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Robert Melerine of Yscloskey, Louisiana, points to water tower over which he watched a UFO hover for nearly half-an-hour. The case is described in detail by Dr. Ted Peters in this issue.

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103 Oldtowne Rd.
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Dennis William Hauck
Editor

Walter H. Andrus
Director of MUFON

Paul Cerny
Promotion/Publicity

Rev. Dr. Barry Downing
Religion and UFOs

Ann Druffel
California Report

Lucius Farish
Books/Periodicals/History

Marjorie Fish
Extraterrestrial Life

Stan Gordon
Creatures & UFOs

Richard Hall
Associate Editor

Mark Herbstritt
Astronomy

Rosetta Holmes
Promotion/Publicity

David A. Schroth
St. Louis/Mass Media

John F. Schuessler
UFO Propulsion

Dwight Connelly
Norma E. Short
Editor/Publishers Emeritus

Len Stringfield
Commentary

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FROM THE EDITOR

Recent developments such as the Sturrock Report, discussed by Director Walt Andrus on page 6, Prime Minister Gairy's UN initiative (see last issue), the Acapulco Conference, and even a recent squib in the "Washington Whispers" section of U.S. News & World Report to the effect that President Carter is about to release 'disturbing' UFO information, all point

to the fact that the year 1977 will be one of extreme importance to anyone interested in ufology.

Add to this, a big surge in media interest in UFOs and a significant increase in close encounter cases of all types in recent months. Yes, it's going to be quite a year. So buckle down! We promise to keep you informed in depth every step of the way!

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Warm Light Stops Everything!

By Dr. Ted Peters,
MUFON State Director
for Louisiana

It was nearly 8:45 p.m. on a clear night, January 21, 1977, when Robert Melerine was paddling quietly up the Dike Canal in St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana. He was alert. He was hunting nutria to sell the pelts to New York furriers. In the northwestern sky he saw a light about the size of a star moving toward him, growing bigger. "Oh, it's probably a star or something," he thought. His eyes fell to the banks and trees, looking for game. He ceased paying attention to the moving star.

Suddenly, he was engulfed in warm light. "The next thing I knew everything was bright. So I turned my light off. I thought it was the light itself. (The little light he was referring to was the equivalent to a six volt flashlight.) But everything was still bright: in the boat, the side of me. There was a big glare, ya know. And I looked up and it was above me! And I said, 'Wow!' I looked around but I could barely make it out. It was gigantic, ya know."

Merlerine's first thought was that it was a game warden helicopter about to arrest him. The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries will occasionally put a search light upon a suspected poacher before landing on the water to make the arrest. Later, when telephoned, the conservation department reported they had had no surveillance aircraft in the area at that time.

"I figured they'd come over a loud speaker or somebody'd hollar down. So I listened." But there was no sound whatsoever. No helicopter engine. No loud speaker. No wind. No frogs croaking or ducks calling. Silence.



*Robert Melerine (front) and Irwin Menesses (rear)
with boat and outboard used at original encounter.*

Merlerine said the light made him feel warm. "Then it left me. Just that fast it was gone." He followed it with his eyes as it shot up into the sky towards the woods. "It was glowing," he remarked.

The aghast hunter continued to watch it until he turned the bend and lost sight of it behind the trees. Then he spotted the glow of the campfire built by his partner, Irwin Menesses. Menesses, known widely as Captain Pinky because of his title at the St. Bernard Fire Department, was warming his hands in the 45 degree weather. Melerine recited his adventure to which Pinky responded with a laughing "You're crazy!" Pinky suggested that it might have been a "gas light" (swamp gas), but Melerine said he was certain it was not.

