BRIGHTER THAN THE MOON

Dear Sir: I am sending to you the particulars of a UFO that I saw in this region last night. I wonder if identification could be made.

I and my friend are amateur "star gazers" and have never before seen anything like this. It most certainly was not an aircraft, weather balloon, planet or star. Date: October 12th 1977 Time: 20.50 BST.

Duration: approx. one second

Description: spherical, brilliant white, very much brighter (about 10 times) than full moon on good night. No noise heard.

Position: Observed from forecourt of 3 Hampden Rise (350ft above mean sea level)

Position of UFO: Moved from behind house (No.2) and descended to disappear behind single-storey garage.

Range: No idea of distance.

Speed: Unknown but extremely fast.

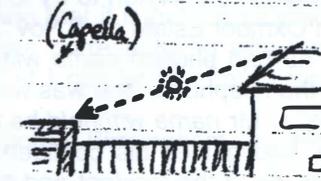
Conditions: Perfect visibility, just a little cloud very low in west.

Notification: No authorities previously notified.

I was sighting on Capella, preparatory to finding the planet Jupiter when suddenly a large, intensely white object flashed across my field of view, as in the diagram [pictured above].

It completely blotted out all stars in the neighbourhood and, although it was gone in one second, it could not have been a trick of the

imagination, as my eyes were stationery and the streetlamps are yellow. Meteors are ruled out because a disc was visible.



I would be grateful if you could inform me of your identification, if possible.

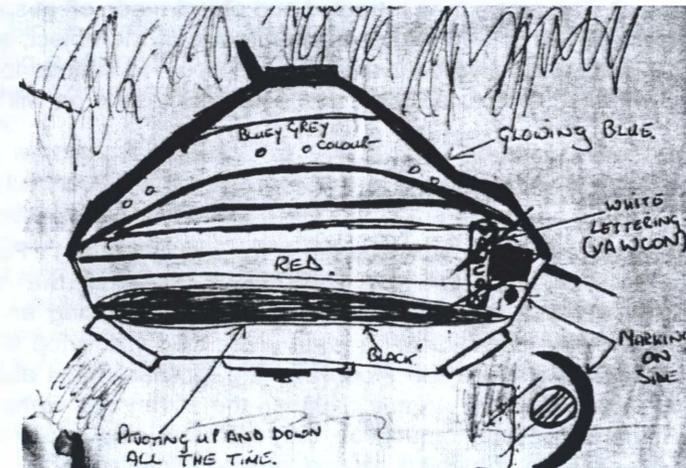
Mark Porter (age 15½) Royston, Herts, 13 October 1977

I, Peter Melling of 3 Hampden Rise do hereby confirm that my friend Mark was truly astounded at what he saw, and could find no terrestrial or astronomical explanation for this unusual observation *Peter Melling (Age 16¼)*

I NEARLY HAD KITTENS

Dear Sir: I enclose a sketch of the craft I saw [pictured below] on Friday morning 5th November at 6.21am. I am not doing this as a hoax and I don't want any publicity whatsoever or it going to the press; if it does, I will deny everything. I hope you will treat this matter in strict confidence.

Name withheld Huntingdon, Cambs, 10 November 1976



MOD note (by Mr H.E. Mackey): Further to RAF Wyton Signal 05133DZ Nov, I had asked RAF Wyton to try to obtain precise location of incident reported at Oxmoor Estate on 5 Nov '76.

Flt Lt Chapman said he had phoned *name withheld* on 10.11.76 and his mother answered the telephone. She was well spoken, and brought her son to the telephone. Mr *name withheld* had a broad local accent. After Flt Lt Chapman had gained his confidence, Mr *name withheld* was very willing to talk about the incident and himself. He seemed (to Flt Lt Chapman) a kindly likeable person. His voice sounded younger than his 29 years might suggest. He impressed Flt Lt Chapman as imaginative. He reads a lot, especially books on aviation.

The place of the incident was a playing field between Shapley Rd and Hartford Rd, two acres in area. It transpired that the incident occurring on 5 Nov was not the first time that Mr *name withheld* had sighted the object, the first occasion being about two weeks previously. He had again seen the object on the morning of 9 Nov.

Further Description of Object: Tank-like, rather square with dome-shaped superstructure, had white and blue lights. Main body of dark bluish-grey colour. Mr *name withheld* had impression of heat radiating from object.

