

## *Looking Back at Levelland*

The November 1957 UFO Wave

From the Monday morning, November 4, 1957 *Amarillo Daily News*:

### *Witnesses Tell of 'Saucer' at Levelland*

## S a t e l l i t e , D o g O r b i t E a r t h

### Object Lands On Highway

Compiled by Regional, AP and UP Sources

LEVELLAND, Nov. 3 — Sightings of a blazing oval-shaped object that landed on highways and then took off at tremendous speeds straight up early this morning have been reported to the sheriff's office here by at least five witnesses from different points near Levelland. There were also reports of an unexplained light in the sky far across the state between Sherman and McKinney, and two men said pulsating green flashes streaked between clouds near Odessa, about 130 miles south of here.

James A. Lee of Abilene, a member of the National investigations Committee of Aerial Phenomena, rushed here to investigate. He will send a report to Washington.

"I think it's a space craft from some of the neighboring planets," Lee, who has spent 20 years studying "flying saucers," said.

A Texas congressman said he was calling on the pentagon for an explanation.

Sheriff Weir Clem said he saw the light from the object himself when he and Deputy Pat McCulloch went out to investigate the sightings at 1:30 a.m., but that he "didn't actually see the thing — only the light from it, as if a flare had been lighted."

Clem also said that the object or its illumination was seen by two highway patrolmen and a constable from Anton, Lloyd Bollen. (to Page 3)

### Pup May Make It Back Alive

MOSCOW, Nov. 3 (AP) — Russia's fantastic half-ton satellite whipped around the earth more than 1,000 miles out in space tonight and radioed back reports that the world's first space traveler — a female dog named Curly — was taking the ride quietly and normally. A top Soviet scientist hinted the dog eventually would parachute back to earth — alive.

At 6 p.m. — 10 a.m. EST — Sputnik II had made six circuits of the globe, taking 103 minutes per trip.

This indicated the satellite was blasted into space by a powerful new ballistic missile at about 7:30 a.m. — 11:38 p.m. Saturday EST.

An official announcement placed the satellite 1,056 miles out in space. The first announcement said the satellite was in orbit 923 miles out.

Listening posts around the world began hearing the staccato beeps from the new satellite shortly after the first announcement. It came as a signal to the world that Soviet scientists had made another seven-league stride toward conquest of mysterious outer space.

Curly — Kudryavka in Russian — was clamped inside an air-conditioned container in what the Soviet announcement described as the third stage of the powerful rocket that shot the satellite into space. (Continued on Page 3)

Maybe the time is right.

## *Why dig up a thirty five year old UFO Wave?*

by Anne Ecker

Why is a group of thirty five year old UFO sightings worth recalling in detail? The trail has been cold a long time—longer than the lives of over half the population of the United States. The Levelland sightings are, after all, not like the Roswell case where pertinent new information has come to light. And if the events of November, 1957 were not sufficient to persuade the public of the reality of the UFO phenomenon when they were news, how much weight could they possibly carry today?

Quite a lot, we think, particularly when examined in the light of subsequent history. The Levelland sightings were part of a worldwide UFO flap that began in late summer 1957 and peaked the first week of November, coincident with the launch of the Soviet satellite carrying the first living being to orbit Earth, the dog Laika. A new look at the old files and literature on the cases turned up a few hitherto unnoted correspondences, probably of minor significance - some attempted canine abductions come to mind in this regard.

The files also provide a graphic look at Air Force investigations of a group of significant UFO reports. The superficial nature of the investigations, the artless identifications of the unknowns, and the readiness to impugn the character and intelligence of the witnesses are appalling.

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How did they get away with it? Because time passes. Today's headlines divert interest from yesterday's news. News is entertainment, and we like our entertainment to have a beginning and an end. The official explanations to UFO sightings satisfy our need for closure. Another mystery neatly solved, and the world goes back to being a predictable place again. News is a perishable commodity, as are witnesses. Twenty, thirty years later witnesses are gone and the story has dwindled to a few lines in a few books pushed to the occult or new age sections of bookstores.

What is to be gained by recalling the old cases? Public attitudes in two relevant areas have changed since 1957. More people now grant the possibility of extraterrestrial life; and Americans have become more sophisticated, even to the point of being cynical, regarding the veracity and decent intentions of their government. As Merle Haggard sings in *Are the Good Times Really Over?*: "It was back before Nixon lied to us all on TV."

We have also become hyper-attuned to the slur in all its manifestations - the Hispanic, the blue-collar worker, the truck driver rated as below average intelligence and unreliable sources; the perfectly mannered and groomed young serviceman dismissed as impressionable; the housewife discounted because she displayed the unthinkable courage to advance on an object she feared rather than flee.

A recent *Blondie* comic strip showed Dagwood with the family album, recounting the fate of his ancestor who had his Texas citizenship revoked. Why? Because he kept forgetting the Alamo. The Levelland sightings are only one of the Alamos that have been forgotten, to the detriment of honest discovery.

In his introduction to the CUFOS file on Levelland, Dr. Michael Swords says:

"The Levelland, Texas, incidents comprise one of the classic cases in UFO history. Although not the first electromagnetic vehicle-interference case in the history of our field (a 1954

French wave was especially prominent), Level-land served to introduce this element of ufology into the consciousness of U.S. researchers. The series of car-stoppages around one small town was also important because of the number of independent witnesses. The literature varies, but it appears that at least ten independent occurrences on the night of November 2-3, 1957, could be related to one electromagnetic interference phenomenon. The case is very difficult to dismiss casually, despite the usual crude debunking attempts by the U.S. Air Force and certain close-minded debunking specialists. It entered the popular culture in a major way as a slimmed-down red-orange sphere, mischievously wreaking electronic havoc in the movie, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*.

"A lesser known case from the same period took place on November 4 near Orogrande, New Mexico. James Stokes was a technician working for the Air Force at Holloman AFB. His report described certain electromagnetic features (like Level-land) and added the effect of receiving a sunburn from a heat wave emanating from the object. The same element was also included in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. The Stokes case remains controversial on two counts: 1) whether the sunburning actually occurred; and 2) what happened to the alleged other witnesses (some named and located by Stokes). The case received national publicity nearly equal to Level-land, and the major puzzle of it all is why it wasn't better investigated."

We think the time is right to bring the remarkable sightings of the postwar years to public attention again, to fuel an outcry that the time for secrecy on this subject is over.

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### **Dog in orbit** (from Page 1)

The absence of descriptive details on the new satellite raised speculation here that it may be different in shape than the smaller Sputnik I.

Soviet scientists have announced only the weight of the new satellite and it is believed that rather than being a sphere the new earth moon may be rocket-shaped.

### **Object Lands** (from Page 1)

All actual sightings of the object itself described it as either landing on or setting on highways in front of their vehicles between about midnight and 1 a.m. today.

"I've had four eyewitnesses who saw it come right down on the road," Clem said. "On three separate occasions the object killed the engines of motor vehicles, but when it took off, the engines would start up again."

Ronald Martin, 18, of Levelland reported this afternoon at the police department to Patrolman Shelby Hall that he saw the object — light orange in color and moving at great speed — above Highway 116 about 6 miles west of Levelland at 12:45 a.m.

Martin said the object "stopped about 200 feet off the ground, came straight down and landed on the highway about 300 to 400 feet in front of my truck, sat there for a while and took off straight up again." The object, which did not cut off his truck engine or lights, was about the size of two cars and "round as a ball."

The engine and lights of a vehicle driven by Newell Wright, 19, of Levelland were knocked out when the vehicle approached the object on Highway 116 about 10 miles west of Levelland at about midnight, according to Clem, who also said the youth reported the incident to him at 5 p.m. today.

"Newell said he was going toward Levelland when he saw the object and his car stalled," Sheriff Clem said. "The engine finally died and the lights went out. The boy said it was fiery bright and shaped like a loaf of bread. It went straight up and took off at a high rate of speed when the boy started walking toward it."

Clem said he also had reports of actual sightings by Frank W. Williams of Kermit, James D. Long of Waco and a Latin-American, Pedro Sacido of Levelland, who was the first to report the object.

Sacido said he was driving on Highway 116 slightly before midnight when the object flashed over his car with a terrific noise.

"It sounded as if something had exploded," Sacido said.

Long, a Negro truck driver, said he drove up on the egg-shaped object until about 200 feet away

## Retired technician's tale inspires a look back

We were inspired to reexamine the Levelland case by a conversation we had with a retired NASA employee.

Because the subject of this story does not want publicity (and seems unconcerned about whether his story is believed) we are using only his first name. However, his identity is not a secret and is available to serious researchers.

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### **Object Lands** (continued from Page 3)

when it cut off his engine and lights on a farm-to-market road about 4 miles west of Levelland. He said it gave off a blinding light.

When he started to get out of his car and investigate, the object shot up about 200 feet and streaked away on a horizontal path, Long said. His headlights and motor came back on when the object flew away, Long said.

Clem said he checked the spot where Long said the object was resting, but no burn marks or other indications of the sighting were found.

Officials at Reese Air Force Base in Lubbock, about 30 miles east of Levelland, checked for a possible plane crash in the area, but reported nothing.

At Odessa, theater executives Wallace Scott and Milton Namkin told of watching a greenish light flash through the clouds northeast of town between 2 and 2:15 a.m. today. They said they were convinced it was not lightning but had no explanation.

Rep. J. T. Rutherford (D-Tex.), at his Odessa home, called for a statement from the Pentagon on this and other sightings. He said he was dispatching a telegram asking for an explanation from Air Force officials in Washington.

"If this thing is American, there should be some explanation — at least to people in this area — that it is an American experiment so they will not be alarmed," the congressman declared.

"If it's not American, the people also should be notified so they can do something — declare open season on it."

One of Anne's dental patients, knowing of our UFO activity, told Anne that her father-in-law was a retired NASA scientist and had seen alien bodies during the course of his employment. The patient identified him as Ron, and gave Anne his Titusville, Florida, phone number. Anne called and interviewed him by telephone, and arranged for us to meet him at a Titusville restaurant for an in-person interview, which we did over dinner at the Sand Point Inn in Titusville. He said he was an electronics technician and denied having seen alien bodies.

Ron said he was trained in electronics and telemetry in the U.S. Air Force, had a security clearance dating from 1947, and had worked for various government agencies and contractors for twenty five years. He mentioned working for or with Convair and Land-Air, Inc., and was working at the Kennedy Space Center (NASA) when he retired.

He was at March Field in 1952, and apparently in the southwest throughout the fifties. In 1956-57-58 he was at Holloman AFB with Land-Air, Inc., which he called an airline subsidiary.

Ron said his job at Holloman was tracking and filming launched rockets, including rockets fired by jet fighters. He said he was in charge of one of four crews doing identical, simultaneous work. That is, among the four crews, they bracketed their targets.

Each crew's equipment consisted of a 35mm Mitchell camera mounted on a 96 inch focal length telescope with a 16 inch mercury-coated mirror, which was mounted on a 5 inch gun mount. Also mounted on each telescope was a 60X sighting scope. The mirror was housed in a stainless steel or chromium box, and was cleaned each morning by pouring glycerine on it and tilting it to a 60 degree angle so that the glycerine would run off, leaving the mirror clean.