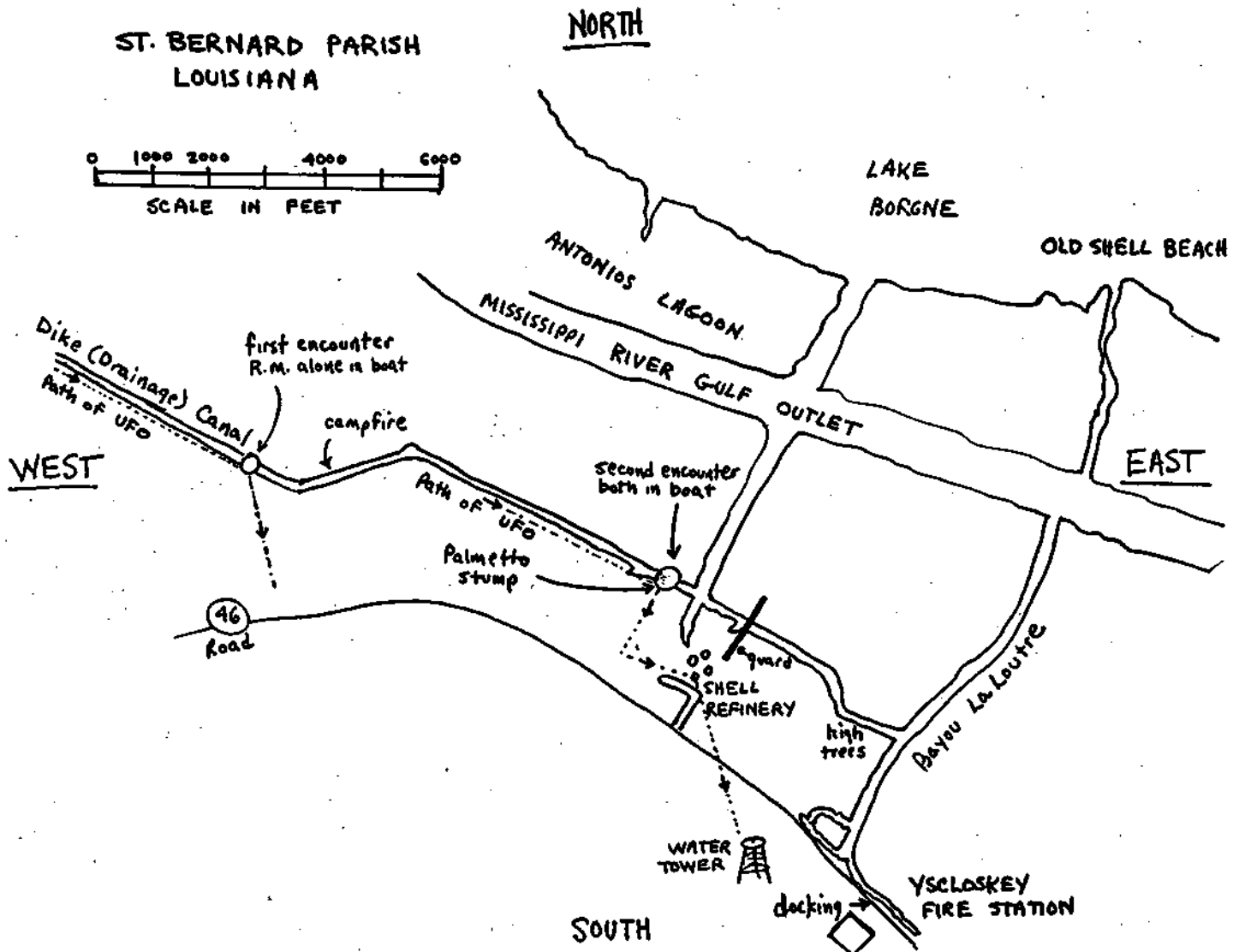
With both men in the boat and the 25 hp Evenrude motor running slowly,

they continued their hunting, proceeding southeast down the canal. They would shine their light, looking for the red sparkle in the nutria's eyes as they swam in the water. Now, however, none were to be seen. No sign of life.

Then the light came flying down the canal from the west aimed right at them. It stopped and hovered above the boat at an elevation of 65 to 70 feet. "Robert, put yer light out. They got us," hollared Pinky. But again there was only silence. No helicopter engine could be heard.

The men were petrified--perhaps literally motionless. Melerine had his rifle on his lap and talked about shooting it, but Pinky said, "no, just in case it belongs to the government." Melerine's hair was standing on end. "It stood out like wire," reported Menesses.

Then everything felt warm. Nothing



moved. The men did not speak, stand up, or move their limbs. They were aware that the motor was still running, but the boat stood absolutely motionless. Something was holding them. Pinky described it as being held by 'strong gravity forces.'

The boat was stopped in the middle of the canal near a tree stump upon which a small palmetto plant was growing. Dr. Peters, MUFON investigator, reports that the canal is approximately 40 feet wide at that

point, freshly dredged to permit large fishing boats to pass, and there is no sign of roots or tree limbs in the water which could have caught and held the small row boat.

"It was shaped on the order of round," said Pinky, "and was every bit as big as my kitchen." He estimated it to be 15 to 25 feet in diameter. The surface of the glow had a connected diamond or square texture or pattern to it. Both men drew pictures of the reported craft, but

Merlerine was much less certain of the shape than was Menesses.

When the glowing light left the boat lurched forward. Pinky was thrown back against the motor and Merlerine down to the floor of the boat. Evidently the force that had been holding the boat from moving released its grip and the sudden acceleration caused by the motor threw the men off balance.

