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UFO sightings in the USSR, 1967 vintage.
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## RADIO TV LOG

- November 6 - Whitley Strieber was a guest on WBZ radio (Boston)  
The David Brudnoy Show.
- November 8 - Whitley Strieber and Christopher Walken were guests  
on ABC - Good Morning America.
- November 12 - 7:30 & 11 PM, Ch. 25 - Current Affair carried a  
segment on the S.C. video.
- November 20 - 4:30 CBS, Hard Copy - aired segments on the UFO  
Phenomena.(Part 1)
- November 21 - 1230 NBC, People Are Talking - featured a  
discussion on UFOs.
- November 21 - 4:30 CBS, Hard Copy (Part 2) dealt with UFO  
related events - cattle mutilations and mystery  
circles.

COMMENTARY  
By: Jim Melesciuc

Strange glowing spheres darting about, pulsating discs disappearing and reappearing, eerie nocturnal lights unlike any conventional craft. Sound familiar? It should, because approximately 90% of UFO reports fall into the category of unusual lights or curious light forms. Researching this baffling enigma for over ten years it has become evident that there are rare transient events that occur in nature, some so very rare, that science has little understanding or no explanation for such occurrences. If this is so, what does that have to say for the investigator/researcher who is in the field accumulating data from eyewitness accounts? What reference does he/she utilize in determining a transient event? After all, the observers account is the end product, of probably, an experience of a lifetime. Consider a couple of accounts on strange unusual light phenomena: One day in 1961, Mrs Doris Will, of Cheltenham, England, was watching a thunderstorm alone in her kitchen when she suddenly felt something watching her. She turned, saw a fireball, and screamed. She ran through the dining room and headed for the stairs to the second floor. The ball followed her, but passed her in the stairwell. Mrs. Will was so confused that she continued up the stairs, following the ball. At the top, the ball entered a room where her two brothers were lying on a bed. The ball shot out of the open window of the bedroom as it expired with a "crash like thunder."(1)

Another example of seemingly intelligent behavior of light phenomena occurred in France in 1852:

There was a strong flash of lightning and shortly afterwards the firescreen covering the fireplace in the witness' room was knocked inwards and a fireball 'the size of a child's head' gently entered the room from the fireplace aperture. The phenomena wandered slowly around the room before it approached the witness' feet whereupon it rubbed itself against the man's legs 'like a young cat'. The man felt no heat from the ball but carefully withdrew his feet and avoided further contact. The ball of light eventually rose up to the man's head (he was seated) whereupon it became somewhat elongated and made its way towards a hole for a stove pipe above the upper cornice of the fireplace. This hole was obscured by wallpaper which the ball peeled away without tearing and disappeared up the flue. It exploded near the top of the chimney causing some damage but no injury.(2)

It is obvious to those who are familiar with meteorological knowledge/data that ball lightning commonly occurs during electrical storms. However, it is also obvious the phenomena ignore's known laws of govern lighting.(1) In fact lightning has been known to occurred in Blue sky.(3)

The world is teeming with unusual and mysterious lights. The la luz del dinero- the "money lights" along the Andean Highlands, in Peru, appear at twilight and float above the rocky soil. They gleam white or green, then hover and fade. There are the famed Brown Mountain lights in N.C., resembling toy balloons, pink-orange or reddish in color. In Australia it's the "min min" lights that move rapidly about Alexandria station. They are white in color and have a diameter comparable to a headlight.(1)

To conclude, it is imperative for UFO researchers to become informed on rare, natural, events which have been occurring, on planet Earth, most likely since the dawn of history.  
Sources:(1) Mysterious Fires and Lights-Vincent Gaddis (2)Earth Lights-Paul Devereux (3)Quarterly Journal of the Meteorological Society 36-1910.