Ron said one of the scientists in his chain of command was a Dr. Jose, who he said was a German and an associate of Von Braun. (The 1968 edition of *World Who's Who In Science* lists,

on page 895, Dr. Paul Douglas Jose, an American astronomer born in Irwin, Pennsylvania, on Feb. 10, 1906. He was on the staff of Holloman AFB from 1953 to 1963.)

According to Ron, one morning during late July the four film crews filmed the launching of a rocket by an F-104, and were preparing for the next mission when a radar station called Stallion or Red Stallion reported a bogey at 90 degrees. All four crews found the bogey. All scheduled missions were canceled until further notice, and the four crews spent the next eight hours filming the bogey.

The bogey was a mile long cigar or submarine shaped object hovering directly over the Trinity site at an altitude of 24,000 miles, discharging and receiving smaller objects. It appeared black and featureless during the day, but as the sun set it began to glow. After remaining stationary for eight hours it left at Mach 6, as measured by the several radar stations tracking it.

According to Ron the object was also sighted by the Lowell Observatory at Flagstaff.

The film was not developed as usual by Land-Air, but was taken by the Air Force. Everyone involved—about ninety men—was debriefed and searched, and told not to talk about the event.

Now, one problem with this story is that Ron thinks it happened during the last week of July 1956. He recalls that it was a clear night “in the dark of the moon”. But according contemporary newspapers the moon was full during the last week of July 1956. During the last week of July 1957 there was a new moon.

Also, Ron says that a few weeks later he was driving along Highway 54 to El Paso when a thirty foot disk buzzed the highway and stopped all traffic except diesels and military vehicles with shielded ignitions. He says he and another fellow reported it, and their story appeared in the El Paso newspaper. That sounds like the Levelland sightings, which definitely occurred in 1957.

Also, Ron says the airplane firing the rockets he was tracking and filming was an F-104. It's our understanding that the F-104 went into production in 1958, although prototypes would have been flying before then.

Anyway, we strongly suspect that, if the event actually happened, it must have been in 1957 and Ron's memory is faulty on that point.

On that assumption we decided to take a fresh look at Levelland, hoping to find something that might help confirm or discredit Ron's story. It required no great feat of research. The CUFOS file on Levelland, compiled by Dr. Michael Swords, contains an adequate sampling of newspaper stories on the several incidents that constitute the Levelland case, as well as Air Force reports and the NICAP report, and Dr. Swords's own brief but pertinent commentary. (The file is available from the J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies, 2457 W. Peterson Avenue, Chicago, IL 60659.)

An account of the case from a national perspective is provided by Donald Keyhoe in his 1960 *Flying Saucers: Top Secret*. For an even more interesting international perspective, and a startling hypothesis about what it all means, there is Coral Lorenzen's 1962/1966 *Flying Saucers: The Startling Evidence of the Invasion from Outer Space*.

Nothing in the record, as we have it, confirms Ron's story, or even verifies that he was there rather than having read about it. If he was there, he was among the motorists stopped on Highway 54 south of Orogrande along with James Stokes, one of the more important Levelland witnesses.

We did find one brief news item that appears to lend Ron's story some credence. A story headlined “Was It Flying Saucer?” in the November 4, 1957 Fort Worth *Star-Telegram* quoted Mrs. Mary Agnes Ferraro as saying that radar in four Texas cities had picked up readings of an apparent flying saucer three weeks earlier. According to the story, the object sighted by radar was about 200,000 feet up in the air, hovered for nine minutes, and then took off at 10,000 miles an hour almost instantaneously.

Another fascinating tidbit we found buried in a 1957 news story is the first published mention, to our knowledge, of a secret base in New Mexico, near Clovis.

What we found mainly in the cumulative literature of Levelland and the November 1957

*Lubbock Morning Avalanche, Monday, November 4, 1957:*

## Levelland 'Flaming Thing' Brings World Knocking At City Door

By Bill Wilkerson

Levelland, Nov 3 — While a curious world pounded at the door seeking information, Levelland residents today were pondering the strange, fiery "thing" seen by numerous people Saturday night as it flashed through the skies and landed on nearby highways.

By late today seven persons said they saw the object at close range, many others reported seeing it from a distance and reports still were coming in. The object was described by most observers as being a 200-foot long, egg-shaped

### *Technician's Tale* (from Page 5)

What we did find, however, in the cumulative literature of Levelland and the November 1957 "flap", is an overall view that makes Ron's story seem feasible if not confirmed.

Coral Lorenzen presents a persuasive argument that by 1957 the aliens had completed a survey of our planet and developed nonlethal weapons with which they could paralyze our transportation and communication systems, and were busy establishing bases in northeastern Brazil when the launching of Sputnik took them by surprise. They then mounted an intensive search for the launch site, at the height of which the Russians launched another satellite with a dog aboard. During their search they made their presence obvious and tested their weapons against selected targets, and finally went back to their preoccupation with Brazil.

Later, during the 1960s, they demonstrated their ability to shut down our electric power systems to our government's satisfaction.

Thirty years after she expressed it, we believe Coral Lorenzen's prudent concern is still justified: "The UFO problem embodies an urgency which defies expression. Certainly procrastination is no solution. To leave matters as they are would seem to indicate that we are anxious to re-learn the bitter lessons of history: Billy Mitchell - Maginot - Pearl Harbor - and so on."

— Terry Ecker

ball of fire that that moved at great speed.

It was reportedly sighted during a 2 1/2 hour period at points 4 to 10 miles from Levelland to the east, north and west.

Officer A. J. Fowler of the Levelland police and Reese AFB was notified, in the belief that the low-flying object might have been an airplane in distress.

For an hour, the area was quiet as patrolmen searched for the "thing." Meanwhile, RAFB reported none of its planes were in the air and CAA officials at Lubbock said they knew of no planes in the vicinity.

Then four reports were received in the next 90 minutes and by 1:30 a.m. today dozens of officers were combing Hockley County for a trace of the "fireball."

### Spotted By Officers

The last report sent officers to an area about 4 miles northwest of Levelland where several patrolmen spotted the object from a distance.

Hockley County Sheriff Weir Clem said he saw a streak of fire flash across the highway in front of his car as he was driving toward Levelland.

Highway Patrolmen Lee Hargrove and Floyd Calvin of Littlefield, who also were driving south several miles behind Clem, said they saw the flash of fire.

Fowler said he questioned the units he sent out to the area, and each man reported seeing the object from a distance at least once.

The series of sightings literally "swamped" the Hockley sheriff's office and the police station here with telephone calls today.

"All I've done all day is answer my telephone," Clem said. "People have called from New York, Los Angeles and it seems like every other town in the country."

### Turns Up At Station

Fowler, who works nights, turned up at the police station soon after noon today. "I couldn't sleep," he explained with a grin. "My telephone has been ringing all morning."

Among those who rushed to Levelland to talk with those who reported seeing the object was

James A. Lee, an Abilene medical-supply salesman who said he has “spent 20 years studying flying saucers” and warned “I think it’s a space craft from some of the neighboring planets.”

In addition, U.S. Rep. J. T. Rutherford of Odessa said he has demanded an explanation from the Pentagon on this and other sightings.

Meanwhile, officers were pushing a search for four of the five men who first reported sighting the object.

#### **Returns To Give Report**

Pedro Saucedo, 30, a Levelland farm hand and part-time barber, who first reported seeing the object, returned to the police station today to give a more complete report on what he saw, but the others who said they saw the egg-shaped mass could not be found today.

Saucedo, a Korean war veteran, gave a complete statement on what he saw to Officer Shelby Hall at the Levelland Police Station today and later talked at length with an *Avalanche-Journal* reporter.

#### **Driving With Friend**

“I was driving out to the Gerald Reding farm near Pettit community with a friend, Joe Salaz, when we first saw the thing,” Saucedo said. “We first saw a flash of light in a field to our right and we didn’t think much about it at first.

“Then it rose up out of the field and started toward us, picking up speed. When it got near, the lights of my truck went out and the motor died. I jumped out of the truck and hit the deck because I was afraid.

“I called out to Joe but he didn’t get out. The thing passed directly over my truck with a great sound and rush of wind. It sounded like thunder and my truck rocked from the blast. I felt a lot of heat.

#### **Watched It Go**

“Then I got up and watched it go out of sight toward Levelland. We drove on to Whiteface to call police and we stopped at a feed mill where a man told us that someone else had just told him about it.”

Saucedo described the object as being “torpedo shaped” or like “a rocket,” but much larger. He said he’d seen rockets and torpedoes while in the service. Fowler said Saucedo’s description

was the only one that called the object “torpedo-shaped.”

Saucedo explained that although he and Salaz were only four miles west of Levelland when they saw the object, they decided it would be better to continue on to Whiteface to report than return to Levelland and risk another encounter with “the thing.”

Others who reported sighting the object in addition to Saucedo were Jim Wheeler of Levelland, Jose Alvarez of Levelland, Frank Williams of Kermit and James D. Long of Waco.

Fowler said Saucedo and the others appeared to be “terrified” when he talked with them on the telephone.

Saucedo’s sighting 4 miles west of Levelland on State Highway 116 was the first report. The next was about an hour later, from Wheeler who saw it about 4 miles east of Levelland on the same highway.

Then Alvarez spotted the object near Whitharral about 10 miles north and slightly east of Levelland, and a short time later Williams saw it in the same area on State Highway 51 north of Levelland.

Long reported about 1:30 a.m. that he spotted the object about 5 miles northwest of Levelland on the Oklahoma Flats farm road, and it was about the same time that it was seen by Clem, Hargrove, Calvin and other officers.

Wheeler, Alvarez, Williams and Long, all traveling in separate cars, each said their car engines died and their lights went out when they drove near the object. They all described it as being “egg-shaped, and about 200 feet long.”

However, none of the four men who reported it after Saucedo called mentioned heat or noise.

#### **Two Others Report**

Two more sightings were reported this afternoon by Ronald Martin, an 18-year-old Levelland truck driver, and Newell Wright, a Texas Tech student whose home is in Levelland.

Martin said his truck engine died and the lights went out when a “big ball of fire dropped on the highway” in front of his truck about 5 miles west of Levelland on State Highway 116 about 12:45 a.m. today.

### Changed Its Color

Martin said the object changed to a "bluish-green color" when it settled on the highway, then changed again to a "fireball" when it rose straight up and disappeared.

"I guess I sat there in the truck about 15 minutes too astounded to move, then it took off," Martin said in an interview with an *Avalanche-Journal* reporter. He described the object as being round in shape and about as wide as the paved portion of the highway.

Wright gave a similar report, saying the object stopped his car near Smyer east of Levelland.

### Gave Talk Here

Lee, who gave a talk in Lubbock several months ago as a member of a group he calls the "National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena," rushed to Levelland to gather information for a "report to Washington."