Noise: Almost silent: thought he detected low-pitched hum. Dog ran into field. Object descended to about 12ft from observer, but did not actually land. A "sort of telescopic probe appeared" and seemed to be "probing the ground". At this juncture the object turned round and faced Mr *name withheld*. He was petrified and in his own words "nearly had kittens". The probe then retracted and object made off at speed.

Mr *name withheld* is now no longer frightened of the object, and has taken to looking for it on his walks with his dog. He intends to take a camera with him on future walks, and if he gets results he will contact Wyton.

A RATIONAL EXPLANATION

Dear Mr Mackey: Thank you very much for your letter of 11 February. Bearing in mind that you will have been given all the relevant information on the sighting, I take pleasure in enclosing an artistic impression of the occasion. The large white disc in the top left hand corner is intended to be the moon and the smaller object above the trees is intended to be Venus. Neither the moon nor Venus were visible to me at the time in question, they are strictly there to give some idea of how, in size, the object I saw appeared to me.

The object travelled downward, following the path of the dotted line. Compared with the objects I've included in the picture, you'll see how

"large" it appeared to be and considering the speed at which it moved, you'll appreciate my excitement and surprise at that time.

Let me finish by saying that it is not my intention to encourage you to involve yourself in time corresponding with me, but, if there is some simple explanation that I can know about I would appreciate hearing from you.

L.G.E. Campbell Harborne, Birmingham, January 1975

Dear Mr Campbell: Thank you for your recent letter. Although, as I explained, we cannot normally undertake to advise observers of the probable identity of the objects they see and kindly report to the Department, I am pleased to be able to give you some information in connection with your report of an unidentified flying object seen by you on 18 January this year. The under-mentioned Earth satellite vehicles (ESVs) were within 1,000km at the time of your sighting.

1 Name: ZOND4; **Slant range:** 558 km; **Azimuth:** 1,32 DEC; **Elevation:** 26.2 DEC; **Time:** 0035.

2 Name: Cosmos 460; **Slant range:** 878 km; **Azimuth:** 004 DEC; **Elevation:** 30.9 DEC; **Time:** 0035.

It seems probable that the object you saw was one of these vehicles.

H.E. Mackey

MOD, Whitehall, London, 20 February 1975

WITNESSED BY 12 OFFICE STAFF

Dear Sir: I telephoned Manston Airport, on Monday 19 January reporting a strange object in the sky. Although the person I spoke to sounded extremely bored, he did suggest I should send in all the details:

I was watching the sunset at VW Motors, Mansion Road. At about 16.05 I noticed a strange length of light very far off, in the north-west. It was quite high and moving about the same speed as a plane. It could have been a very long aircraft but to me the object was far too long. I think it was the reflection from the sun, which gave this object a flaming effect. I watched it from north-west to west until my view was blocked.

Still watching the sky, at 16.10 my colleagues and I saw a very small ball of light, again north-west. There were a few clouds about and my view was blocked for a couple of minutes. Then the speck was gone but a little to the north was an object much closer, at a very rough guess 10-15 miles off. It was bright yellow. Note: By this time the sun was red. The object was the size of about 30 large stars as we see them. It could rotate, i.e. it appeared lengthways, front-on and width-

ways. It left with a fair speed and disappeared altogether. The third sighting lasted from about 16.15 to 16.35.

The whole incident I have described was witnessed by 12 office staff, my supervisor and my boss. I trust you will look into it.

At a guess I would say that the object I saw was a research craft, measuring the atmosphere or something, but I find it more interesting to think that maybe I had seen my first UFO.

Name withheld, Ramsgate, Kent, 23 January 1976

NO, WE ARE NOT ALONE

Huge brains, two eyes and brilliant with their hands. A leading astronomer says aliens are terrifyingly like us...and we'll find them within ten years.

By Professor Barrie Jones – Professor of Astronomy, The Open University.
Source: Daily Mail, April 6th 2005

THESE days you don't hear much about UFOs. Reports of close encounters with little green men are rightly regarded as pure hokum. E.T. never got to phone home, it is generally accepted, because E.T. never landed here in the first place.

Yet the very big question remains: are we truly alone in the universe? I for one don't think we are. In fact, as a serious astronomical researcher, I am more convinced than ever that there is extraterrestrial life out there somewhere.

There is nothing particularly revolutionary in that view — it is widely shared by my colleagues — but what is new and exciting is that I am equally convinced we will be able to prove the existence of such life within the next ten years.

My confidence starts with the growing consensus that there is actually nothing very unique about life evolving on Earth. Find another planet of roughly the same size and composition, and with a similar set of physical conditions, and most scientists now believe that life — perhaps not quite as we know it but similar — will emerge again.