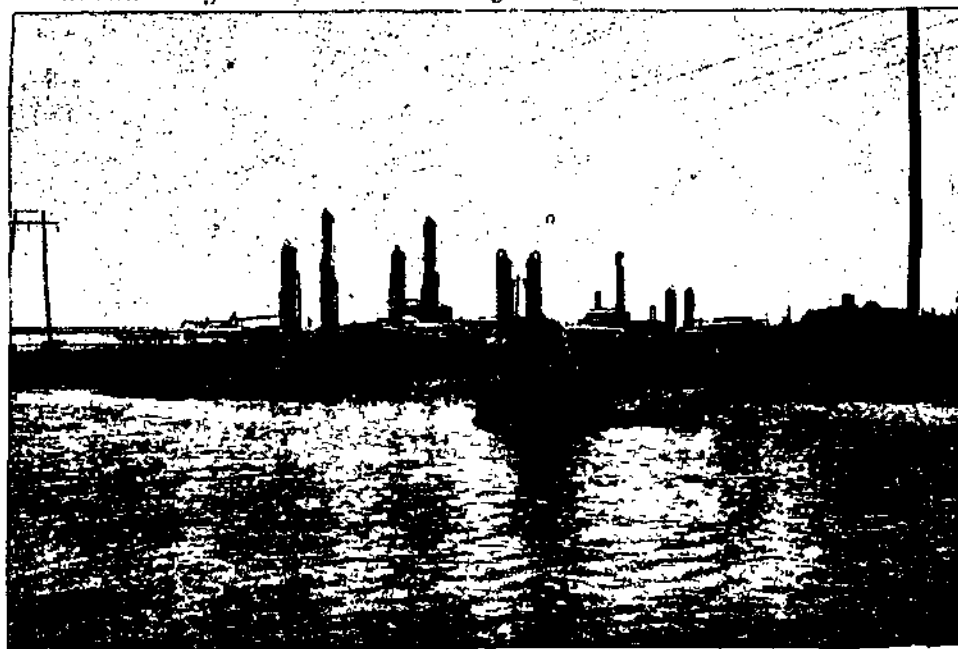
The object flew straight back toward highway 46 and then turned and

stopped near the Shell refinery. It was 9:05 p.m. The two frightened hunters were now racing down the canal at full throttle, but they slowed as they passed the Shell plant. There they saw the UFO about 50 feet above the two hundred foot high refraction towers. They also saw a guard standing on the Shell bridge. Later, after the incident had been reported in a local newspaper, the St. Bernard fire station where both men work received a telephone call. The voice claimed to be that of the guard on duty, but he declined to give his name. He said, "tell those firemen they're not crazy. I saw it too."

The bright object then flew over toward the water tower located a few hundred yards east of the Alluvial Baptist Church near highway 46. There it hovered just above the tower. The boatmen lost sight of it behind the trees as they neared the turn into Bayou LaLoutre. They could see it again, however, as they docked at the canal bank in front of the Yscloskey fire station. Pinky reports, "When I got to the fire station it went right on the side of the water tower and stood there for every bit of 30 minutes. . . . I could see the beam coming down beside the water tower." The hunters drove home about 10:00 exclaiming to one another that they had had an almost unbelievable experience.



Robert Melerine (left) and Captain Pinky (right) with actual light used on the night of the UFO encounter.



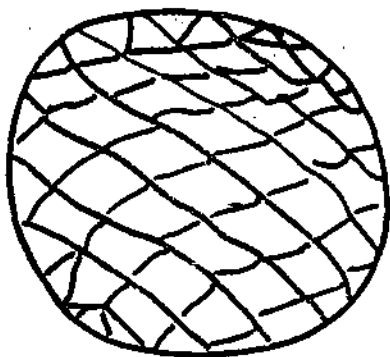
Palmetto bush and stump near which 2nd UFO encounter took place. Yscloskey Shell Refinery in background.

Phoenix

Eighth Annual MUFON Symposium

Saturday, July 16, and Sunday, July 17, 1977 at the Safari Hotel & Convention Center, 4611 N. Scottsdale Rd., Scottsdale, Arizona 85251. The public is invited to the affair, which will be hosted by Ground Saucer

Watch and MUFON of Arizona. Advance registration may be made by writing to: GSW/MUFON, 13238 N. 7th Dr., Phoenix, AZ 85029. The package price for the Symposium is \$16.00.