## From The Letter Box

I've recieved another letter, from former Bluebook Chief Dewey Fournet, in refernce to some of the material the late Major Donald Keyhoe used in his book titled, "Aliens from Space - The Real Story of Unidentified Flying Objects". For the record Fournet writes - in part:

"As I told you previously, by mid-1952 the USAF had adopted a policy of releasing all unclassified information from any official UFO report that pertained to an incident that the inquirer identify satisfactory. Don had become aware of this and, I believe, made a number of requests. He used some of this material in his later books, I understand. In late 1952, some of his work was called to my attention, and even though I was unimpressed with the themes that he often wove into his writing, I was impressed with his aggressiveness, background, knowledge of the aviation field in general and his numerous personal contacts with high-caliber personalities involved in closely related fields of activity. I believe it was Al Chop who relayed the message that Don would welcome an opportunity to meet with me. Since my tour of duty was coming to an end shortly, I agreed to meet with Don immediately after my release from the USAF. This brief meeting was when I actually first met Don. My advice to him was to continue his own UFO investigation, reminding him of the then-current USAF policy re the availability of UFO information. I also cautioned him to resist the temptation to get involved in sensational speculation but rather to stick to the factual material, which was abundant because of the earlier USAF decision on releasing this information. In no way did I even imply that the USAF and CIA were at odds on UFO policy because I could sense no such situation -- I don't believe I even alluded to the CIA in our conversation. Nor did I mention any scheme to release UFO material in wholesale fashion to the public. (Ed. comment see p.#83-86 in Keyhoe's - Aliens from Space) And since I had never considered such a scheme, it followed that I had never proposed nor agreed to a press conference for such a purpose, so Don simply went off the deep end in attributing to me a lead role in such a plan, perhaps because he was told this by someone else. I have my own ideas on how this misunderstanding might have possibly developed; the key is in page 85 of Don's book where he says: "Luckily the Fournet group had not given any hint of their secret preparation plan. In February they made a determined effort to put over the special press conference. They seemed on the verge of winning - then the CIA moved in". After this he mentions that "Chop told me what had happened." Don makes it appear that I was the leader in all of this, but by February (1953) I had already left the USAF and Washington. And on page 84, referring to the purported wholesale release plan, Don says "I had been told off-record, first by Chop, later by Fournet and Ruppelt." I again categorically deny any such statement and have considerable reason to assume that Ed Ruppelt would have done the same. When Don approached me in the early 1960s to join the NICAP board, had I had previous knowledge about these claims I would have had considerable discussion with him about them and would not have accepted the appointment without some sort of public retraction. But, of course, I didn't get any hint of this until I read your article, prompting my original letter." (Ed. comment - refer to Orbiter #6 Feb. '88)

\*\*\* UFO TRIVIA \*\*\*

Q: What two countries printed Apollo 11 UFO postage stamps?

A: Grenada and Equatorial Guinea

Q: The term "UFO" was coined by this USAF officer?

A: Cpt. Edward Ruppelt

## CASE REPORT

Date of Sighting: 12 OCT. 1989.

Location of Sighting: East Kingston, NH.

Number of Witnesses: Two (2) Mother/Daughter.

Time of Sighting: Approximately 8:50 PM.

Type of Sighting: NLs.

Duration of Sighting: Approximatley 30+ sec.

Weather conditions: Partly cloudy - winds from the south at less than 10 MPH. Temperature in the high 50s to low 60s

Account: At the above time, date, and location Mrs. Kate and her 17 year old daughter were unpacking groceries from the family car. While in the driveway, Mrs. Kate noticed 4-5 objects flying overhead at a distance of about 1/2 to a 1 mile. She admitted to being very poor at judging distance. She brought her daughter's attention to the objects. The objects were heading West-East, speed unknown. All objects appeared to be the same size and shape (round). The size of each object would be much less than a dime held at arms length. The objects flew in a tight formation and were blinking or pulsating in color from white to a pale bluish-green. They were not blinking in unison. Elevation angle of the objects was approximately 60-65 degrees. No sound was detected and there was no vapor or exhaust trail noticed by the witnesses. There also was no odor associated with the objects.

At one point Mrs. Kate thought the speed of all the objects slowed considerably before resuming the original speed flying out of sight over the easterly horizon. The daughter also witnessed this maneuver before losing sight of them.

Both Mrs. Kate and daughter felt strongly that all objects were flying independently of one another and were not affixed lights attached to a single large object. When asked if what she observed could have been small aircraft flying in formation she stated, "I can't prove they were not planes, but I am positive they weren't."

Ed. comment - In a private communication with Rick Giordano (investigator) he gave high marks to both Mrs. Kate and daughter for honesty.

## UPDATE ON OTIS AFB REPORT

The second witness, Patrolman Jones, was finally contacted in reference to the 28 May 89 sighting at Otis AFB, Cape Cod MA. reported in Orbiter #19. To brief those who are not aware of the reported sighting I will give a general summary.