The alternative is to believe that conditions on Earth are absolutely unique, which seems like statistical nonsense. Just look up at the myriad twinkling stars on a clear night. Faced with that stellar superabundance, does it seem likely to you?

Of course, until very recently, those who believed in the absolute

uniqueness of life on Earth took great comfort from the fact that there was absolutely no sign of planets anywhere else in the galaxy.

But all that changed in 1995 when two Swiss astronomers, Mayor and Queloz, discovered the first evidence of a huge planet orbiting a star known as 51 Pegasi.

The planet was a gas giant, like our own Jupiter and Saturn. Like them, it was far too big — and in Jupiter's case, too hot — to sustain life. But the important thing was that here was the very first evidence of another planetary system, apart from our own solar system.

Since then, there has been an explosion in planet discoveries. At the last count some 134 planetary systems had been detected and that number is increasing by the month.

ALTHOUGH we can't see them — yet — it seems certain that some of these systems include Earthlike planets. And where there are Earthlike planets, there could be Earthlike life. We already know quite a lot about the sort of planet on which extraterrestrial life could evolve. It will have a solid rocky surface and/or a surface ocean and needs to be big enough to hold on to its atmosphere.

Anything less than one quarter of the mass of our Earth will not have enough of a gravitational pull to retain the gases, water, clouds and so on that we take for granted. Mars, for example, one-tenth the mass of Earth, has lost its atmosphere so cannot support life.

It also needs to be in the 'Goldilocks zone', which means it orbits its star at the right distance for the temperature to be 'just right' to allow water to be present as a liquid, making it habitable.

Water is a component of every living organism we know and is a key chemical in many of the biochemical processes vital for life. I am not saying it is impossible for life to evolve without water, but it is hard to imagine.

I also firmly believe that any extraterrestrial life forms will be carbon-based, as all living organisms on Earth are.

Carbon is the basis of all known life-forms, because it is the best element for building the very complicated molecules essential to life.

Science fiction writers love the idea of silicon-based life forms because silicon is the next best element for making complicated molecules, yet is sufficiently different from carbon to convey the notion of alien beings.

But it is nowhere near as good as carbon for building the basic blocks of life: only carbon offers the range of complex organic compounds such as DNA.

Carbon, water, Earthlike planets — it's all sounding very familiar. But if we do find extraterrestrial life forms, just what will they look like?

It is impossible to be certain, but any advanced alien organism will share certain characteristics with us. They'll have a big brain because they, like us, will depend on thinking power.

Close to this brain will be two eyes: binocular vision is the most effective means of seeing and focusing on objects near and far; the eyes will be close to the brain because they will generate immense amounts of complicated data that need processing by grey matter.

These advanced aliens will have flexible hands with many fingers to manipulate their environment, although the number of hands or fingers is impossible to determine.

As for their skeletal structure, it is impossible to say — they might have so many hands they look like octopuses. Furthermore, they could be completely different from us both in how these characteristics are put together and again at the cellular and biochemical level.

Given the number of planets and the elements available in space to create life, extraterrestrials are a probability. That's why I am so confident there is extra-terrestrial life out there somewhere.

Let me now turn to why I am equally confident that we will be able to prove it within a decade.

For a start, telescope technology continues to improve and, once we start building big telescopes in outer space, free of the distortions caused by the Earth's atmosphere, we will be able to see the cosmos in amazing detail.

BUT, if you think of the amazing pictures that the Hubble telescope beams back about our own planetary system while it remains in orbit, just imagine what might be possible with a telescope that offers ten times or 100 times its power — for that is the likely path of technological development.

At present, the smallest planet we can detect is 13 times the mass of Earth, but I am confident that, within ten years, that will come down to planets just three to four times the mass of Earth — precisely the sort of planet where life might occur.

Using the new space telescopes, we will actually be able to see these distant planets as tiny specks of light and, by analysing the composition of that light, we will be able to tell a surprising amount about what is going on there.

We will know what gases are present in its atmosphere and at what temperature. If liquid water is there, we will be able to find supporting evidence.

But, most importantly, we will be able to detect the anomalous gases that signify life, in the same way that an intelligent alien looking at Earth would be able to tell there was life here from the amount of oxygen or methane in the atmosphere.

Oxygen, of course, is the by-product of plant photosynthesis, an unmistakably living process, while methane comes largely from certain bacteria, and the digestive process of cows and other ruminant species.