Sketch of UFO seen by Irwin Menesses and Robert Melerine, St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana, January 21, 1977,

ADDENDA

At one point in the investigation, Robert Melerine reported twenty minutes for which he could not account. Pinky's watch read 8:45 when they entered the boat at the campfire sight. They did not check the time again until passing the Shell refinery at 9:05. Where did the time go? Dr. Peters suspected a time-loss abduction case and considered hypnotherapy.

In the initial interview, Irwin Menesses judged the distance from the camp fire to the palmetto stump to be about two city blocks. This estimate proved to be very short. Later, when Dr. Peters went to the site in the same boat with the same motor, it took five minutes at full throttle to reach the stump from the campfire. The distance is estimated now between one and two miles. If the boat had been traveling on January 21 at the quiet speed of a slow troll--as is reported--then 20 minutes would be appropriate to cover the distance. At open throttle it took less than five minutes to return from the Shell plant to the point of disembarkment, and the men had reported arriving there at about 9:15 p.m. on the 21st.

REVIEW BY: WALT ANDRUS

"REPORT OF A SURVEY OF THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE AMERICAN ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY CONCERNING THE UFO PROBLEM"

We are indebted to Peter Sturrock, Phd., for mailing us a personal copy of his book titled "Report on a Survey of the Membership of the American Astronomical Society Concerning the ufo Problem", SUIPR Report #681 dated January 1977. Dr. Sturrock is Professor of Space Science and Astrophysics, Institute for Plasma Research at Stanford University, Via Crespi, Stanford, California, 94305.

When he conceived the idea of a questionnaire to professional astronomers, it was with a definite purpose in mind. If trained astronomers offer no reports of the UFO type, this would strengthen the view that such reports are misperceptions of known objects and phenomena. If on the other hand, a group of astronomers submit a number of reports fitting for instance, the categories described by Dr. J. Allen Hynek in his book "The UFO Experience", this would support the view that there is a real phenomenon which a trained observer can distinguish from known natural objects and events.

Of the 2611 questionnaires mailed out, 1356 were completed and returned. The initial letter to AAS members was written on April 25, 1975. Summarizing the 202 page report, it leads to these basic answers from the membership of A.A.S.:

- (1) Scientists have thoughts and views but no answers concerning the UFO problem.
- (2) Although there is no consensus,

more scientists are of the opinion that the problem certainly or probably does not.

- (3) A small fraction (of order 5%) are likely to report varied and puzzling observations, not unlike so called "UFO reports" made by the general public. As is the case with reports from the public, many may be unusual observations of familiar objects, however, some seem to be definitely strange.

These results are consistent with the findings of an earlier but more limited survey of members of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (Sturrock 1974), except that the opinions of astronomers (expressed in 1975) concerning the significance of the UFO problem were more positive than were the views of aeronautical engineers (expressed in 1973).

The major portion of the report consists of sightings by astronomers of unusual events witnessed. Dr. Sturrock is to be commended for this positive step to lend more credibility to the UFO phenomenon by surveying professional astronomers. Another significant point was established in that over 80% of the respondents expressed a willingness to contribute to the resolution of the UFO problem if they could see a way to do so but, of those expressing this interest, only 13% could see a way to do so but, of those expressing this interest, only 13% could see a way. Those who have studied the subject are more willing to help and more likely to see a way to help.

CALIFORNIA REPORT

"THE HEFLIN CONTROVERSY" BY IDABEL EPPERSON

(Note: The original concept for "California Report" was a monthly column to be written alternately by Ann Druffel and Rick Zimmerman. Since Mr. Zimmerman has been unable because of work responsibilities to contribute, the alternate months will be available for other California researchers to write on topics of interest. The following discussion of the "Heflin Controversy" is by Idabel Epperson, MUFON State Director for Southern California. She is in a unique position to speak out authoritatively, as she was Acting Chairman of the Los Angeles NICAP Subcommittee (LANS) during the years of the Heflin investigation. AD)

On June 12, 1976 a statement was made before the MUFON Annual UFO Symposium that the photographs of a UFO taken by Rex Heflin in Santa Ana, California "were fraudulent". The speaker suggested that the pictures could have been faked by suspending an aluminum plate from a pole balanced on the roof of Heflin's truck, and the fourth photo, the "smoke ring" could have been a photo montage.

The UFO field has never been publicly and completely acquainted with the true story of the Heflin photos, which were taken August 3, 1965. For the past decade, however, the series of four pictures have been generally accepted by knowledgeable researchers as genuine.

The story has two parts: 1. the scientific examination of the photos by six photographic experts and the establishing beyond doubt of Rex Heflin's integrity; 2. the persistent and determined efforts by either a government agency or cranks (or both) to discredit Heflin and the photographs.