Lee said reports that car engines stalled and headlights went out convinced him that a flying object definitely had visited the area. He said "machines inside the object disturbed the magnetic field of balance and caused car engines to stall."

Lee said he definitely did not think the object was launched by the U.S.

However, Rutherford said he has called on the Air Force for an explanation.

"If this thing is American there should be some explanation — at least to the people in the area — that it is an American experiment so they will not be alarmed," the congressman declared.

"It's not uncommon to find a rifle or a shotgun in West Texas homes and cars. We certainly don't want anybody to harm such an object or its occupants if it's American.

"But if it's not American," Rutherford warned, "the people should be notified so they can do something, like declare open season on it."

### Radar Showed Nothing

A RAFB spokesman said today that radar at the base showed nothing during the sightings and no explanation was given for the reports. Investigators from RAFB were among those who rushed here Saturday night to search for the object.

*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, Nov. 4, 1957:

## Was It Flying Saucer?

That brightly lighted flying phantom reported seen in West Texas Saturday night probably was a flying saucer, Mrs. Mary Agnes Ferraro of 11015 Snowwhite, a former member of the Texas Astronomical Society, said Sunday.

What convinced her was the fact that the object interfered with the lights and engines of trucks and automobiles.

"From my investigations of flying saucers, I definitely do believe that they operate on some power that interferes with the power systems of automobiles and airplanes, Mrs. Ferraro explained.

The flying object seen around Levelland was not a meteor, according to E. M. Brewer of 5218 Morningside, president of the Texas Astronomical Society.

He based his statement on the fact that the object was reported to have landed and taken off and "meteors couldn't do a thing like that."

"*Meteors just go in one direction*," Brewer said. "Some go until they burn out. Others, of course, explode from the gas in them. But in any event it could not have been a meteor.

"Of course, anybody interested in flying saucers might have something to say on the subject. That's what this report reminds me of — flying saucers. I've never seen one myself."

Mrs. Ferraro said that radar in four Texas cities had picked up readings of an object, apparently a flying saucer, just three weeks ago.

She said she was not free to reveal the source of her information, but that the object sighted by radar was about 200,000 feet up in the air, hovered for nine minutes, and then took off at 10,000 miles an hour almost instantaneously.

"If I could tell you the source of my information," Mrs. Ferraro said, "you would realize that our Air Force is not taking these flying saucer reports lightly."

Fort Itaipu, Brazil, November 3, 1957

## Two soldiers severely injured by UFO

In *Flying Saucers* (Signet Books, 1962/1966), the late Coral Lorenzen reported that on the evening of November 3, 1957, a flying saucer made a brief assault on the Brazilian Army fort at Itaipu, shutting down the fort's electrical power and severely injuring two sentries.

**Dr. Olavo T. Fontes**, APRO's chief investigator in Brazil, spent a year investigating the case, first reported to him by an army officer who was there and eventually confirmed by three other officers who had been present.

According to Mrs. Lorenzen's account, two sentries were going about their business atop the fort when a bright new star suddenly appeared in the moonless and cloudless sky over the Atlantic Ocean.

*"The sentries watched* with detached interest until they realized it was not a star but a luminous flying object coming straight toward the fort. They realized it couldn't be a plane for its speed was tremendous. Within seconds the UFO was over the fort; then it dropped abruptly and slowly drifted down, its strong orange glow etching each man's shadow against the illuminated ground between the heavy cannon turrets. It hovered about 120 to 180 feet above the highest turret and then was motionless... The weird object was large, about the size of a big Douglas, but round and disk-shaped and encircled by an eerie orange glow. It had been silent as it approached, but now at close range the two men heard a distinct humming sound coming from it. The weird object hovered overhead and nothing happened for about a minute.

*"Then the nightmare. . . .* Something hot touched their faces. One of them said later he thought he heard a faint whining sound at the time. Then an intolerable wave of heat struck the two soldiers. One of the sentries said later it was like a fire burning all over his clothes, the air filled with the UFO's humming sound. Blind panic seized him; he staggered, his only conscious

purpose to escape from that invisible fire which seemed to be burning him alive. He gasped and beat the air before him; then he blacked out and collapsed to the ground.

*"The other sentry* had the horrible feeling that his clothes were on fire. He began to scream desperately, stumbling and crying like a trapped animal. He did not know what he was doing, but somehow he managed to skid into shelter beneath the heavy cannons. His loud cries awoke the garrison. Inside the installation everything was confusion, men and officers trying to reach their battle stations.

*"Suddenly the lights throughout the fort collapsed*—the electrical system which move the turrets, cannons and elevators failed; the intercommunication system was dead. . . The fort was helpless. . . Confusion changed to widespread panic, soldiers and officers running blindly along the dark corridors. Then the lights came on again and every man ran to face the enemy attacking the fort. Some were in time to see an orange light climbing vertically above the fort and then moving through the sky at high speed. . .

*"On the next day, November 4,* the fort commander, an army colonel, issued orders forbidding discussion of the incident, even with relatives. Intelligence officers came and took charge, working frantically to silence everyone. The fort was put under martial law and a top-secret report was submitted to HQ.

Days later, *American officers with the U.S. Army Military Mission* arrived at the fort with officers of the Brazilian Air Force to question the sentries and other witnesses. A special Air Force plane took the two injured sentries to Rio de Janeiro, where they were completely isolated behind a tight security curtain in the army's Central Hospital."

Santa Fe New Mexican, November 5, 1957:

## Nationwide Radar Network Is Alerted

WASHINGTON (INS) — The Air Force alerted its nation-wide radar network today to watch for a “brilliant mystery object” that has been reported flying in a crazy pattern over Texas, New Mexico and the Gulf of Mexico in the last two days.

Air Force officials said the latest sightings have been placed in an unexplained category pending investigation although they cautioned that 98 percent of such reports have natural explanations and none has ever involved national security.

A statement issued by the Air Force said: “The air defense command radar network is keeping watch . . . trained personnel are investigating reports on the scene.”

The alert coincided with the release of an official dispatch to U.S. Coast Guard headquarters reporting that the cutter *Sebago* had contacted the strange object several times by radar over the middle of the Gulf of Mexico this morning.

Comdr. Clarence H. Waring, skipper of the *Sebago*, said the object looked like a “brilliant planet.” His radar contacts indicated that the object was moving at from 240 to 900 miles an hour, frequently changing its direction, but at one point appeared to be completely stationary in the sky.

The air defense command, with headquarters in Colorado Springs, Colo., said it had received no reports of radar contact with the object as yet.

Some of the reports being investigated described the object as “egg-shaped,” about 250 feet long and 75 feet wide. One story the Air Force said would be checked was that the huge object stalled 10 automobiles when it dipped low over a highway near White Sands Proving Ground in New Mexico Monday.

Air force headquarters said the service stands firmly behind a statement made two years ago that “no evidence of the existence of the popularly-termed ‘flying saucers’” has ever been found.

Nevertheless, a spokesman said, the Air Force does not doubt that “something was seen,” and believes an explanation will be found.

From Coral Lorenzen's *Flying Saucers*:

### *Dogs Resist Abduction Try*

In Dante, Tennessee, a twelve-year-old boy, **Everett Clark**, sighted a cigar-shaped object in a field. Press notices reported that the boy was honest and delivered a straightforward report of what he had observed.

Everett claimed that on November 6 he had seen a “spaceship” land in a pasture at 6:30 a.m. His parents were at work in the nearby knitting mills and when he got up to let his dog Frisky out he saw the object across the road in a field about a hundred yards away. His first impression was that he had been dreaming, and he went back into the house. Twenty minutes later when he went to bring the dog in the object was still there, and his dog was among a group of furiously barking dogs in the field near the object.

He said there were two men and two women near the ship, and when one of the men grabbed for Frisky, his dog growled and backed away. The strange man then grabbed another of the dogs; the animal twisted in his grasp and attempted to bite him, whereupon the man let him go.

The boy said he walked down the road to see better, and one of the men motioned to him, but Everett did not try to approach the ship or the strangers. Finally, the four strange individuals entered the ship, apparently without opening a door, as though “walking through glass”, and the ship took off.

**Reporter Carson Brewer** of the *Knoxville News-Sentinel* investigated the report and found a faint, cigar-shaped imprint in the grass where Everett said the ship had rested. Everett apparently did not know the imprint was there, and was pointing out where he thought the people had stood when Brewer found the imprint.

## The Stokes Case

# White Sands Technician reports UFO Encounter

*Alamogordo Daily News*, Tuesday, November 5, 1992:

High Air Force and government officials today were investigating the report of a Holloman missile engineer of sighting a "brilliant, egg-shaped object" which he said stalled several autos on the El Paso highway yesterday afternoon.

Holloman spokesmen said the background and experience of James Stokes, 46, rendered him competent in observance of flying objects, and said the Air Force was accepting Stokes' report as bona fide.

Stokes said from six to 10 autos were stopped on an isolated stretch of Highway 54 some eight to 10 miles south of Orogrande at 1:10 Monday afternoon by a huge unidentified flying object which was visible to persons in the cars for three or four minutes.

He described the UFO as coming in from the northeast in the general direction of SAC Peak at a speed estimated at Mach 2 (2,500 miles per hour) and at a height of some 1,500 feet. He said the object "made a pass at the road" and came to within an estimated two miles of the party on the highway before veering off in the direction of Organ Pass.

### **Auto Engines Stopped**

Stokes said the object had no visible portholes or method of propulsion, but that when it came closest, the group on the road felt heat and "a slight pressure" from its passage.

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**HOLLOMAN** - The Air Force Missile Development Center today announced appointment of Maj. Dwight N. Hillis as Center coordinator of unidentified flying object reports. All UFO sighting reports will be cleared through Maj. Hillis for investigation.

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All those stopped on the road reported that their auto engines failed, apparently as a result of the UFO's approach.

Stokes' description of the big egg-shaped object, which he said was approximately 500 feet in length, was similar to reports of a big ball of fire flitting around West Texas last weekend.

## **Fireball At Trinity Site**

Also, a huge oval object, "nearly as bright as the sun" was reported hovering over the bunker used in the first A-bomb explosion at Trinity Site on the integrated range.

**White Sands Proving Grounds** personnel stationed at Stallion Site witnessed the Trinity ball of fire during regular patrols of the area over the weekend. The sightings were reported by two different patrols of two men each, acting independently of each other, and WSPG authorities today said they were accepting the stories at face value.

**Lt. Miles Penney** of White Sands said the glowing object was sighted by two military patrols on the missile testing range 17 hours apart Sunday.

**Bill Haggard**, information officer, said one patrol described it as "about 200 feet long and about 75 feet in diameter."

"The object if it was an object sighted," Haggard said, "has absolutely no connection with White Sands Proving Grounds."

**Col. Barney Oldfield** of the North American Air Defense said "the object . . . was not picked up by radar. It did not seem to be traceable."

He said the provost marshal at Reese had investigated but found nothing. Other peace officers in this area made a ground search but found no signs.