It's a sobering thought, but the answer to one of the biggest questions faced by mankind — are we alone? — could be answered by a dose of extra-terrestrial flatulence...

If we do find signs of life, should we be worried? Will they be aggressive, or even attempt to invade our planet as so many science fiction screenwriters would have us believe?

My guess is they will not. All the signs are that Einstein is right about nothing being able to travel faster than the speed of light — and the light from even the nearest star takes about four years to reach us. So our inter-galactic counterparts will simply be too far away to pose a threat.

They may try to communicate with us but I believe any attempt at communication — which might come in the form of short-length radio waves or powerfully-pulsed laser beams of light — could well be an SOS call.

The most powerful impetus for aliens making contact with the outside world would be if their own planet was threatened — most probably because its sun, or star, had come to the end of its natural life and was swelling up into a giant red ball that would consume the planet.

After all, given such an apocalyptic scenario, wouldn't we endeavour to find other habitable planets?

What UFOs Are and Are Not

Don Berliner, 2002

For more than 50 years, men and women around the world have reported sightings in the sky that are strange to their experience and understanding. Inasmuch as many of these sightings appeared to be solid objects having impressive performance, they have become known as Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) or, colloquially, flying saucers. Their positive identification is one of the major public/scientific challenges of the era, with a significant number of these sightings so far defying all reasonable efforts at classification. We take a look at the most common explanations for these sightings.

EXPLAINED SIGHTINGS

It is generally agreed that most sightings initially called UFOs are quickly revealed by qualified analysts to be common phenomena that have been misidentified by inexperienced or impatient witnesses. Estimates of explained UFOs run in the 80% - 90% range. With the total number of observations well into six figures, unexplained UFOs can thus be counted in the thousands or perhaps tens of thousands.

Atmospheric Phenomena

As most UFOs are said to have been seen within a few miles' range, the majority seem to be within the Earth's atmosphere. They can therefore be divided into two major categories: natural phenomena and artificial phenomena.

Natural Phenomena

The following types of natural atmospheric phenomena range from extremely common to rare, but all have played roles in confusing innocent observers into thinking they were seeing UFOs.

1. Clouds

While the great majority of clouds are obviously evolving, shapeless blobs, one type -- lenticular -- strikingly resembles disc-shaped UFOs. Such clouds are most commonly seen in mountainous country but can also form on the downwind side of large hills. They can appear to have sharp edges and are frequently symmetrical. But by studying them carefully and watching their movement, their true nature should become apparent.

2. Birds

Individual birds do not look like UFOs, of course. But flocks of them seen under unusual conditions -- such as in hot weather, when the heat waves above a large, paved surface distort their appearance -- can look unusual because of their changing shape and swooping motions. Careful, patient observation will almost always reveal their true nature.

3. Meteors

Meteors probably trigger more UFO reports than any other phenomenon. They move far faster than anything else in the night sky and can exhibit a variety of colours. The largest of them -- called fireballs -- can be seen simultaneously over hundreds of miles and appear to move much more slowly than ordinary meteors. But they all eventually burn out. And none appears to change direction or speed.

4. Mirages

This is a commonly used explanation for UFOs but is rarely applied correctly. Mirages cannot be seen more than 1° above or below the

observer's horizon. Anything seen high in the sky cannot be a mirage, no matter who says it can be.

Artificial Phenomena

Since the first man-carrying balloon lifted off in 1783, the sky has become increasingly crowded with manmade objects, although the crowding is rarely apparent more than a few miles away from a major airport. Unusual viewing conditions such as rapidly moving, scattered, or broken clouds can briefly make something very common look very unusual.

1. Airplanes

Most airplanes are shaped like conventional airplanes, with a tail in back and wings toward the front. But some are not, such as delta-(triangular) winged fighters and supersonic transports. Some have their wings in back and their horizontal tails in front, while others have two parallel fuselages. But almost all of them climb, descend, and turn like airplanes, except for VTOL (Vertical Take-Off and Landing) airplanes, such as the Harrier and the new Lockheed-Martin F-35, which is not yet in production. None flies the way UFOs are said to fly, with violent manoeuvres, silent hovering, silent high-speed flight, and spectacular acceleration. Claims that super-secret airplanes resemble UFOs lack even the slightest factual support.

2. Balloons

All balloons float with the wind and cannot possibly out-speed any type of airplane. They are also unable to change speed or make turns, except very gradually, as the wind changes. Toy balloons are the least controllable of all and just bob along until they pop or leak enough gas to come down. Human-carrying balloons, the most common type of which uses a propane burner to heat the air in the bag, are silent except during the burner's intermittent operation. Such balloons are usually teardrop-shaped, although more and more have novel shapes (for example, soft-drink bottles, ice cream cones), which make them even more recognizable as balloons.