I will not at this time try to cover the second phase of the story although it is fantastic and incredible, but will try to fill that in at a later date. I would like to say this much, however. Over the past twenty years we have

observed a "pattern" in the attempts to discredit certain UFO reports and the witnesses. A UFO report may be exceptional, but if it is only known locally and does not get national coverage the witnesses are not harassed. But if the UFO report is exceptional and gets national coverage, the witnesses are in for trouble. The Heflin photos were publicized. Internationally! The results were to be expected and history has borne this out.

Regarding the scientific examination of the Heflin photos, the following experts pronounced them authentic: Clay Miller, Chief Photographer of the Santa Ana Register; Ralph Rankow, at the time NICAP's photographic analyst; Joe Carson, a Los Angeles photographic expert; Adrian Vance, former official photographic consultant for MUFON; Don Berliner, also a NICAP photo analyst.

The sixth analyst to study the Heflin photos was a Dr. "A", who has always requested anonymity. He is a top scientist at Jet Propulsion Laboratory who spent several months investigating the Heflin case and had concluded that the picture were genuine. He had available to him a type of computer photographic enhancement process that resolved obscure details. With the type of equipment he had to work with, it was only natural that he should discover much detail that had not been visible to the others. It was Dr. A. who discovered that the object had a "dome", that the black band around the UFO was "particulate matter"—in other words smoke or smog and other particles. One day he excitedly phoned to report that he had found a "shimmering" around the object, exclaiming that the object seemed unearthly. The shimmering had nothing to do with the object being in motion. It was something else, but just what this highly qualified man did not know.

Dr. A. made a wood model of the Heflin UFO, the upper exterior

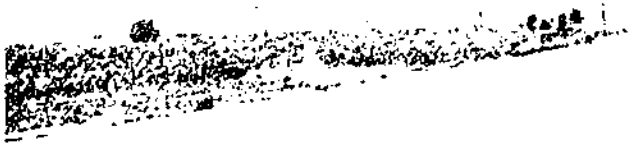
painted with aluminum finish, the underside black. It was complete with a black band, a dome, and a 20-30 degree pie-shaped wedge of aluminum to represent the rotating beam of light reported by Heflin. Two years to the date of Heflin's sighting, on August 3, 1967 Dr. A., Rex Heflin and three NICAP aerospace engineers met at the sighting location on Myford Road in Santa Ana. Pictures were taken of the model on top of a pole, measurements were taken and other experiments performed.

Dr. A. was pleased and satisfied with his findings. He went on to conduct his own investigation of the Heflin case, going over ground already covered by the NICAP Subcommittee, including calculations by John Gray. These were calculations that the Air Force had never challenged. They ignored them—but they didn't challenge them. Dr. A. personally interviewed Heflin's associates, and concluded that the photos were not a hoax and that Heflin was an honest man, as other investigators before him had concluded.

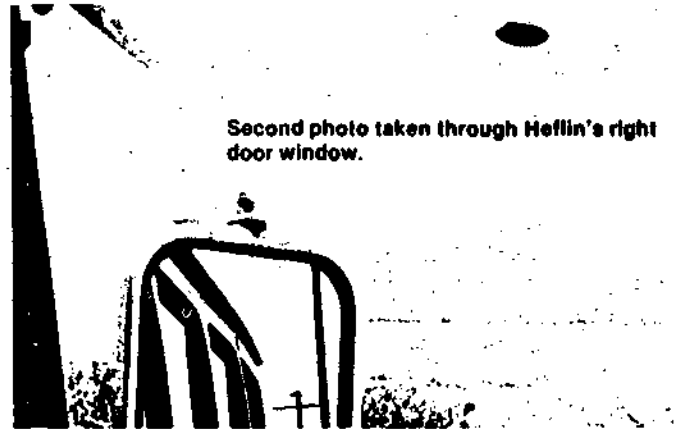
Strangely enough, some of Heflin's strongest support can be found in the original AIR FORCE REPORT (marked FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY) giving a detailed account of the AF INVESTIGATION AND A THREE AND ONE-HALF HOUR INTERVIEW WITH Heflin by Captain Charles F. Reichmuth whose full title was: Investigating Officer USAF, Director Technical Support Directorate, Deputy for Foreign Technology, Space Systems Divisions, Systems Command. Here are a few excerpts:

"Pg. 138 - Par. f. . . Observer stated that when the UFO was tilted so that he could see the underside that he observed a small, narrow, rotating beam of light which began at the center of the underside of the object and ran to the outside edge of the object. . . Officials in the G-2 office at El Toro [Marine Base California] stated that the light line

Heflin's first photo of UFO taken through windshield of his truck.