Levelland Daily Sun, November 6, 1957:

## Air Force 'Mystery Man' Leaves City

### *Actions, Identity Cloaked in Secrecy*

An official Air Force Investigator — as mysterious as the objects he came here to investigate — left Levelland Tuesday night after talking to eye witnesses about the phenomenon which set information-hungry newsmen knocking at Levelland's door for three full days.

Any secrets about what he may have learned went with him.

Anonymous from the moment he arrived at Reese Air Force Base from Air Defense headquarters, Colorado Springs, he remained that way as he left.

"Well, I'm gone," he told Sheriff Weir Clem, then walked out into a dark, drippy night and drove away in an Air Force vehicle.

He was in civilian clothes, and there was never any hint as to what he found or whether he was really a civilian or an Air Force officer.

The investigator first showed up at the sheriff's office here about 11:45 a.m. Tuesday and remained until 12:15 p.m. He returned at 2:30 and stayed until 3, headed toward Lubbock and came back to Levelland at about 6:30 p.m.

He successfully dodged all newsmen until his last return to Levelland, when he was cornered by a *Levelland Daily Sun News* reporter.

Admitting that it was the first time he had failed to elude newsmen, although at least one Texas paper had been "hounding" Reese AFB all day, he said the Air Force had authorized him only to say that he is investigating the case. He said he could not give his name or any identification.

Meanwhile requests for copies of the *Levelland Daily Sun News* issues with coverage of the phenomenon were pouring in.

The Aerial Phenomena Research group in Seattle, Washington, asked for reports and names and addresses of witnesses, while other requests came from such places as La Puente, Calif.; New Orleans, Childress, Tex.; Azusa, California; Birmingham, Ala., Oregon and others.

*Levelland Daily Sun News* staffers had received calls from reporters of papers as far away as the

*London Daily Telegraph*, as the world indicated a hunger for more facts about what they referred to as Levelland's "mystery object," "fireball," and "blazing sky object which stalled cars."

The last reporter for a big-city daily had packed his bags and departed Tuesday night, however, and Levelland was losing out to other areas, as a rash of other sightings were reported in New Mexico and over the Gulf. A Californian even reported that he went inside a space object and talked to its occupants.

### Secret Base in New Mexico?

A United Press story also told of a Fort Worth chemical engineer, Arthur P. Ticknor, who said he and two companions had happened onto a secret American airfield while on a hunting trip in the vicinity of Clovis, N.M. in 1953.

They were suddenly surrounded by U.S. soldiers, carrying drawn weapons. Then, Ticknor said, the first thing he knew a flying object "so enormous it blotted out the stars" took off.

"Almost immediately another went up," he said, "there was no noise, only the swish of air."

The engineer said he was sure the objects seen in Levelland were American inventions.

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*Not exactly a review, but:*

### You should read this book

The book to take home this month is not new: it is *The Secret Government* by Bill Moyers (Seven Lock Press, 1989). Based on Moyers' analysis of the Iran-Contra scandal, this book delves into the disintegration of constitutional government in America and the ongoing breach of faith between the government and the governed that began with Harry Truman's signing of the National Security Act in July, 1947. It's tight, terse, and a kick in the pants we all could use as the Iran-Contra probe enters its latest phase.

N.B. When you read it, keep in mind what else happened in July, 1947.

# U. S. Air Force Report on the Levelland Case

from the CUFOS File

## LEVELLAND, TEXAS

2, 3, and 4 November 1957

On 2 November 1957, at approximately midnight, T/Sgt Harold D. Wright, his wife and two children were driving south in the vicinity of Shallowater, Texas. Sgt Wright noted that there was occasional lighting with associated static on his radio. At approximately 2355 an extra large bolt of lightning occurred to the southwest, and at the same time the lights and radio of the Sergeant's car went off. After approximately 1-3 seconds the lights and radio came back on.

On 2 November 1957, Mr. Newel E. Wright, Jr. was driving home from Lubbock on state highway #116 at approximately midnight. Mr. Wright noted at this time that the ammeter on his car jumped to complete discharge and then returned to normal. At the same time the motor of the car started cutting out. Then it quit and the lights went out. Mr. Wright got out of his car and attempted without success to locate the trouble. Mr. Wright then looked up and saw an object which he described as oval shaped, about the size of a baseball at arm's length, and was white with a greenish tint. Source stated that he observed the object for four or five minutes, then it disappeared straight up. After the object was gone the car started and operated perfectly.

At 2300 on 2 November 1957, Mr. Pedro Saucedo was driving west on highway #116 about four miles from Levelland, Texas when he saw a large flame in the west. The source first thought it was lightning, but reported that the object then moved into a position over his truck and the engine and lights went off. The witness reported that the heat was so intense that he got out of his truck and laid on the ground. The object was estimated to be two hundred feet long and six feet

wide. Source estimates the object was in sight two or three minutes and disappeared by burning out. The speed was estimated to be 800 miles per hour and no more than 200-300 feet away. After the object disappeared Mr. Saucedo was able to start his truck and the lights worked perfectly. The witness stated he believed the object to be an electronically controlled rocket.

On 3 November 1957, Patrolman Lee Roy Hargrove was driving south on the unmarked roadway known as the Oklahoma Flats Highway. At approximately 0115 he saw a strange looking flash which appeared to be one to one and one half miles to the south. The flash was from east to west and appeared to be close to the ground. The duration of the flash was estimated as a fraction of a second and was red to orange-red in color.

On 3 November 1957, at 0130, Sheriff Weir Clem was driving south on the Oklahoma Flat Road at twenty miles per hour when he saw a streak of light. This light had a reddish glow and moved from south to west in two seconds. Sheriff Clem estimated the object to be 800 feet at its longest dimension and estimated it to be four hundred yards away from his position.

At 2045 on 4 November 1957, Mr. J.B. Cogburn was driving about seven miles north of Sundown, Texas on Farm Road #300 when he saw a red object the size of a basketball in the northeast. The object appeared to be swinging in about a quarter mile arc from north to south. Mr. Cogburn stopped his car by the roadside and watched the object for three to four minutes. At the ends of the arcs flames were given off, as if to

start the object on its course back. The object appeared to be attached by a hose or cable to a larger stationary object. The stationary object appeared to be similar to a balloon. After three or four minutes the object, still swinging, turned white and rose at a rapid rate of speed into the clouds and disappeared. Mr. Cogburn stated it was pitch dark with no stars or moonlight, thick heavy clouds, and a light rain.

It appears that during the period 2-4 November 1957, that the area of Levelland, Texas was undergoing a rather heavy electrical storm. The ATIC conclusion is that all witnesses on 2 November 1957, experienced seeing the same "streak" lightning which was a discharge of unusually high potential difference. Lightning usually has a potential difference on the order of 1,000,000 volts.

To the matter of the motor stoppage and loss of lights, one witness stated loud noise on the radio, and fluttering of the headlights for 1-3 seconds. This can be considered normal and typical of heavy electrical storms. As to the two cases of motor stoppage, this can be attributed to a number of causes, one directly attributed to the storm itself and others indirectly. The high humidity may have resulted in sudden deposition of moisture on distributor parts and the possibility of stoppage due to this is especially true if moisture condensation nuclei were enhanced by increased atmospheric ionization.

It is the ATIC opinion that both witnesses on 3 November 1957, experienced seeing the same "streak" lightning.

The phenomena observed by the witness on 4 November 1957, appears to have been an illusion. It is known that an inversion was present on this night and it is quite possible that the witness experienced a mirage. The file does not have enough detail to allow a positive conclusion.

Mr. Saucedo indicated that the object was 200 feet long and six feet wide, and was traveling at

800 miles per hour. The witness stated that he jumped out of his truck and got down on the ground to protect himself from the heat (probably covered his face). The witness also indicated that the object was in the area two or three minutes and was only 200-300 feet away. An object traveling at a speed of 800 MPH covers approximately 13.35 miles per minute, or approximately 33.4 miles during the time Mr. Saucedo stated he saw the object. If the object was at only 300 feet altitude, it would appear that there would have been some other associated effects experienced by the witness as the object went by.

At an altitude of 300 feet or less the witness would not have been able to see the object until it was 20 miles or less away. It is the ATIC opinion that the excitement of the situation probably whetted the imagination of this witness, and that at least part of the information which he provided is false.

Mr. Newel E. Wright, Jr., stated that he observed oval shaped, green color objects. From the limited information provided by the witness it appears that this object may have been "ball lightning." Not too much is known about ball lightning; however, the conditions which existed in the Levelland area during 2 and 3 November 1957, are consistent with those which our limited knowledge associates with the formation of ball lightning. The phenomena of ball lightning consists of luminous balls or masses, lasting at most, several minutes, but usually only a few seconds. The size of ball lightning is usually between 26-27 centimeters (approximately 11 inches). It is the opinion of ATIC that ball lightning may have contributed to the overall circumstances of the Levelland sighting, but was not a major factor.

It is concluded that the major cause for the Levelland case was a severe electrical storm. The storm stimulated the populace into a high level of excitement. This excitement reflected itself in their reactions to ordinary circumstances, and resulted in the inflation of the stories of some of the witnesses concerning their experiences.

# The NICAP Report

From the *U.F.O. Investigator* Vol. 1, No. 3, January 1958

## Did the Air Force Deceive the Public About the November Sightings?

### *The True, Documented Story of the November UFO Crisis*

According to United States Air Force spokesmen, the November UFO sightings were a combination of errors, lies, incompetence, hysteria, and the inability of even highly trained aerial observers to recognize familiar objects. NICAP presents the following detailed account of the situation so that members and the press may decide whether or not the truth was deliberately hidden. — Editor

For two taut weeks in November, as verified UFO reports poured in from trained observers, the U.S. Air Force faced a growing crisis. Under a barrage of questions from the press, Air Force Headquarters officials battled to offset the dramatic news stories and public demands for the facts. The battle was won, but only after —

The Air Force had labeled a Coast Guard officer and Coast Guard radar experts as incompetent.

The Air Force Public Information Officer at White Sands Proving Ground had warned all Air Force personnel of official punishment if they publicly revealed UFO sightings.

A rocket engineer at White Sands, whose story first was called “satisfactory” by the Air Force, was isolated in a hospital because of “nervous tension” after which his story was publicly labeled a hoax by Air Force Headquarters.

A Navy pilot, witness to a UFO sighting in California, had been told not to appear on a television network program.

The senior Public Information Officer at Los Angeles has practically reversed himself, after revealing serious Air Force concern and urging the Secretary of the Air Force to let the public know whether the UFOs were extraterrestrial or earthmade.

The Air Force had labeled most reports as “humbug,” ridiculing hundreds of reputable and qualified observers, including even Air Force pilots, radarmen, guided missile trackers and other Air Force specialists.

Air Force officials had blamed the November sightings on hysteria caused by the Sputnik satellites — even the reports by CAA tower operators, airline pilots, and members of the armed forces whose duties require cool-headed thinking and an absolute lack of hysteria. The pre-Sputnik sightings were blamed on other causes, listed later in this report.