While on routine patrol Sgt Trill of the Department of Defense (DoD) police became aware of an object beneath a vapor trail left by a high flying aircraft. The object was traveling in the opposite direction S to N and appeared to be on a direct descent towards the base. He started to follow the direction of the object in his cruiser. The object appeared has a dark grey sphere, no wings, no windows, was noiseless, and descending quickly towards a field where a Huey UH-1 was on maneuvers. Upon reaching the field Sgt. Trill stepped out of his cruiser and stood approximately 120 ft, away from the Huey. The dark sphere made a sudden dive towards the back of the Huey and then ascended 30 ft. up and disappeared. Sgt. Trill compared the maneuver, made by the sphere, to that of a check mark.

The second witness, Patrolman Jones, had this to say about the sighting. "The size of the object was like a small compact car. The color was silver and the speed was very high for a regular aircraft. The duration of the sighting was about 1-2 minutes. I was on the roadside watching the Huey performing maneuvers when I noticed Sgt. Trill traveling at a high rate of speed on the main street. Then I noticed the UFO. When it came very close to the helicopter, on the left side, that is where I lost sight of it. Sgt. Trill, myself, and another patrolman checked the whole area without success. The unit on maneuvers was from CT., but that is all I have."

## Luminous Phenomena and Earthquakes

By: Chris Rutkowski

Since the 1970's, many scientific articles have been published concerning the relationship between UFOs and earthquakes. More specifically, it has been suggested that luminous phenomena are produced by underground stresses within rock, and that UFOs are these luminous bodies. The theories actually extend much further than this, by going on to suggest that the energy of the rock stresses is also capable of affecting people's minds, causing them to see ghosts, aliens, religious figures and a host of other apparitions and psychic phenomena.

The strongest proponent of these ideas in North America is Michael Persinger, a physiological psychologist at Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario, Canada. In Europe, their champion is Paul Devereux in Great Britain. Devereux's version of the theories is known as "Earth Lights", and has not appeared in a scientifically refereed form (though has been described in the magazine New Scientist)<sup>2</sup> but has been published in Fortean journals and in one book.<sup>3</sup> Persinger, on the other hand, has published many articles on the subject in psychology journals, as well as in a book he co-authored with his associate Gyslaine Lafreniere.<sup>4</sup> He has also published articles in journals of psychic research.<sup>5</sup> Between the two researchers, over fifty articles have appeared in lay and professional publications, describing the Tectonic Strain Theory of UFOs (TST). The theory has the support of other scientists, including John Derr of the National Earthquake Information Center in Denver, Colorado. Derr is an acknowledged world expert on the phenomena of earthquake lights, which are luminous glows seen about the time of major seismic events. These lights are not well understood by scientists, and their formation and mechanism has been suggested to be through static discharge or electromagnetic effects with water vapour or radon gas.<sup>6</sup> Another scientist is Brian Brady, a geophysicist with the United States Geological Survey. He has shown that small spark-like luminosities are produced during the onset of breakage in rock samples under pressure.

With all this documentation and scientific research to support the TST, it might be considered reasonable to say that UFOs have been definitely proven to be caused by the TST mechanism. Unfortunately, this is not so. In fact, such a "mechanism" has yet to be established. This may seem rather odd, especially since the main proponents of the TST claim that there are "definite correlations" between UFOs and seismic data. But of what value are these correlations?

First of all, most ufologists are only too aware that most UFOs are explainable as conventional objects or phenomena, and are thus IFOs. And if we are to accept the views of skeptics such as Philip Klass and James Oberg, then we can further suggest that all UFOs can be downgraded to IFOs.<sup>8</sup> However, for the sake of argument for this paper, let us adopt the conservative ufological view that perhaps 5% of all reported UFOs cannot be explained. (If we do not adopt this position, and side with Klass and Oberg instead, then the TST has no value whatsoever, since it would be attempting to correlate misidentified stars and aircraft with seismic events, and these are clearly not related.)

The data used by TST proponents, particularly Persinger, has been taken directly from the CUFOs UFOCAT and from various geophysical indices. The UFOCAT UFO data, however, is an undifferentiated list of UFO reports, many from press clippings and magazines. Allan Hendry, in his noted UFO Handbook, pointed out that UFOCAT could not be used for statistical purposes because of inherent flaws in its design - it was more for record keeping than statistical analysis.<sup>9</sup> Yet Persinger's UFO data comes largely from the UFOCAT files. The most recent TST studies by Persinger and Derr have attempted to address this problem, but the data itself is still the flawed UFOCAT sources.