Second photo taken through Heflin's right door window.



Third photo through right door window as object began to move north.



Last photo taken by Heflin outside his truck as UFO suddenly shot straight up, leaving this strange vapor in its wake.



was clearly visible in the original photo."

"Pg. 145 - Par. 2...About one hour's conversation ensued with Mr. Heflin's supervisor, Mr.---and one or two other officials in the Road Department. All vouchedd for Mr. Heflin's character, etc. which is described earlier in this report."

"Pg.145 - Par. 8...Based on the investigating officer's conversations with Mr. Heflin, it appeared that he was a normal, upright and tolerant citizen. From all appearances he is not attempting to perpetrate a hoax."

Another surprising source of support for Heflin came from Robert J. Low, a prominent member of the Condon Committee. According to a Santa Ana newspaper, Low was, "impressed with Heflin's cooperative attitude and sensible viewpoint." "He certainly isn't the crackpot type," Low commented. Despite the official Air Force verdict, Low termed the Heflin photos "among the top four or five items of photographic evidence in existence" on UFOs.

The UFO which Rex Heflin saw and photographed was only one of many that visited Orange County during August of 1965, the same time period other parts of the nation were experiencing flaps of their own. Sometime during the first week of August 1965

two women and a child observed an object which was identical or nearly identical to the Heflin object, an outstanding and well-documented case occurring in Sherman Oaks, California, about 30 miles northwest of Heflin's sighting location.

Another sensational low altitude sighting also occurred during the first week of August 1965 about 15 or 20 miles from the area of Heflin's sighting. Viewed by numerous witnesses, the UFO was a brilliantly lighted disc with a dome top which silently hovered above high tension wires bordering the Santa Ana Freeway, as cars lined up, parked on the shoulder and some persons even scrambled up the embankment to get a closer look, the UFO moved very slowly slightly above the wires. One mont later, on September 4, 1967 a private pilot flying near the El Toro Marine Corps Air Station spotted a "saucer"-like craft which shone like polished aluminum. He was not alone; two passengers in his Piper Cherokee shared the sighting with him.

These reports of UFO sightings in and near Santa Ana during the same time period as the Heflin sighting show clearly that the Heflin UFO was not an isolated one. in fact, it was one of many described by independent witnesses which showed

a strong resemblance to the UFO that Heflin saw and photographed.

During our first interviews with Rex Heflin, he told us about a crew of surveyors working near the Santa Ana Freeway at the time he took the pictures of the object. We tried to locate the members of this survey crew, but I realize we did not put sufficient effort into it. Obviously they did not report the sighting for the same reason Rex did not report it, and for the same reason that the vast majority of witnesses everywhere prefer to remain silent.

Years after Heflin's sighting I received confirmation of the crew of surveyors working near the Freeway, including the name of the crew's supervisor. This lead is being followed up by a MUFON member whose professional experience includes searching for missing persons.

We have lived a long time with the Heflin case, and apparently the work isn't over yet. But we cannot let the statement that the Heflin photos are "fraudulent" go unchallenged. This patently false attack upon Heflin, eleven years late, with no attempt to check with the original investigators seems very curious. Is it an example of "debasing of the strongest cases"? Or is it merely rank ineptitude?

UFOlogy, Religion, and Deception

By Barry H. Downing

One element which constantly hovers over UFO research is the issue of deception. People say they see something, which we call a UFO, and which many of us have concluded is some kind of reality from another world. But, are we being deceived? The issue of deception has important ramifications from the point of view of the Biblical religion.

1) Readers of the **UFO Journal** are deeply indebted to Philip J. Klass for his time-consuming research in the Travis Walton case, published in the July and August, 1967, issues of the **Journal**. While Klass has not proven beyond doubt that the Walton case is a fraud, it is clear that the evidence in favor of the fraud theory is strong.

Thus, the first thing that faces us in UFO research is the reliability of the witnesses. Are they trying deliberately to deceive us? In UFO research, especially if we hope that UFOs are some kind of reality from another world, we are vulnerable to being "taken in" by a good UFO story because we desperately want to get at the bottom of the UFO mystery, and hope that the latest report, no matter how fantastic, may be true because we want it to be true.

In the field of religion, this problem is very old. There have been traveling evangelists in the United States, who have claimed to have "Healing Powers" and other types of supernatural gifts. Maybe some have, but it

is also clear that this has been an area of much fraud. Many people want to believe in prophets and miracle workers.