The following report includes most of the factual evidence, though some sightings are omitted from lack of space. The key November cases will be familiar, but other important items and certain behind-the-scenes details may cast a new light on the entire November crisis.

During October there had been an increase in UFO reports, but few had been published. None of the military pilots’ encounters had leaked to the press.

The first big November case to hit the papers occurred at Levelland, Texas, on Sunday, November 3, 1957.

However, before this action started there were three other sightings - possibly linked. At 8 p.m. on November 2, Odis Echols, owner of Station KCLV in Clovis, New Mexico, saw a strange glowing object speeding southeast. Not long afterward the Ground Observer Corps at Midland, Texas, logged reports of a large bluish object flying west at low altitude. At 11:20 p.m. CAA tower operators Calvin Harris and Sandy McKean — on duty in the he Amarillo Airport tower — sighted a peculiar bluish object moving

through the sky. Never before, said McKean, had they seen anything so spectacular.

Then the Levelland story began to break. Between 11:15 p.m. Saturday night and 1:30 a.m. Sunday, a huge oval-shaped object was reported as landing or closely approaching trucks and cars on Highway No. 116. In three cases, as established by Sheriff Weir Clem, close passage of the UFO had stopped car engines and dimmed or put out headlights.

At 1:30 a.m. Clem and Deputy Sheriff Pat McCulloch saw the glow from the object as it crossed above the highway brightly lighting the pavement. This light also was seen by Patrolmen Lee Hargrove and Floyd Gavin, following in separate cars.

In general, the reports agreed. The mysterious object was 125 to 200 feet long, oval shaped, flat on the bottom. In rising vertically, it glowed a neon-red in its brief landings on the road, the light became bluish-green.

Each observer was interviewed separately by Sheriff Clem and fortunately these interviews were witnessed by NICAP Member James Lee, who had rushed to the scene to investigate for the Committee. In Lee's phoned report to NICAP he stressed the witnesses' sincerity. Both he and the sheriff were convinced the reports were true.

(A few days afterward, Sheriff Clem and Mr. Lee were told that the engines of two grain combine machines at Pettit, near Levelland, were stopped at the same time as the Levelland incident, apparently by the same flying object.)

Undisclosed until later, a similar sighting was made at 3:00 a.m. Sunday by Army MPs Cpl. Glenn H. Roy and Pfc James Wilbanks at the north tip of White Sands Proving Ground.

Both MP's told Intelligence officers in an open session that what they saw looked like the landing and takeoff of a controlled object from outer space.

The UFO, they said, was about 75 to 100 yards in circumference.

"It came down very slowly to about 50 yards," said Cpl. Roy. "It stayed there three minutes, giving off a brilliant reddish-orange light. Then it came to the ground fairly fast. It looked like a completely controlled landing."

At the time, there was no official attempt to explain away the report.

As Sunday wore on, papers all over the country began to set up the Levelland story for Monday morning editions. But this was only the start.

At 7:30 p.m. at Deming, New Mexico, a large brightly-lit object swept in over the area. It was seen by Robert Toby, radio station owner and GOC observer and CBS-TV cameraman Russell B. Day.

As the UFO maneuvered through the clear sky, Day recorded its movements on 35 feet of film.

It was just after this at 8:00 p.m. MST when the second White Sands sighting came. As officially released by Lt. Miles Penney, CO of a camp 90 miles north of proving ground headquarters, a two-man patrol sighted a bright object hovering 50 feet from the ground. According to the men, SP3 Forest R. Oakes and another SP3 named Barlow, the strange object was 200 to 300 feet long. It took off, climbed at a 45 degree angle, and disappeared.

Before Sunday ended, two more reports by expert observers were on record. At 10:55 p.m. Tech. Sgt. Jack Waddell, USAF control tower operator at Dyess AFB, saw an oddly lighted object glowing neon-red near the San Angelo highway.

At 11:53 p.m. the CAA tower at Amarillo, Texas, received a UFO report from a Navy pilot flying over the city. Giving the objects bearing, the pilot described its glow as alternately dim, the brilliant. He said the UFO was climbing and then descending at varying speeds.

About four hours later another "interference" report was honed in at Chicago by police at suburban Elmwood Park.

At 3:12 a.m. Monday two Elmwood Park officers and a fireman had sighted a glowing orange-red object about 200 feet long hovering 250 feet about Elmwood Cemetery. When they radioed the police station dispatcher, Daniel de Giovanni stepped outside and also saw the stationary UFO.

As the police in the squad car turned their spotlight up toward the object, the spotlight beam and their headlights dimmed. The hovering

object quickly began to move, heading west, then disappeared.

By Monday morning - November 4, 1957 - teletype reports of the main sightings were being studied by Air Force Intelligence in the Pentagon, at ADC (Air Defense Command) in Colorado Springs, and at ATIC (Air Technical Intelligence Center) in Dayton. A member of ADC/s 4602d Air Intelligence squadron had already been flown to Texas to check the Levelland case.

Though the big "flap" had only begun, the press and newscasters already were asking pointed questions. A press release had been prepared in July with the usual AF claim that flying saucers did not exist. But would this be taken seriously now?

The Navy pilot and the CAA men - these were aviation experts. The MP's and the Texas police - these too were reliable observers. It wouldn't be easy to brush all of them off.

The press release was held up.

But that evening the pressure increased. Shortly after 10:00 p.m. the official teletypes brought a disturbing message from the Air Force Missile Development Center near Alamogordo, New Mexico.

James Stokes, a research engineer at the Center, had just reported a dramatic UFO encounter. A huge, elliptically shaped object, Stokes said, had appeared between the Center and White Sands. As it passed near Highway 24 it had cut out his radio and then stopped his engine and those of ten other cars.

Stokes estimated the UFO's length at 500 feet. At its closest point, he said, he could feel a wave of heat. The object had no visible portholes nor any exhaust trail.

This report, coming from a Missile Center engineer, was bad enough. But to make it worse, the story had been broadcast by KALG in Alamogordo and the report was now on the press wires.

Though the Air Force didn't know it then, a new radio interference incident had occurred at the very moment Stokes' story went on the air.

At 10:00 p.m.. a dazzling red ball of fire trailing a weird greenish-yellow vapor had flashed over

Kodiak, Alaska. It was sighted by three persons, including Kodiak patrolman John Boucher.

Boucher was in his police car when suddenly the area around him "lighted up as if someone had turned on field lights." The light came from a flaming red ball whizzing out of the east.

"It skimmed about 50 feet over a school," Boucher reported to Navy HQ in Kodiak. "I attempted to radio police headquarters, but there was interference. It was a steady 'did-did-dit' that went on for about two minutes.

"Jan Bueckers, the guard at the jail, noticed the interference, too."

By now reports from reputable observers were coming in from widely separated points. For example:

A mass sighting of UFOs in Barahona Province, Dominican Republic; seen by hundreds, several discs had hovered for two minutes, then sped off into the east.

A report of a rocket-shaped UFO by Professor Jacques Hebert, Department of Physics, Ottawa University, Canada.

At Spooner, Wisconsin, a sighting of a bright oval-shaped object streaking across the sky. Witnesses: Newspaper Editor William Stewart, and Episcopal minister, and three other citizens.

On Tuesday morning, November 5, three Air Force statements were released.

From the Air Defense Command: "one published saucer report will set off a rash of sightings."

From Air Force HQ: "We are making a serious investigation of the Levelland case...(but)...we don't investigate all of the reports."

From Air Technical Intelligence Center: "We investigate all the reports; we never know when one may turn up something new."

At the same time, the press release summary made up in July and stated by one wire service to have been held for an emergency, was ordered made public that afternoon, November 5.

But before it could reach the papers, the Air Force was swamped with more sightings - the most important from highly qualified observers.

One of the most impressive sightings came from the Coast Guard, which considered it so

important that a special press conference was held at its New Orleans office.

At 5:10 a.m. Tuesday morning in the Gulf of Mexico radarmen on the Coast Guard cutter Sebago had picked up a strange flying object. According to Cdr. C.H. Waring, CO of the Sebago, the blips were very strong, indicating that the object was solid.

At 5:21 a.m., after the UFO had been tracked maneuvering in concentric circles about the Sebago, the object glowing brightly was seen for three seconds by four men on deck: Lt. Donald Schaefer, Ensign Wayne Schotley, Quartermaster Kenneth Smith and Seaman-radioman Thomas Kirk.

The object was moving horizontally at very high speed. The men could see no visible means of propulsion nor any vapor trail.

During its maneuvers around the Sebago the unknown object at times reached a speed of almost 1000 mph. Once, briefly, it appeared to be stationary seven miles north of the vessel.

The last radar contact showed it to be 175 miles north, heading toward Louisiana. It had covered this distance in 17 minutes as proved by the Sebago's official log.

Front page stories of this official report overshadowed a number of other verified cases revealed on Tuesday, November 5:

At Selma, Alabama, three Air Force pilots disclosed that they had seen a UFO, like the one in the Sebago case, flash through the sky on Monday.

Three Atlanta firemen reported seeing a huge round object with a shiny glow early Tuesday morning.

From Johannesburg, South Africa, came a bulletin on a South African Air Force chase of two UFOs which had appeared over the city on Friday, Nov. 1.

(Details later sent to NICAP revealed three additional sightings, Nov. 2 to 4. On Nov. 1 two disc shaped objects were seen by hundreds of Johannesburg residents, one maneuvering at high speed, while the other hovered over the city. A Sabrejet pilot, ordered to attempt an interception, climbed to 45,000 feet but was still below the UFOs. In another case a UFO was caught in

a searchlight beam from Dunnottar Air Force Base.)

("We can only assume," said a South African AF Intelligence officer, "that the objects were some form of physical phenomena for which we have no explanation.")

By Tuesday noon several American scientists had put out explanations for the key sightings based on their interpretation of the news accounts.

Explaining the Levelland and Alamogordo cases, Dr. Donald Menzel, Harvard Observatory, said the objects were nothing but mirages. He said it was not surprising that "a nervous foot" could stall a car in such cases, but did not mention the radio fading and reported effects on headlights.

In addition, an October statement by Dr. Menzel was repeated in which he said that besides weather phenomena, causes for UFO reports included floating cobwebs and owls which glowed as a result of fungus and rotted wood in their nests.

At Miami W.W. Talbott, former Weather Bureau observer, said ball lightning caused the Texas and New Mexico reports. This was denied by J.C. Ballard, meteorologist-in-charge, U.S. Weather Bureau, Atlanta.

Mr Ballard said ball lightning has never been reported more than a few feet or a few yards from observers. Also he said the balls are the size of a man's fist and they don't move in concentric circles.

At Buffalo Dr. W. R. Dornberger, missile expert with Bell Aircraft, said the Texas and New Mexico witnesses had seen "whirling air turning at seven machs." (At seven machs - seven times the speed of sound - the air would be whirling at approximately 6000 mph. Ed.)

This whirling action, said Dr. Dornberger, would set up magnetic and luminous fields capable of blotting out any electric power within the area of the field.

(To NICAP's knowledge, no other authority has ever mentioned the possibility of air whirling at this speed. No violent winds or turbulence were reported in the Texas and Alamogordo cases.)