3. Missiles

Missiles can look like cylindrical UFOs, but they are launched only from well-known sites and are never directed over populated areas. The most common launch sites are Wallops Island, VA; Vandenberg AFB,

CA; and Cape Kennedy, FL. Almost all launches of large missiles or space launchers are known in advance and publicized. With rare exceptions, such flights begin straight up and finish straight down. Level flight is rare, except for small missiles in combat situations and training.

4. Satellite Re-entry

The re-entry into the atmosphere of a satellite or its launcher can be highly spectacular, resembling a large meteor, although more colours may be visible at one time due to the variety of types of material in a satellite. Re-entries of large manmade objects are well publicized in advance.

5. Other

Searchlights, singly or in groups, are sometimes used to attract attention to the opening of a business, such as a gas station or used-car lot. When they sweep around and reflect off low clouds, they can look like oval lights flying fast in tight circles.

Some airplanes fly at night with batteries of blinking or moving lights used for advertising purposes, and the same can be said of blimps. They can give the impression of quite strange craft unless the observer is patient.

Exoatmospheric Phenomena

Natural Phenomena

1. Stars

Nothing in the night sky is more common, well known, and identifiable than stars. But an especially turbulent atmosphere can make a star -- especially one near the horizon -- appear to jump or bounce around, or to twinkle or change colours. However, all stars move so slowly across the sky that you have to line one up with something stationary to detect any movement, which is always in a straight line.

2. Planets

Planets generally look like bright stars and move in a similar fashion. But at certain times and in very clear weather, planets like Venus can

look entirely too bright to be planets. Careful observation will reveal their planet-like motion.

3. The Moon

The only natural sight in the sky that has apparent size and shape is our moon, which can be seen at any time of the day or night, unlike stars and planets, which are almost never seen in the daytime. The shape of the moon varies from a thin crescent to a full circle but it is still the moon. It rises in the east and sets in the west. It does not move quickly or change direction. When seen through fast-moving, broken clouds, the moon can appear to move.

4. Comets

One of the more rare and mysterious sky sights, comets can occasionally be seen with the naked eye. A comet looks like a smear of light that hangs in the sky, night after night. A comet does not appear to move.

Artificial Phenomena

1. Satellites

Manmade satellites move in a straight line, at a steady speed. They do not change speed, nor do they change direction. Every satellite, from the smallest to the largest, looks like no more than a point of light without any shape.

Indeterminate Explanation

Many UFO sighting reports are first placed in the indeterminate category until more information can be acquired. Most are then placed in one of the categories of known phenomena, or are listed as unexplained. Some remain indeterminate.

1. Insufficient Information

Many reports can never be explained owing to the lack of important information. Without a precise date and time, it is almost impossible to check them against air traffic records or satellite launches. Without the name and background of the witness(es), there is no way to determine if the information is reliable.

2. Unreliable Source

If it is determined that the information in a UFO sighting report came from one or more persons whose word cannot be trusted, the case will remain indeterminate and thus worthless.

UNEXPLAINABLE REPORTS

Some UFO reports contain enough information from good sources that they should be explainable, but the information does not describe anything familiar. In this case, the report is considered a genuine UFO, which means it appears to have been an object that was seen flying but that remains unidentified. This is the heart of the UFO mystery, and the object of considerable effort aimed at explaining what has puzzled so many people for so many years in all parts of the world.

Appearance

Genuine UFOs usually have particular visual characteristics. Most of them have simple geometric shapes (discs, ovals, spheres, cylinders) that are unlike airplanes, along with sharp edges and metallic-looking surfaces that suggest a manufactured origin.

Behaviour

Otherwise-unexplained UFOs fly in very unusual ways that are not characteristic of airplanes. They can exhibit spectacular acceleration, silence while flying fast or hovering, and violent manoeuvrability.

Non-Earthly Craft

When all possible conventional explanations have been discounted, it can be a great temptation to conclude that a particular unexplained UFO must be an extraterrestrial (ET) vehicle. Using the process of elimination, however, is valid only when all possible alternative explanations have been considered. In the case of UFOs, there is no way to know all possible explanations.

The closest one can get to justifying the ET answer occurs in the case of a UFO that is not merely beyond all known answers, but that also displays a very unusual appearance and/or very unusual behaviour. Lacking this, a report must be considered simply "unknown."