This is not to say that lists of UFO reports cannot be used in statistical studies. J.S. Accetta published the results of an excellent study in which he searched for correlations between UFOs and geomagnetic events.<sup>10</sup> These events included solar flares, sunspot numbers, ionospheric fluctuations, magnetic storms and other aspects of natural electromagnetic effects. Persinger's early studies for the TST included such effects, claiming some degree of correlation and success, though his recent work has centered primarily on seismicity.<sup>11</sup> The major difference with Accetta's work is that although he used the UFOCAT database, he selected only high-reliability cases with stringent criteria. Thus, out of 60,000 UFOCAT entries, he used only 73 UFO cases that were reliable, well researched, with both high reliability and high strangeness. In order to achieve the standards required for the study, Accetta had each case examined by committees which reviewed the known information to obtain the highest possible "signal to noise ratio". His results showed possible correlations in only three of eighteen comparisons with geophysical data, and even these analyses may have been affected by other variables. Accetta cautiously noted that his study has been done in the context of TST research.

With regard to geophysical phenomena, much attention has been drawn by TST proponents to the observation that earthquake lights are definitely associated with seismic events, and that UFOs are equated with such lights in many instances. It is the contention of TST advocates that UFOs are variances of the same phenomena and caused by the same physical mechanism.

Recently, a large earthquake was experienced in the Province of Quebec, Canada. It occurred at about 1850 hrs local and was felt over a wide area of the eastern part of the continent. Dozens of people in the Quebec area reported seeing unusual lights about the time of the event, though without investigation reports it is difficult to say whether these were in fact earthquake lights.<sup>12</sup> In addition, there were reports of UFOs over 1000 km northeast of the epicenter in Labrador, and nearly the same distance southwest in Pennsylvania. TST proponents were quick to associate the UFOs with the earthquake, in substantiation and support for the TST.<sup>13</sup>

However, UFOs have been reported in New York and Pennsylvania regularly for several years, and a book has been published documenting the last decades' events in that region.<sup>14</sup> The TST accounts for this by describing a "strain field" in underground rock which alternately stores and releases energy from the stress or compression. This energy is either visible as irregularly-moving lights and glows, or is invisible electromagnetic energy which affects human brains and causes "real" hallucinations. Since high levels of energy are also capable of physically affecting the environment, even "landing traces" can be explained through TST.<sup>15</sup>

Published studies of UFO data and seismic events have not shown any definite one-to-one correspondence. Instead, "lag" or "lead" times of several months are included in the criteria. As well, distances of several hundred kilometres separating UFO sightings and the detection of seismic events have been used in TST correlations, to allow proper "temporal and spatial" window for analyses. In effect, UFOs observed many months after a certain seismic event and hundreds of kilometres away are "correlated" with the release of seismic energy. TST proponents qualify this huge "window" by noting that some kinds of atmospheric phenomena are properly understood only in terms of large scale distances and evolve over long periods of time (e.g. "El Nino").

But is this a fair comparison with UFOs? Although TST advocates have produced many statistical results and graphs which apparently show good relationships between UFO reports and seismic events, statistical results by themselves are not convincing evidence for such a theory. Does a physical mechanism for TST-Produced UFOs actually exist?

Early studies of TST relationships centered around seismically-active regions. One study found correlations between UFOs and seismicity in the Utah Basin in the American Rocky Mountains.<sup>16</sup> The UFO reports were in close proximity to the seismic events, and it appeared that the TST might hold true for the area. But as noted earlier, the UFOs had a high probability of actually being IFOs; some researchers postulated that the UFO sightings could be explained<sup>17</sup> by the luminescence of swarms of insects native to the area.