At about the same time, an Air Force spokesman in Washington said the Texas-Alamogordo reports probably were caused by St. Elmo's fire. (The *Encyclopedia Britannica* states that St. Elmo's fire is a brush-like discharge of atmospheric electricity which is seen around church steeples and the masts of ships. It also has been seen around tips of aircraft propellers and wings, but NICAP can find no record of St. Elmo's fire appearing independently and in a mass 125 to 250 feet long. Ed.)

But in spite of the AF and scientists answers, still more UFO reports clattered in on AF teletypes. Several which came from armed forces pilots were classified "for official use only" and did not reach the press. But some uniformed men made their sightings and opinions public enough to prove that these were not "crackpot stories."

Three of the Tuesday reports drew wide attention:

1) The Long Beach Case.

November 5, 1957

At 3:50 p.m. six "saucer shaped objects" were reported operating at high speed over Long Beach Airport. The sighting - an official AF report - was given to the press by Major Louis F. Baker, commanding officer of the Air Force weather observation post at Long Beach. Two other AF weather experts and ten military personnel waiting at the airport also saw the objects. The group of six discs was spotted at an altitude of 7000 feet, near the base of a cloud bank.

"They were circular and shiny like spun aluminum," said Major Baker. "They changed course instantaneously without the loss of speed which planes have in a dogfight."

She said the objects were larger than twin engine C-47 aircraft - military name for the DC-3.

2) The Navy Sightings at Los Alamitos.

November 5, 1957.

From 6:05 p.m. to 7:25 p.m. personnel at Los Alamitos Naval Air Station in California reported almost continuous UFO sightings. One report came from Lt. Richard Spencer, a Navy pilot.

Spencer said the object was not a star nor a plane and that its light seemed to pulsate. The

object also was seen by the Navy tower operator, Louis D. Mitchell.

Lieut. Spencer was later told not to appear on the television program *You Asked For It*, as previously planned. He was quoted as saying he believed the official directive applied to all members of the armed forces.

3) The AEC Plant Sighting at Augusta.

November 5, 1957.

At about mid-evening Tuesday a strange "ball-like" object glowing red was seen hovering over the Atomic Energy Commission's Savannah River Plant near Augusta.

An alert was ordered immediately at the 35th Air Defense Division, Dobbins AFB, Marietta. It was reported that this followed the radar pickup of a UFO by an AF aircraft control and warning unit at Aiken, South Carolina. But the Aiken unit refused to say whether jets had been scrambled for an interception. Dobbins AFB said its radar had found "nothing that after investigation proved to be out of the ordinary."

One of the several civilian witnesses was the executive editor of the Augusta Chronicle, Louis Harris, who saw the object from the newspaper building. It appeared as a constant red light, he said, either a small light relatively close or a huge object at a distance.

No explanation was offered in the Augusta case. In California the Naval Air Station sightings were called a temperature inversion mirage by Dr. Dinsmore Alter, Director of Griffith Observatory. But this was quickly labeled as impossible by Air Pollution Control meteorologists who said there had been no inversion strong enough to refract light. Later Dr. Alter was quoted as saying the witnesses might have seen the star Arcturus.

On Tuesday night, November 5, 1957, newspaper editors and newscasters were divided - some fully accepting the new Air Force claim that flying saucers did not exist, others running the new UFO reports in full, with no tongue-in-cheek treatment.

The latter group included reports from :

Houston, Texas, where several businessmen and other citizens described "an egg-shaped glowing object" and one observer reported car and radio interference.

Beaumont, Texas, where a sighting was made by Police Capt. Clyde C. Rush, five other policemen and reporter Paul Smith.

Chicago, Illinois, where two sheriff's deputies and a police sergeant saw an oval shaped UFO.

A few hours after these cases a report of contact with occupants of a flying saucer was made. The story came from Kearney, Nebraska, where a 48 year old grain buyer named Reinholdt Schmidt said he had seen an elliptically shaped space ship land near the Platte River. The occupants, Schmidt said, were two men and two women who talked in "high German." He said the was invited inside while the crew repaired their machine but that they refused to say where they came from. The press was strongly skeptical, particularly after they found that he had a prison record. Shortly after this the county attorney filed a mental illness complaint. When Schmidt was confined to an institution there were suggestions that he had been locked up to keep him from talking. However, he was soon released.

Although the press in general rejected Reinholdt Schmidt's story, a majority of the press and broadcasters maintained a serious attitude toward reports by pilots and other trained observers. A few, like the *Columbus Dispatch*, were critical of the Air Force investigation. (See the *Dispatch* editorial in this issue.)

Many Wednesday morning papers (Nov. 6) carried the latest AF release attributing UFO reports to balloons, aircraft, stars, meteors, comets and other celestial bodies, reflections, searchlights, birds, kites, blimps, clouds, sundogs, spurious radar indications, firework displays, flares, fireballs, ice crystals, bolides and hoaxes.

Only 1.9% of the reports from January to June 1957 were "unknowns," the Air Force concluded.

On this same morning — still Nov. 6 — a statement from ATIC at Dayton said that 3% of the reports were "unknowns."

The Air Force also announced a radar alert by the Air Defense Command and said that trained personnel were investigating the UFO reports. However, it added, nothing unusual was expected since all but 2% of the sightings have had natural explanations.

Without comment, the *Chicago Daily News* published a report by Capt. Irving Kravitz of Trans World Airlines. A few hours before, said Capt. Kravitz, he had seen a strange object moving swiftly through Nebraska skies.

"It was a brightly lighted object and was going faster than any jet," the TWA captain declared. (A detailed report on this incident was examined by the CAA and the Air Force. Ed.)

From St. Petersburg, Florida, came another early morning UFO report by numerous citizens, including Paul Hayes, news director for WSUN-TV and Eddie Ervin, sports writer for the *St. Petersburg Independent*. Both Hayes and Ervin had previously been strongly skeptical.

At Buffalo a conviction that the UFOs are extraterrestrial was publicly stated by Edward L. Kramer, assistant chief engineer, Plant Engineering Department, Bell Aircraft Corporation. Mr. Kramer also disclosed that he and other observers had seen a bright orange object moving at a high altitude over Buffalo on October 10.

"These objects are definitely from outer space," said Mr. Kramer. "they are nothing created on this earth. They do not fit in with our knowledge of mechanics or electronics. This is apparent in their illuminating powers and their ability to move off with great rapidity."

The reality of the objects reported in the Southwest also was emphasized by Dr. Lincoln LaPaz, Director of the Institute of Meteoritics, University of New Mexico. Though he said flatly they were not interplanetary, Dr. LaPaz contradicted Air Force statements when he said:

"Whatever they are, you can bet they belong either to us or to the Russians."

The fear that the objects might be Russian was voiced by several papers, including the *Cincinnati Times*, despite massive evidence refuting this explanation.

On Wednesday, November 6, the AF HQ claims were partly offset by Col. Dean Hess, chief AF public information officer at Los Angeles. A former minister and a Korean ace, Col. Hess publicly revealed serious Air Force concern about the flying saucer sightings and urged the Secretary of the Air Force to tell the facts.

In an interview published by the *Los Angeles Mirror News* and briefed in press stories, Colonel Hess said the Pentagon was "greatly concerned." He said he had phoned the Air Force Secretary's office and asked for a thorough investigation "so the public may know the real nature of these objects."

Said Colonel Hess, "I'm not going to be satisfied with one of these routine inquiries. I am sure the American people would be receptive to information as to whether these objects are of terrestrial or celestial origin."

Adding to the implication that information had been withheld, an Associated Press story from Dallas disclosed that the Air Force had held up a UFO picture for over a year. The photograph showed a jagged trail believed to be glow of radiation vapor from the object. (Full story elsewhere in this issue.)

This was followed by a new Dr. Menzel statement in which he explained the Coast Guard report: The officers and men in the Sebago had been misled by bubbles of hot air.

Then from Winnipeg, Canada, came the report of a UFO chase by six Royal Canadian Air Force interceptors. The fighters as seen by ground witnesses had not tried to close in but had warily circled behind the strange round object. No explanation was given by the RCAF.

Between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday thousands saw a glowing, apparently metallic object moving over Western New York. The first official report came to the Buffalo Filter Center from a GOC post in Dansville. The three observers on duty said Filter Center Sgt. George Hatch, were fully experienced in identifying aerial objects.

"they said the object appeared to be made of highly polished metal, or else was glowing very brightly," said Sgt. Hatch. He flashed word to the Air Control and Warning Base in Lockport, New York. Officers there refused to confirm or deny a report that AF radar had tracked the object.

Later Wednesday evening an unknown lighted object was reported by hundreds in southern Michigan, including Police Chief Donald Miller at Decatur, deputy sheriffs in Eaton County, and

Waldron Stewart, editor of the *Adrian TELEGRAM*.

Editor Stewart and a Lenawee County deputy tried to catch up with the object as it accelerated from a hovering position. But even speeds of over 100 mph were in vain, said Stewart. The UFO climbed steeply, circled to the southeast, and then disappeared.

Not long after this — out in California — an Air Force sighting at Edwards AFB leaked to the press. At about 7:30 p.m. MST six Air Force MP's in three widely separated areas reported seeing an orange ball shaped object move southwest over the supersecret test center. It was flying, the MP's estimated, at about 200 feet.

The story leaked out when Edwards AFB officers called county sheriff substations at Lancaster and Palmdale and asked them to watch for the UFO.

Colonel Dean Hess said he had sent the report to the Air Defense Command.

"We don't question the integrity of the observers," he told the *Los Angeles TIMES*.

By this time many newspapers were running the official AF disclaimer alongside the latest UFO reports, apparently to let the public take its choice. One fully verified case handled this way was the sighting by two veteran Illinois State troopers on Wednesday night, Nov. 6.

First sighted near Danville, Illinois, the "brilliant flying object" was chased for 15 miles by officers Calvin Showers and John Matulis. The UFO — first a brilliant white then changing to orange — was moving at "a terrific rate of speed" the troopers said.

The two officers said they were unable to notify their headquarters during the chase because their radio mysteriously went dead. Before and after the chase, however, it was in perfect condition.

Lieut. John Henry, Urbana police district chief, accepted the reports as genuine.

"These are two experienced, trusted policemen," he said, "and their reports are very reliable."

Though the Air Force made no comment on other Wednesday reports, Edwards AFB officers put out a statement during the night to explain

what the specially trained Air police and other witnesses had seen.

The star Arcturus, said Edwards AFB, seemed much brighter and bigger than usual and appeared to "blink" and change colors. Also, they stated, jet bombers were dropping photoflash bombs five miles south of the base. It was Arcturus and the flash bombs, said Edwards officials, which had tricked the Air Police and the public.

At the same time, general AF claims were strongly countered by Capt. Edward J. Ruppelt, former chief of the Air Force UFO Agency, Project Blue Book.

"There is sufficient evidence of flying saucers' existence to warrant further investigation," said Captain Ruppelt. He also urged the AF to release more information.