In order to prove conclusively that a UFO is alien, one must have direct proof, not merely an absence of other answers. This proof would probably have to be physical evidence, such as a piece of metal that two or more scientific laboratories agreed could not have been made on Earth.

Brazilian Air Force Admits Investigation on UFOs

Carlos Mendes of the Brazilian UFO Magazine reports 27 years later, that the UFO phenomenon is still taboo to the Brazilian military.

In the months of October, November and December of 1977, and during the first half of 1978, the Brazilian state of Pará was invaded by UFOs flying at few meters above the trees and firing strong light beams at the people in the Marajó Bay region. Many people were harmed by the phenomenon. The bright objects were called: "vampire lights", "bugs", "the thing," and mainly "chupa-chupa" (the sucker). Witnesses claimed the UFO pilots were beings with the height of 1.20 or 1.30 meters. The people called it chupa-chupa because of the weird scars the victims bore on their bodies. The light beam left tiny holes on the skin. Women had scars on their breasts. They seemed to lose blood during the attack. Men and women complained of giddiness, body numbing and headache after the attacks. The inhabitants of the cities of Colares, Santo Antonio do Tauá, Mosqueiro and Baía do Sol panicked on these days of bitter remembrance. The panic took over even the state's capital, Belém, with a sequence of strange-lights reports and chupa-chupa attacks in several quarters of the city, astonishing the authorities.

At the end of the 70s scientists from all over the world came to Pará, Brazil, but they all failed to explain the phenomenon. Twenty-seven years later, documents from the Brazilian Air Force's secret service reveal that these lights from space were something much more unsettling than we can imagine. It is still a big mystery and a huge challenge to the science and to the Air Force's experts. Ufologists, scientists and researchers from Brazilian universities are collecting signatures to a petition that will be delivered to Brazilian President Lula da Silva. It requires the Air Force to reveal the conclusions of the investigation on the chupa-chupa case. The petition already has thousands of signatures: physicists, biologists, journalists, officers and politicians among them. The campaign is called *UFOs: Freedom of Information Now* [www.ufo.com.br/secretcy.php]. The military report, called Operation Saucer, has 2,000 pages, 500 photographs and some 16 hours of

films. Part of this report came to the public through an interview with a brave Air Force officer, Captain Uyrangê Hollanda, who gave it to *Brazilian UFO Magazine* editor, A. J. Gevaerd.

The Captain was the operation commander, sent by the government to investigate this secret operation. One farmer called Claudomira Paixão was a victim. She lived in Baía do Sol and reported that, in the night of October 18th 1977, she woke up when a strong light appeared through her house window. *"The air got warmer. At first the light was green, touched my head and crossed my face. I woke up completely and the light became red. I could see a man-like creature, wearing something like a diving suit. It had a device like a pistol. It aimed at me and the object blinked three times, as if shooting at my breast, almost always on the same place. It was hot and hurt me. I felt like there were needles piercing me. I think they collected my blood. I was terrified. I couldn't even move my legs. I was shocked."*

What she said to the military was very important because, for the first time, someone mentioned a being leaving the flying object to extract blood. Almost all the witness accounts talk about lights causing giddiness, weakness and "body shivering". The only exception is a case of someone, also in Baía do Sol, who talks about the appearance of a space couple that shot at a fisherman with a light-beam pistol, leaving him in a faint for several minutes.

Captain Uyrangê Hollanda wrote up an Operation Saucer report concerning the alien aircraft flying over the region, causing panic among the locals and driving some people to despair. They used fireworks to warn the neighbourhood when chupa-chupa was coming. They often shot at the UFOs, with their hunting rifles, the captain told *Brazilian UFO Magazine* [www.ufo.com.br]. *"We kept telling them: don't shoot, don't shoot. One time a strong light was aimed at a carpenter. The 55-year-old man took his rifle and shot at the flying saucer. The light surrounded him and he fell to the ground, almost paralyzed. For 15 days the carpenter could hardly move. On the first day the man didn't move at all. He could see, hear and speak but it was very difficult for him to move,"* the captain said in an interview for *Brazilian UFO Magazine*, the only magazine interested in hearing his impressive story.

Source: Filersfiles.com. Thanks to A. J. Gevaerd, editor of Brazilian UFO Magazine. Operation Saucer official secret documents can be downloaded at: www.ufo.com.br/documentop.php.

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The views expressed in Pegasus are those of the articles' authors and are not necessarily those of the editor, or of SIGAP.

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