The Bible tells the story of how one old prophet deceived another prophet into coming to his house for dinner against the will of God by saying, "I also am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord saying, 'Bring him back with you into your house that he may eat bread and drink water.'" (I Kings 13:18) The young prophet wanted to believe in the angel story — he was hungry. But the old prophet had lied.

In the New Testament, Jesus warns frequently not to be deceived by false prophets, but sorting out false and true is no easy task. Many people think Jesus was a false prophet — a master of deception, as Hugh Schonfield has shown in his well known book **The Passover Plot**, which argues that Jesus faked his death on the cross.

In the field of religion, we are used to dealing with the issue of fraud, deliberate deception. Many of those scientists working in the UFO field are not used to this. Recently we have heard of scientists "doctoring" mice to make their experiments appear to yield results which will lead to further government funding, but for the most part, scientists do not work with the constant fear that they are deliberately being taken in. But fraud does go with the UFO territory, just as surely as it does with religion.

Thus, in the UFO field, as in religion, we must guard against being too quick to believe. This means that we must risk insulting those who claim to be UFO witnesses, by questioning them carefully. We can, perhaps, take away some of the pain of not trusting witnesses by explaining to them that fraud has been frequent in our field, and we must take all precautions to guard against it. In religion I say, "I believe in God. Forgive me for being less sure about you."

The other thing is that we must not get down on ourselves too badly if we are taken in once in awhile by fraud. A boxer who gets into the ring expects to take a few punches. He doesn't want to. He guards against it. But if he can't take punches, he had better get into another line of work. We in the UFO field must guard against fraud, but we should not be too discouraged if we have been "taken in" by the Walton case. We have to take the risk of being "taken" by the Travis Waltons, because, of course, the case might be true. It might provide the key to the truth about UFOs. So this type of "deception" problem is one we have to live with if we want to keep trying to uncover the UFO mystery.

2) A second aspect of the "deception" problem is that a UFO observer may be sincere, but he himself may have been deceived. This deception may have been accidental, or deliberate. If deliberate, it may have

been of human, or superhuman origin.

a) The United States Government, in its explanation of the UFO problem, has, for the most part, developed a "natural deception" theory of UFOs. The usual term for this is "misidentification of natural phenomena." In other words, the UFO observer reports seeing what he thinks is a UFO, a reality perhaps from another world, but instead he has seen a weather balloon glowing in the sky, a shooting star, swamp gas, airplane landing lights, or as one scientist speculated, maybe even clusters of flying ants which were giving off an electrical charge.

Most scientists who do not believe UFOs are from another world start with the assumption that if the observer is sincere, then he has been "deceived" by natural phenomena. Philip Klass, author of *UFOs Explained*, has this underlying thesis behind all his work. In the case of most UFO objects in the sky, this works out fairly well. There are so many things in the sky — stars, plane lights, etc., at night, and birds, planes, balloons, clouds, etc., in the day, not to mention esoteric subjects such as plasma and atmospheric distortions, that alternate plausible explanations for most UFOs which are in fact flying can be offered. In a sense, after the horse has been stolen, it is anyone's guess who has it.

When UFOs are on the ground, men like Klass tend to assume the possibility of fraud, and often this thesis apparently proves to be true, as he so well argues in his analysis of the Walton case.

We in the UFO field do have
10

to be careful of the "natural deception" of the UFO observer. But, at the same time, I do not believe we should adopt the thesis of Klass, that all UFO reports can be explained as either natural or deliberate deception. This means that if something new did happen — if we did confront a reality from another world — we could never admit it, because we were too busy "explaining it away."

We have a similar problem in the field of religion. It is called "demythologizing." There are many in the field of religion who do not believe in the possibility of the miraculous. They believe all miracles are myths. Thus Schonfield, mentioned above, cannot believe the resurrection of Jesus is a true story. It must be a plot, a fraud.

The relation between "demythologizing" in the UFO field and in religion is well illustrated in the work of the late Dr. Donald H. Menzel of Harvard. Menzel assumed that all UFOs could be explained away as misidentification of natural phenomena. In an article by Menzel entitled "UFOs — The Modern Myth," published in the book *UFOs: A Scientific Debate*, edited by Carl Sagan and Thornton Page, Menzel has a section entitled "Flying Saucers of the Bible." With ease, Menzel explains the burning Bush of Moses as an example of "St. Elmo's Fire," and the parting of the Red Sea as a mirage.

It is probably possible to explain away most of the miracles in the Bible as mistaken natural phenomena, or as some form of fraud. Also, we can explain away most UFO reports as some form of deception.