For the first time, Ruppelt confirmed long-withheld UFO reports of electrical force field effects.

"During my tenure with Project Blue Book," he said, "we had reports of radiation and induction fields in connection with UFOs." The recent reports, he added, should add a whole new dimension to the UFO investigation.

Captain Ruppelt also criticized Doctor Menzel's mirage claims:

"This is one thing we proved the UFO is not. We went to Dr. Joseph Kaplan, the UCLA meteorologist and others, and we spent a lot of money to determine if mirages were the answer. The only positive answer we got was that they were NOT mirages."

In 1953, Ruppelt said, top American scientists recommended a big increase in funds for an intensified UFO investigation. But it ran into a governmental economy drive and the AF then adopted the position that the UFOs do not exist.

"The Air Force ought to give us some answers," he declared, "even if it requires money. They shouldn't play mum."

Later on Thursday, November 7, Spencer Whedon, chief of air intelligence at Dayton, said it costs the Air Force about \$10,000 for each major trackdown of a flying saucer report. This includes, he said, sending jets to investigate intruders. Several newscasters quickly asked why

the AF was spending so much money if it is actually convinced that flying saucers do not exist.

During the day, Col. Dean Hess surprised many who had read his earlier statements. In a televised interview he repeated the latest Air Force claims - that there is no evidence the flying saucers even exist. To many who had heard him, it seemed a strange reversal. (NICAP has received several letters from California members who saw the program and suggested that Colonel Hess had been ordered to retract his earlier words.)

On this afternoon, Thursday, Nov. 8, the Air Force found that another UFO report had been leaked to the press - at Alamogordo. Between 1:45 and 1:55 a.m. six Holloman AFB airmen on duty at the base had sighted an "unidentified flying light" which changed from white to orange to red. The object, the airmen said, also made a whistling sound as it passed overhead.

When the leak was discovered, an official warning not to talk about UFOs was issued in the Holloman AFMDC Daily Bulletin. A copy of the warning was given to Mrs. Coral Lorenzen, Director, Aerial Phenomena Research Organization at Alamogordo, who formerly was employed at the base. With APRO's permission, the official section is printed here, verbatim:

**"7. UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS:** On November 7, six airmen claimed they sighted an unidentified flying object and did not report this to the proper base authorities. They didn't, however, give this information to the local press. Request that each member of the military and civilian, employed at this center, refrain from any public statement on political, diplomatic, legislative or scientific matters of any controversial subjects, such as UFOs, without first contacting the Center Information Services Officer. This request is in accordance with AFR 190-6k. Disciplinary action may be taken against offenders. (Lt. Col. McCurdy, HDN, Ext. 491.)"

(Colonel McCurdy was the Senior PIO who earlier stated that Engineer Stokes' UFO report was satisfactory.)

Another report made public on Nov. 7 came from Mr. Olden Moore, Geauga County, Ohio,

who reported seeing a round controlled object land temporarily in a field near Montville, Ohio. According to Moore, his car's electrical system was affected. Civil Defense officials checked the ground, found its radioactivity above normal. Later, Moore said he was questioned by high officials and sworn to secrecy. (NICAP expects further details on this case.)

By Friday, the 8th of November, fewer sightings from trained observers were being reported. Whether there was an actual decrease, or fewer witnesses were talking, has not yet been determined.

One unusual report on Nov. 8 came from Australian Government astronomers at the Commonwealth Observatory, Mt. Stromlo, in Canberra.

Just after 3:00 a.m., four Mt. Stromlo astronomers sighted a luminous object moving westward, brighter than anything in the sky but the moon.

"It is the first time," said Dr. A.R. Hogg, the assistant director, "that the observatory has sighted what might be called an unidentified flying object. What it was remains an open question."

It moved too slowly to be a meteor, he said, and was neither Sputnik I or II. If sighted again, it would be an indication that something was circling the earth like the satellites, concluded Dr. Hogg.

Back in the United States, a sighting report verified and taped by Dr. Adolph G. Dittmar described a round silvery object flying ahead of a jet bomber near Ausable Forks, New York. As the bomber started to gain, it was reported, the UFO speeded up to stay ahead. During a discussion with an AF major, the officer confirmed that many UFOs had been seen that morning over Plattsburgh AFB." (About 27 miles distant.)

The next day — Saturday, the 9th — there were three developments of unusual interest.

At 9:15 a.m. the crew of an Eastern Air Lines flight and two EAL ticket agents clearly saw a bright UFO above Lafayette Airport in Louisiana.

"It was a big shiny rounded object," said Capt. Truman Gile, Jr., a veteran with 16 years of flying.

"we watched it about four minutes. Then it disappeared, as though someone had turned off the light."

The other witnesses included Co-pilot James Hall and Stewardess Jean Mayo. They agreed with Captain Gile that the UFO seemed to hover just beneath a cloud layer at 20,000 feet.

Captain Gile said he had never seen anything like it before and never wanted to again.

"I reported the sighting to the Air Defense Command in Baton Rouge," he said. "They were on the phone waiting when we landed there."

The second development on November 9 was a Pentagon statement in regard to firing on UFOs. The Air Force said its pilots have orders to shoot down unidentified flying objects if they become "hostile." The AF statement read:

"Any object detected and not identified could be called a UFO, not, of course, meaning a flying saucer as no such thing has ever been sighted by the Air Defense Command. When, and if, a UFO is not identified, it would be forced to land and, if it would not, or showed hostile acts or intent, it would be intercepted or destroyed."

(According to Captain Ruppelt, the term "UFO" was coined to apply specifically to flying saucers. In 1954 a Navy directive termed PRNC Instruction 3802.1 and referring to an Air Force letter, 200-5 of 29 April 1952, also confirms that "UFO" sighting reports do not apply to any ordinary aircraft or missiles.)

The third item was an announcement from London that both Norway and the Netherlands had reported a mysterious object flashing overhead.

By Sunday, as the first week of the "flap" ended, there were still enough authentic reports to show that sightings had not suddenly ended.

Astronomers at the National Observatory in France sighted a mysterious yellow elliptical object — "neither a meteor or a space rocket."

At Eau Claire, Wisconsin, about 5:50 p.m. on Sunday, November 10, 1957, Police Lt. Harold Lovvik and several other Eau Claire officers observed a large bright aerial object from which cones of light shot out. It was also seen by members of the Menomonie police department.

Spokesmen at Truax AFB in Madison said the objects, seen in Wisconsin Sunday and previously, could have been "traveling meteorites."

Shortly after 7:00 p.m. three policemen at Hammond, Indiana, saw and chased an "elongated object" reported by numerous citizens. Capt. Dennis Becky said a loud beeping sound caused interference on his police radio during the pursuit. He also stated that police had many complaints about the "beeps" interfering with car radios and blacking out television sets.

As the second week started, sightings continued at a reduced rate and the interest of some reporters and newscasters shifted to the Pentagon. Lou Corbin, Station WFBR Baltimore, informed NICAP that he and Paul Parker, WIP Philadelphia, were cooperating in an attempt to learn the next Air Force move.

"I think there's a stronger statement coming," said Corbin. "Even though press coverage of sightings has dropped, that AF release hasn't stopped questions by the press."

When NICAP learned that Corbin had been unable to reach Stokes, a query was put to Maj. L.J. Tacker, through whom all AF HQ statements on UFOs were being funneled. Major Tacker stated that Stokes had been in the hospital "for nervous tension" and also that Stokes now believed he might have seen some kind of weather phenomenon.

On November 14 NICAP learned that the new Air Force release was due the next day. That evening a new, slightly different "interference" incident was reported at Tamora, Illinois. Electric power failed in a four mile area at a time when a strange flying object was said to have been sighted by Mrs John Riead, wife of a justice of the peace. District Power manager H.D. Heath said workmen found an open circuit breaker, but could find no cause for the unusual interruption.

The following day, November 15, the Air Force issued its expected statement. It labeled all the November sightings as hoaxes, mistakes or as caused by natural phenomena. Five cases were singled out for specific answers:

1) The Levelland incident was caused by ball lightning or St. Elmo's fire. The cause of the stalled cars — wet electrical circuits.

2) In the Alamogordo case the originator of the report had pulled a hoax, said the Air Force.

3) The Coast Guard report brought the AF explanation that radar operators had misread the scope; there were false returns; also the operators had tracked a jet and a propeller driven plane without recognizing them; the deck officers were also misled and had made erroneous reports.

4) In the case of MPs; reports at White Sands, the AF said one object seen was the planet Venus, the other was the moon.

5) The Kearney case was considered wholly unreliable.

Though the Air Force made no attempt to give specific answers for many authentic reports, this was generally overlooked in news stories. The hoax angle inevitably appeared in many headlines and surprisingly few papers questioned Air Force claims that trained observers were in fact deluded.

Privately, some Coast Guard officers denounced the AF explanation of the Sebago case as completely untrue and a deliberate slur on the ability of the Coast Guard officers and radarmen. But for some reason Coast Guard HQ withheld comment. Nor did any officers at White Sands speak up to defend the MP's who were supposed to have mistaken the moon and Venus for spaceships descending at close range.

On the same day Maj. Gen. Joe W. Kelly, Director of Legislative Liaison, USAF, wrote NICAP that the Air Force never intended to turn over UFO sighting reports to the Committee, despite his previous letter to Rep. Peter Frelingheusen of New Jersey that NICAP had received all UFO information in the hands of the Air Force. Paradoxically, in the very same letter, General Kelly revealed that UFO reports are withheld via an "official use only" classification and at the same time he insisted that the USAF had never withheld UFO information.

Within 24 hours it was evident that the new AF press release had turned the tide. Many papers stopped running UFO reports. However, a small but important percentage seemed less impressed than by former AF disclaimers. There were indications that the next "flap" might be harder to explain.

Another result, noticed at NICAP, was a revived fear of ridicule by reputable observers. But UFO reports have not been blacked out completely. Some newspapers and newscasters again are mentioning local sightings. Even an occasional military report leaks out, despite official restrictions.

One of the latest occurred on the afternoon of November 25 when the crew of an AF bomber saw - and reported publicly - three UFOs over the Gulf of Mexico.

Because of official withholding of most military sighting reports the preceding material is not a complete picture of what happened in November. But there is enough documented evidence for analysis and intelligent conclusions.

The opinions of NICAP Board members and Special Advisers will be released later. Meantime, we urge members to weigh the facts carefully so that they can evaluate future sightings and official statements.

The lull may end at any time and the next big increase in sightings may not only top the November flap but break down UFO censorship. A strong hint of it was seen in Canada on December 14 when the dramatic sighting of a huge disc upset the Chatham-Windsor area.

Seen by scores of police, an airliner crew, civil defense officials and hundreds of others, the UFO described as a whirling flaming orange disc - was fully reported with a front page factual story in the *Windsor Daily Star*.

(Though it was first spotted in the U.S., before it streaked across Lake Erie, officers at Selfridge AFB in Michigan denied any knowledge of the object.)