One of the few vocal critics of the TST argued that areas with large numbers of UFO reports but low seismicity would tend to invalidate the theory. In particular, seismically-inactive regions of central North America ought not to have associated UFOs, according to early interpretations of the TST. In response, the Carman area of Manitoba, Canada, was the subject of a paper by Persinger, in which it was shown that the hundreds of UFOs observed during a 1975-1978 "flap" were correlated with two or three moderate earthquakes in the United States, hundreds of kilometres away.<sup>18</sup> The Carman area, though, has no known history of seismic events (in fact, the entire Province of Manitoba is seismically inactive), and the vast majority of UFOs reported there have been explained and reassigned as IFOs.<sup>19</sup>

In the case of Carman, TST advocates maintain that underground rock stress carried the energy between Carman and the epicentre of the associated earthquake, through the hundreds of kilometres, through different kinds of strata and across the various discontinuities. A simple question is: Why did the UFO flap not occur closer to the epicentre? Another mystery is: Why is the energy visible in one region but felt as an earth tremor in a different region? TST proponents admit that they cannot be certain of the answer, but suggest that, effectively, the conditions "aren't right" for the observations to be consistent.

The nature of a "strain field" associated with a seismic event is not fully understood by geophysicists. However, calculations on the size of the strained region prior to an actual earthquake have been made and published in various journals.<sup>20</sup> A "strain radius" can be derived, giving the distance at which stress effects associated with an earthquake will be related to a certain seismic event. These stress effects include earthquake lights, which are only one type of seismic precursor or concursor. For example, the recent earthquake in Quebec had a magnitude of approximately 6. The corresponding strain radius is less than 400 km, far less than the distance to the Labrador and Pennsylvania UFOs considered by TST proponents as related to the seismic event. Calculations show that the American earthquake related to the Carman UFO flap was similarly "out of range", yet the TST advocates maintain that their correlations are valid.

The problem is clearly the absence of a physical mechanism for the TST. Although there is a great deal of geophysical evidence that electromagnetic energy can be produced by seismic events and rock stress, the extrapolation of this process to the generation of UFOs is not easily delineated. Glows and sparklike luminosities have been produced in the laboratory under specific conditions, but to create the effects in the natural environment may require extraordinary circumstances. It has been suggested that the large volumes of rock in the terrestrial strata would scale up the luminosities accordingly, thus creating luminous UFOs of dimensions exceeding 3 metres in radius. However, the laboratory results were found during the actual breakage or failure of the rock samples tested, and the observation of a UFO over undisturbed terrain would seem to be in contravention of logic. It has been proposed also that UFOs may be produced by the release of energy from relatively minor earth tremors, in effect "baby" earthquake lights.<sup>21</sup> But if the tremors were strong enough to generate electromagnetic energy, they would certainly be detectable. Most seismic stations record events as low as 2 to 3 magnitudes, though some areas such as the region around the San Andreas Fault in California have monitoring networks more sensitive than this.

But values below magnitude 2 are usually lost in the "background noise", so it would be very difficult to distinguish seismic events with such low energy levels.

A test of the TST was recently proposed by Greg Long, a UFO researcher specializing in reports of balls-of-light (BOLS). He suggested that since seismically-active areas were the usual regions examined by TST studies, it would be very instructive to locate an essentially inactive region, and then observe the absence of UFOs in order to validate the theory. Unstressed rock would not generate energy, so UFOs would not be observed. However, TST advocates have proscribed the test, since they believe the strain radius could be extended for very large distances to accommodate differing "terrane margins". In effect, if a tremor-free zone was located, tremors very far away could therefore be correlated with the UFOs, if any were detected.

The result is that there can be no indisputable test for the TST. This is a difficult situation, because TST proponents are advancing the notion that the theory can explain all forms of UFOs, "abductions", landing traces and physiological UFO effects, as well as most psychic phenomena including ghosts, poltergeists, precognitive experience and religious visions. One could wonder whether there was any phenomena that the TST could not explain.

But all is not lost. Since it can be demonstrated that the energy can be released during rock failure, it is possible that the TST can be used to explain some kinds of earthquake lights, phenomena that have baffled scientists for many years. Similarly, some form of energy is certainly generated during the strain process, so it is not unlikely that some UFOs could be explained with the TST (possibly some nocturnal lights near fracture zones). TST studies are furthermore very important to draw scientists' attention to UFOs, something that ufologists have been trying to do for decades.

