

# Credibility of UFO sightings increased

Many King Islanders are this week attaching credibility to reports of recent sightings of unidentified flying objects by private correspondents to "The King Island News" in what they regard as unsatisfactory explanations so far offered by the Department of Transport and the Department of Civil Aviation.

Most members of the public who have contacted the "News" refuse to accept official explanations for the disappearance of Mr. Frederck Valentich and his aircraft on Saturday night between Cape Otway and Cape Wickham. Light in conditions which were described as near perfect, as the product of hallucinations. Credence is given to the view that Mr. Valentich's description of an unidentified aircraft prior to losing radio contact with air traffic controllers is one of the best documented and most re-

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putably backed stories in the history of UFO sightings and experiences.

A leader in "The Australian" on Monday said "there is something hair-prickling about the pilot's recorded dialogue with the Melbourne Flight Service which must raise doubts in the minds of the most confirmed UFO cynics".

First UFO reports received by the "News" in recent weeks was from a correspondent who wished to remain anonymous "for the moment," but requested publication of his letter in the

ion of his letter in the hopes that it might bring forward corroborating reports from other sources.

The correspondent described a number of incidences over a two month period in which a slow moving object with a light had followed a vehicle down the North Road into Currie, and then disappeared towards the lighthouse.

The correspondent claimed other sightings had been made in Currie on the same night; others "further up North" had seen a strange light passing over their house, but when they had gone to investigate, the light suddenly disappeared.

On September 12 according to the correspondent, a strange light appeared near Camp Creek, whilst "several" lights lit up the area as if daylight". The strange vehicle was reportedly oval in shape, the same description given by Mr. George Newman and his sons Peter and Neil, relating an experience they had at approximately 9.30 p.m. on September 20.

The party was returning

The party was returning from a shooting trip when whilst travelling along the Reekar School straight a "bright white light in an oval shape" began to follow them. It then disappeared towards the sea when they reached the butter factory.

According to Mr. Newman's report, the object then with a weaker light, reappeared near Seaview

and continued towards Currie.

Enquiries at the "News" office make it clear that the public is not prepared to be "fobbed off with the jargon of officialdom". Many believe that the authorities

are failing to disclose all that is known. To quote "The Australian", "we are not suggesting that we should fly into a flurry about little green men and

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the like — but we do suggest it is perhaps time mankind made up its collective mind whether it will welcome or seek to repel visitors from space", and this question may indeed be most relevant to King Islanders.

However mystery still surrounds the original objectives of Mr. Valentich and his plane on that fateful Saturday evening.

It would appear that briefing at Moorabbin would not have approved Mr. Valentich's flight plan to King Island unless he had informed them that King

Island Flight Service had been alerted and a request made for landing lights, this being the flyer's responsibility. Mr. Valentich's clearance from Moorabbin was for NVMC, standing for flying at night under visual meteorological conditions, confirming the ideal conditions prevailing.

However King Island

Flight Service had no knowledge of Mr. Valentich's intentions, let alone the need for landing lights in view of his estimated time of arrival. Currie Flight Service was closed at 3 p.m. on Saturday in accordance with normal procedure for that day.

This must inevitably raise the questions whether Mr. Valentich ever had any intention of reaching Currie airport, whether he had in fact intended to land more inconspicuously at an alternative air strip, or if, on applying to what he believed to be King Island Flight Service, he had in fact been intercepted by some other controlling body which gave him the impression that he was clear to land at Currie in accordance with the flight plan which he had filed at Moorabbin.