As it flashed over Kent County, the strange object was watched and trailed by dozens of police. Later Capt. J.A. Miller said it was an oval shaped disc, whirling and fiery orange, flying at an altitude of 2000 feet at terrific speed.

Police radios in the region crackled for more than half an hour as reports flowed in from officers who had sighted the UFO.

Over a wide area hundreds of motorists stopped on highways to watch the swiftly maneuvering disc. In Chatham and Ridgetown the pro-

vincial police told the press that the UFO was real "beyond any doubt."

But most important of all was the lack of an official Canadian attempt to hide the facts from the public - or to ridicule the witnesses.

This was Canada. But it can happen here, too. The November flap was not in vain.

## Alien bases on Earth?

from Coral Lorenzen's *Flying Saucers*:

I have shown, in a survey of known facts and reports since the inception of the UFO mystery, that the objects are not just random phenomena - they adhere to a pattern. Their activities indicate that the Earth has been the subject of a geographical, ecological and biological survey accompanied by a military reconnaissance of the whole world's terrestrial defenses. I have shown that they are aware of our attempts at space travel and the launching of artificial satellites. Evidence is ample that they have tested their weapons against our automobiles, planes and defenses. There must now be an interpretation of these facts.

They came in numbers in 1947 - two years after the explosion of the first three atomic bombs. Their survey started almost immediately thereafter; and was pursued as though the plan had been carefully worked out.

Major activity took place in the latter part of 1957 - immediately following the launching of the first Earth satellites. Prior to that they had been busy investigating military installations in South America; after an apparent search for the launching site of the satellites in the United States and Australia (and possibly Russia) they returned to the area they had been occupied with before - South America.

They were doing something in a remote area of Brazil and would brook no interference. Thus, the Ponta Poran incidents.

Moon bases, satellite bases - Earth bases?

## Book Review

# Psychic author explores the holographic nature of reality

*The Holographic Universe*

by Michael Talbot

HarperCollins 1991

HarperPerennial 1992, 338 pages, \$10.00

**Reviewed by Anne Ecker**

In *The Holographic Universe*, Michael Talbot, a seasoned traveller along the boundary between science and the paranormal, explores the idea that reality behaves in many respects like a hologram. As Talbot explains in the introduction, the holographic concept is still developing, and as such should not be called a model or theory. Because of this the bundle of ideas goes by several names such as the holographic analogy and the holographic metaphor. In a world where "theory" has come to mean little more than an opinion, it's pleasant to see the distinction drawn. Sort of like visiting a new acquaintance for dinner and finding the table set with lobster forks. It promises intriguing things ahead.

Talbot begins with a short history of the holographic analogy as it grew out of the independent discoveries of two respected researchers in different disciplines, quantum physicist David Bohm and neurophysiologist Karl Pribram. The summaries of their careers, heavy on brilliance and intellectual courage, have an Indiana Jones feel to them that should inspire readers to go to the sources and read Bohm and Pribram firsthand.

Pribram, in years of research into the nature of memory storage, saw that memory was not confined to one part of the brain but was distributed throughout. Bohm, viewing the unsettling world of quantum physics, came to the view that not only did subatomic particles behave as if they were part of a greater whole, the whole represented the more basic level of reality.

Before launching headlong into a measurement of the world by the holographic paradigm, Talbot devotes a few pages to showing what a holograph is and why it deserves to be counted a metaphysical rosetta stone.

The hologram was discovered in 1947. It was not until the 1960s and the development of lasers that the technology existed to create a hologram, and the discovery received widespread notice in the scientific and popular literature. When Bohm and Pribram read about holograms and their unusual properties they saw an analog to their views of neurophysiology and the subatomic world.

Bohm in particular came to see reality and the visible tangible world as analogous to the holographic image, and felt there was "a deeper order of existence, a vast and more primary level of reality that gives birth to all the objects and appearances of the physical world in much the same way that a piece of holographic film gives birth to a hologram". This he called the implicate order. The visible world, the one we tend to think of as real, he called the explicate order. The information in the implicate order is encoded, forming a template for the explicate order. By this view, time, space and matter are far more transient and illusory than is currently thought to be the case.

*The Holographic Universe* meticulously explores the holographic nature of several physiologic systems such as vision and thought, and looks into ways in which the holographic metaphor sheds light on such things as psychic healing, schizophrenia, multiple personality disorders and lucid dreaming. In a section called "Seeing Holographically" Talbot, who claims psychic experiences, talks about the relationship of such venerable mystic concepts as chakras and auras to the holographic view and offers the work of Dr. Valerie Hunt as evidence that each of us has a piece of the implicate order in the form of a human energy field. Hunt, a physical therapist and professor of kinesiology at UCLA, has measured electrical fields in muscle tissue of various human subjects and has found that the frequencies of the energy field changed with the individual's psychic activity. According to Hunt, a person focusing attention on the material world tended to have energy field readings around

250cps, near the normal physiologic baseline for the body. People with psychic abilities, when actively operating psychically, ran in the 400 to 800cps. Trance psychics operate in a narrow band between 800 and 900cps, and above 900cps one finds what Hunt calls "mystic personalities", people who are more than merely conduits of information: they receive it, and know what to do with it.

Perhaps even more intriguing is Hunt's claim that the human energy field, when displayed on an oscilloscope, produces the strange attractors of chaos.

Before leaving mind and body, Talbot takes a stab at nailing down the nature of miracles, including firewalking and the Jansenist convulsionaries, looking to the implicate order to explain the apparent suspension of physical laws for which these events call.

Talbot gathers a second wind for the final part of the book, holding time and space up to holographic scrutiny. He postulates that time has no meaning in the implicate order, an idea that has widespread implications in paranormal research. If the human energy field is part of a timeless information pool, clairvoyance, psychometry, ghosts and out-of-body experiences (OBEs) find an explanation consistent with their known behavior. Even precognition can be seen as a tapping into the implicate order, though this raises the thorny problem of free will.

Talbot here invokes David Loyle, a clinical psychologist who posits that there are many holograms in the implicate order, and the future is therefore not fixed. Bohm endorses a like view, saying that precognitively viewed events are not the actual future, the future exists as a hologram "substantial enough for us to perceive it but malleable enough to be susceptible to change."

What about the past? In a timeless implicate, past and future should live by the same rules. Here Talbot presents an experiment in which audio tapes containing pleasant and discordant sounds were sent to psychokinetically able people with instructions to listen to the tapes and try to prolong the pleasant sounds using pk. The tapes were reexamined and found to have extended play time for the pleasant sounds. Talbot

presents this as evidence of the mutability of the past, something it clearly is not. Impressive as the claim may be, if it is anything it is evidence of the mutability of the tapes..

And, while we're grouching, there's another problem that comes to mind in connection with the timeless implicate. If time is a meaningless measure in the realm of the human energy field, what meaning can Dr. Hunt possibly assign a measurement of the field's frequency when frequency is defined as a measure of time?

But, as Talbot said early on, it's just an idea, not a full grown theory. There are bugs to be worked out, and if one turns the light on suddenly, they'll be seen scurrying for cover.

Talbot spends much of the last section on near death experiences (NDEs) and reincarnation, discussing near death experiences as a walk into the imaginal, a "plane of existence created by the imagination of many people", yet with an actual reality. This, he speculates, is where the shamans go on their otherworldly journeys. He puzzles over the identity of the ubiquitous beings of light the NDErs encounter, finding no satisfactory explanation.

With the mention of strange beings, could abduction be far behind? Here Talbot turns his attention to UFOs, discussing the indisputably holographic nature of many of the published recent encounters. His conclusion is that the "imaginal is no longer confined to the afterlife realm, but has spilled over into the seeming solidity of our sticks and stones world." He quotes Orpheus (sounds like a job for a shaman) that "the gates of Pluto must not be unlocked, within is a people of dreams." He quotes Vallee, marginally more accessible than Orpheus, who says the UFO phenomenon is an "intelligence of incredible complexity", communicating with us from a "multiverse which is all around us."

And so the reader finds himself backing down the NDErs' tunnel into the realm of UFOs. And if the being of light at the other end looks suspiciously like a tall refugee from Magonia, well, UFOs apparently are not Talbot's strong suit. He endorses their reality, but talks exclusively about their otherworldly aspects which, though they undeniably exist and have in recent years come to

## What is a Hologram?

A hologram is an image created with laser light. The theory of holography was put forward in 1947 by Dennis Gabor, but it was not until the 1960s that the development of the laser made holographic photography possible.

predominate in the literature, do not negate the very real nuts and bolts aspect of the phenomena.

Addressing the issue of the UFO occupants and abductions in particular, Talbot makes a strong, valid point when he cautions against assuming that their actions are understandable in human terms and states that "the true reality of these beings is apparently so transmundane and strange that we have to plumb the deepest regions of our folk memories and mythological unconscious to find the necessary symbols to give them form."

Having pummeled with the holographic paradigm every mystery he could corral, including the Virgin Mary in her Zeitoun steeplejack aspect, Talbot moves into the heavyweight class and takes on God with the question: If reality is a dream, whose dream is it? God's? He points out that nothing points to there being a guiding intelligence in the universe, and that the holographic metaphor is a self-reference cosmology; the dream is dreaming itself. This is all well and good, but for those who like a pinch of pomp with their circumstance, invoking the Father, Son and Implicit Order is likely to be thin soup.

The book ends with a call for a basic restructuring of science, echoing a plea familiar to those in the UFO field:

"Why don't we assume that any class of experiences or phenomena that have been reported, through the ages and across cultures, has a face validity that cannot be denied?"

The book is well written, clear and pleasant to read, with a complete index providing quick reference for a variety of paranormal topics. Most importantly its subject is one of the most intriguing and intellectually satisfying views of nature to come around in a long time.

Laser light is different from ordinary light in that it is coherent. If light is thought of as a wave, this means that ordinary light is made up of random wavefronts. That is, some of the light waves are cresting when others are at their low point; still others are at points in between. In a laser beam all wavefronts are at the same point, cresting together, troughing together. Wavefronts are additive. If a wave at its crest meets a wave of equal height at its low point, they will cancel each other and no wave at all will be produced at that spot. When two wavefronts cross (as when two pebbles are dropped into still water) they create a mix of wavefronts and calm spots called an interference pattern. This property of waves gave rise to holograms.

If a beam of laser light is split into two beams and an object placed in the path of one beam, the wavefronts in that beam will be disrupted in a way specific to the object in its path (an apple cast's an apple's shadow). The two beams are now different, and, if recombined on film, form an interference pattern that can be captured on film. If the developed film is illuminated by a laser beam, a three dimensional image of the object will appear. This is a virtual image; it does not interact with the space it appears to fill. You can put your hand through it without damage to it or your hand.

Aside from their three dimensional quality, holograms have other remarkable properties. In a hologram each piece, no matter how tiny, contains the whole image. Also, it is possible to store remarkably large amounts of information holographically, since changing the angle at which the beams strike the film changes the interference pattern and enables many different patterns to be stored in a small area. These characteristics were what drew the attention of researchers such as Pribram and Bohm to see in the hologram an analog to the workings of nature.

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