The best summary of problems with the TST comes not from its critics, but from its proponents themselves. The critics, such as Greg Long, Claude Mauge, Stuart Campbell, Chris Rutkowski, and Thomas Bullard, have constructively tried to encourage the refining of the TST in a way similar to the development of other scientific theories. The understanding of meteorites and the realization of continental drift both took many years before they were fully acceptable to the scientific community. TST proponents also realize they have a lot of work to do on the theory. John Derr and Michael Persinger have recently submitted another TST paper for publication, this time to the new Journal of Scientific Exploration. In it, they present the following passage: "... problems exist with this type of retrospective study. Primarily, the correlations are statistical, rather than deterministic, and so leave open questions of actual cause and effect. We do not know the source of the energy, how it is conducted from source to observation point, how it is focused to create luminosity, and how it continues for the duration of the sighting. Does one impulse produce LP which can last significantly longer than ball lightning, or is some continuous or intermittent source required? Why do some seismic areas exhibit LP and others apparently not? ... The LP data base is anecdotal, incomplete, nonuniform, and notoriously subjective. Positive results depend on judicious (sic) choice of the area to be analyzed: too small an area reduces significance, too large an area adds 'noise' to the analysis. And, of course, many other ways exist to do statistical analyses. Nevertheless, we believe that the results... are significant."<sup>23</sup>

The last line of the passage tends to be in direct contrast with the rest of the text, which accurately reflects the concerns of those who are cautioning against the acceptance of the TST as a viable theory at this time.

Yet Persinger, Derr, Brady, and Devereux should be applauded for their extensive work on the TST. Their determination has shown that ufology is worthy of scientific attention, unlike the attitude of skeptics who will often dismiss UFOs without any consideration whatsoever. As a theory, the TST is a valid series of observations based on UFOs, and ufologists should well consider the TST in their discussions of the origins of UFOs.

We are faces with an interesting paradox. If the skeptics are right, and all UFOs are really IFOs, then the TST is not a realistic portrayal of natural phenomena. If instead we recognize that some UFOs are unexplainable, then we must recognize that TST studies on raw UFO data are necessarily using ineligible cases in their correlations. We know that there is a mild possibility that some UFOs are caused by underground rock stress, but the TST is so far incapable of proving this concept. Only further research by unbiased investigators using proper data will ever clarify the situation, and even then, the mechanism must be understood before it can be invoked to explain an unknown phenomenon.

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13. *ibid.*
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16. Persinger, M.A. and Derr, J. (1985) "Geophysical Variables and Behavior: XXIII. Relations Between UFO Reports Within the Uinta Basin and Local Seismicity", Perceptual and Motor Skills, 60, pp.143-152. We can further note that many TST articles refer to "predictions" of UFO reports, yet these are all retrospective studies, in some cases performed decades after the events. Because of the large "lag" and "lead" times allowed in the studies, and the huge areas allowed for strain field correlations, the TST is obviously incapable of predicting where or when a UFO may be observed at any point in the future, which is the general concept behind "prediction".
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Nature July 1, 1880 193

Curious Electric Phenomenon

At about 4.30 p.m. this day a severe thunderstorm with a deluge of rain came up from the north-west and lasted about an hour. At 5.30 my wife was standing at the window watching the receding storm, which still raged in the south, just over Leicester, when she observed, immediately after a double flash of lightning, what seemed like a falling star, or a fireball from a rocket, drop out of the black cloud about 25° above the horizon, and descend perpendicularly till lost behind a belt of trees. The same phenomenon was repeated at least a dozen times in about fifteen minutes, the lightning flashes following each other very rapidly and the thunder consisting of short and sharp reports. After nearly every flash a fireball descended. These balls appeared to be about one-fifth or one-sixth the diameter of the full moon, blunt and rounded at the bottom, drawn out into a tail above, and leaving a train of light behind them. Their colour was mostly whitish, but one was distinctly pink, and the course of one was sharply zig-zagged. They fell at a rate certainly not greater than that of an ordinary shooting star. I have never witnessed a phenomenon of this kind myself, but my wife is a good observer, and I can vouch for the trustworthiness of her report.

F. T. MOTT

Birstal Hill, near Leicester, June 22

Strange Star.—Meteor

ON going out last Saturday evening about 8.55 P.M. my attention was arrested by a large deep red star in Serpens which I had never seen before. Its magnitude was greater than Arcturus, though its deep colour made it seem less bright. About ten minutes afterwards I saw it increase and diminish in magnitude two or three times producing the effect similar to a "flashing" light on the coast, after which it suddenly disappeared.

On the same evening, at 9.56, I saw a very fine meteor of a bright pale blue colour with coruscations of ruby colour at the nucleus. Its course was from Gemini over Aldebaran, disappearing below Pleiades. Of a long pine-cone shape, duration about three seconds.

W. M.

Gunnersbury, March 19

# A Soviet Astronomer Suggests World Study of Flying Saucers

By HENRY KAMM

Special to The New York Times

MOSCOW, Dec. 2—A Soviet astronomer has called for a joint effort of all the scientists of the world to determine the nature of unidentified flying objects.

The statement provided new evidence that at least some Soviet scientists are becoming increasingly interested in the mystery of "flying saucers."

The statement was written by Prof. Feliks Zigel of the Moscow Aviation Institute. Professor Zigel expressed "profound respect" for the work of some American scientists who, he said, "are with good reason trying to attract the attention of America's scientific public to the U.F.O. problem."

Alluding to difficulties experienced here by scientists like himself, who take seriously the reports of sightings of unidentified flying objects, Professor Zigel said:

"Unfortunately, certain scientists both in the Soviet Union and in the United States deny the very existence of the problem instead of helping to solve it."

## Official Panel Reported

Such references to internal scientific controversies are infrequent in the Soviet Union. Earlier this month, the view of which Professor Zigel is an exponent appeared to have marked an important gain when a retired Air Force general announced on television that an official commission had been formed to study reports of sightings.

Some of the edge of this victory has been taken off by subsequent reports that the officer, Maj. Gen. Porfiry A. Stolyarov, had spoken prematurely and that the commission, which he was supposed to head, had not yet come into existence and might not do so in such permanent and official form.

General Stolyarov is reported to be ill.

In his statement, Professor Zigel referred not to a commission but only to a team of scientists and specialists formed for a systematic study of the unexplained phenomena.

He prepared his statement for distribution by Novosti, an official agency dealing with foreign publications, in response to inquiries about the new organization. It has not been published here.

Professor Zigel lectures on astronomy at the Moscow Planetarium, in addition to conducting his courses on higher mathematics at the aviation institute. Last April he published an article on flying objects in Smena magazine of the Communist youth movement.

The group of which Professor Zigel is a member has 200 reports of sightings, the scientists said. Preliminary analysis suggests a number of important conclusions, according to Professor Zigel.

The most characteristic type of U.F.O. sighted by Russians was described by the astronomer as follows:

"A luminous orange-colored crescent flying with its outward bend forward. Its surface is only a little duller than that of the moon. The horns of the

crescent throw out jets, sometimes with sparks. The outer contour of the crescent is sharp and the inner contour blurred and wavy." A bright, flaming disk preceded by a crescent is sometimes observed. Sometimes the crescent is preceded and flanked by what looks like first magnitude stars that keep at a constant distance from the crescent.

In some cases, Professor Zigel reported, the crescent dwindled into a disk or dot. Such an object, sighted in the Ukraine last September, was reported to have executed a maneuver when approached by a plane.

The scientist cautioned, however, that this report "certainly needs verification."

Astronomers in Kazan, according to Professor Zigel, set the diameter of the crescents they observed at 500 to 600 meters (1,640 to 1,840 feet) and their speed at about five kilometers (3.1 miles) a second.

Professor Zigel also described daytime sightings.

"To avoid clashing with it, we dived back into the clouds. After 40 minutes of flight in the direction of Medvezhi Island, the clouds suddenly receded, and as we got into the clear we noticed the same flying object to port again. To take a closer look at it, we changed our course sharply and began to approach it. In response, the unknown flying object also changed its course and flew parallel to us at a speed equal to ours."

## Object Melts Into Sky

This maneuver was repeated several times in 15 to 18 minutes of flight until the object surged ahead and upward, "melting in the blue of the sky."

He noted that the classifications of the objects observed in the Soviet Union fit into the patterns observed in the West, particularly the United navigator of civil polar aviation, observed a vehicle resembling a big pearl-colored lens, flying parallel to his plane over Greenland. Mr. Akkuratov, a well-known aviator, continued:

"International scientific cooperation in the solution of this problem would long have become a reality had not sensationalism and irresponsible antiscientific assertions as regards the flying saucers interfered with it. But just as astronomy defeated astrology, the scientific truth will prevail in the U.F.O. problem as well, we are sure."

The main task, the professor said, is to organize systematic study of the phenomena from astronomical and meteorological observatories. It will then probably become possible to determine whether the objects are of protoplasmic origin or come from another planet, he continued. The second hypothesis merits serious consideration, to my mind, Professor Zigel declared.

The U.F.O. phenomenon is a challenge to mankind, the Soviet scientist concluded. "It is the duty of scientists to take up this challenge, to disclose the nature of the U.F.O. and to establish the scientific truth."

# SOVIET U.F.O. PLAN HAS FAMILIAR RING

## Pressure Has Grown in U.S. for a Similar Inquiry

By WALTER SULLIVAN

A report from Moscow that a Soviet scientist and a retired air force general have been trying to organize a systematic study of "flying saucers" has striking parallels in this country.

At least one American scientist of national reputation has been making a similar plea. He is Dr. James E. McDonald, an authority on atmospheric physics at the University of Arizona.

In a talk to the American Society of Newspaper Editors last April he said visits from another world represent the "least unsatisfactory" explanation of the sightings.

A more moderate view has been expressed by Dr. J. Allen Hynek, director of Northwestern University's Dearborn observatory in Evanston, Ill.

In a letter to the Journal Science last year he said that the Government and scientific communities should regard reports of unidentified flying objects, or U.F.O.'s, as a serious scientific challenge, instead of ridiculing them. Dr. Hynek has served as adviser to the Air Force in assessing such sightings.

## Another Similarity

Another parallel to the Soviet situation is the organization of a private investigation group by a retired Marine Corps officer, Maj. Donald E. Keyoe. It is called the National Investigation.

Nevertheless, it appears that the overwhelming majority of scientists believe the Air Force assessment of the U. F. O.'s. This is that most can be explained by a variety of natural or man-made phenomena and that the rest cannot be explained simply for lack of adequate information.

Interviews with many Soviet scientific leaders last summer, including four vice presidents of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, revealed little interest in U. F. O.'s.

The role of conditioning should be evident if enough information were available on Soviet sightings. The Russians are completely cut off from U. F. O. reports. Large numbers of them listen to Western news broadcasts, and their skies are probably almost as cluttered as our own with man-made balloons, jets, satellites and so forth.

## No TV Programs

But they do not see "Star Trek" or "Lost in Space" on their television sets. They do not devour books on flying saucers (since they are not available) or read frequent reports in their newspapers.

Hence, if conditioning plays a significant role, the sightings should be less.

Despite scientific scepticism regarding saucers there is a perceptible shift in attitude. At the meeting of the International Astronomical Union in Prague last summer, an informal meeting on the subject was held. One participant, a professor at Massachusetts Institute of Tech-

nology, criticized scientists for invariably ridiculing reports of unidentified flying objects. This only serves to alienate the public from science, he said.

Rather, he urged that the public be encouraged to make careful observations and write them down immediately. Photographs should be taken, if possible, and any material evidence, such as scorched ground, should be collected and preserved for scientific study.

Only in this way, he argued, can the mystery be laid to rest in the popular mind.

## Letters Also Ask Study

This same attitude is reflected in a number of letters in the current issue of Science. They are in response to an article in the Sept. 15 issue of that magazine, which sought to dismiss the idea of visitations from another world as preposterous.

The author was Dr. William Markowitz, formerly of the United States Naval Observatory and now professor of physics at Marquette University. He argued that the objects could not be under extraterrestrial control, "if the laws of physics are valid."

The letter-writer's—two of them associated with Dr. Hynek at Northwestern—challenged this argument, even though some of them agreed that extraterrestrial control was unlikely.

Public clamor in the United States led to a hearing on U.F.O.'s by the House Armed Services Committee in April 1966. Likewise, the Air Force has contracted with the University of Colorado to conduct an independent investigation.

This investigation has a formidable array of consulting laboratories and specialists at its disposal in the hope of coming upon some concrete evidence. A fragment of metal could be tested to see if it carries the radiation material acquired in space. Photographs obtained by various meteor-monitoring networks could be analyzed to provide objective information on size, speed and direction.

NY Times 12-2-67.

Ed. comment: Here are a couple of interesting clippings detailing how the Soviets dealt with the UFO problem over two decades ago. Comparing this material to the rash of UFO occupant reports in mid-October, from the USSR, reveals strong similarities how the phenomena is treated by the press, in both countries.

clipping cr: R. Giordano

To the readers of Orbiter: Wishing you a happy Holiday Season and a prosperous and healthy New Year. *Jim Meliss*



*"Just who are those guys? They've been following us for days!"*