It is possible. But it is also

dangerous. Suppose that hidden in the midst of all this deception is something extremely important to every human on the face of the earth. It would be unwise to allow the frustration caused by all this possibility for "deception" to cause us to throw out either the religious, or the UFO, baby with the bath.

b) An additional dimension to the deception of the observer is the possibility that he really is seeing what he thinks he sees, but what he sees has been contrived by another human being in order to deceive him.

A common example of this involves stories of students who tie a flash light to a helium filled balloon, and let it float up into the night sky. Sure enough, many fooled observers call in a UFO report.

One can speculate on an even more elaborate example. One might suppose that the U.S. government, or some government of the world, has built our UFOs, and has had crews of midgets in strange uniforms land on highways where they can be observed and reported, for the very purpose of causing the people of the world to think we are being visited by beings from another world. They would then leak a rumor that they are carrying on a secret investigation, while publicly denying it. For what purpose? To keep the public in favor of the space program? Who knows? I am not suggesting this is happening, but it shows further potential for another layer on the onion of deception.

Again, the parallel to this in the religion field is the theory of Schonfield that the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus was staged by him, and a few

disciples, all for the purpose of fooling the public. I don't accept this theory, but it illustrates how this dimension of the deception problem in the UFO field has a counterpart in religion.

c) The final aspect of the problem of deception is in a sense the ultimate one. The problem goes something like this: UFOs really exist, and they are operated by beings from another world. But the purpose of these beings is impossible to understand (or nearly so) because they are deliberately deceiving us concerning their purpose.

Richard Hall has raised this problem, and Ron Westrum, MUFON consultant in sociology, responded with an article "Matching Wits with Extraterrestrials" in the June 1975 issue of *Skylook*. Westrum argues that UFO investigation is more like a criminal investigation than a scientific investigation, with which I agree, except that to tie UFOs with "criminal" is prejudicial. After all, do we have much proof they have done any harm? Are they guilty of anything worse than existing, and watching?

Hall had argued that if UFOs are trying to deceive us on purpose, then we might as well quit. Westrum said, "To the ETIs are often attributed many characteristics formerly reserved for God: in particular, omniscience and omnipotence. If one assumes these attributes are indeed possessed by the ETIs, then if we ARE being deceived by them, throwing in the towel would be justified." Westrum then went on to argue that probably UFO beings are fallible and vulnerable, and,

therefore, we have every right to continue our search, our attempt to see through their deception.

I am not so easily discouraged. I would say that even if UFOs have the deceptive power of God himself, I still want to see if I can figure out his game. After all, even if God decided to deceive us, it might be for a purpose; psychologists make rats run mazes. A maze is deliberate deception by a god figure. If the rat does not try to find his way through the maze, God will not be pleased!

A fruitful approach is to ask the question: if a UFO reality from another world is trying to deceive us, what is the purpose of this deception?

I believe Jacques Vallee's recent book *The Invisible College* makes good progress in answering this question. Vallee, who through the years has been scientific in his method, in this book winds up with an essentially religious conclusion about the purpose of UFO beings. His final statement concerns "The Next Form of Religion."

Vallee offers the theory that UFO beings have made selected contact with human beings over the past centuries. They have done this, however, under cover, or at least, in the background of human consciousness. What is the purpose of these contacts? Vallee says the UFO beings are exercising a kind of control over human history. He uses the analogy of a heating control system in a home in which a furnace comes on if the house becomes too cold, and the air conditioner comes on if it becomes too hot. The UFO beings thus exercise

some control — but not absolute control — over human destiny. They control within limits.

I like this theory, and am pleased that Vallee sees its essentially religious nature. What then is the purpose of these beings carrying on a kind of control of human history, but at the same time remaining "hidden" in part, and perhaps trying deliberately to deceive us concerning their role and purpose?

It could be, within the "temperature limits" of perhaps 67 to 72 degrees, to maximize the human experience of freedom in these limits.

What is the purpose of human life? Is there any purpose? Is there any God, any reality who made it all with any purpose in mind? These are the traditional questions of religion. Mankind has yet to agree on the answers to these questions. There have been answers offered. The Biblical religion has been provided as part of this answer. Yet this answer can only be accepted on "faith," that is, there is the possibility that those who accept the biblical religion have been deceived.

It has been my theory — my guess, and I may have been deceived — that the same reality is behind our genuine modern UFO reports, and the biblical religion. The God of the Bible, after all, hides behind some kind of screen. He is not out in the open for everyone to see. But there are rumors he, on occasion, sends his angels — if you can believe the reports.

All of this brings us full circle to the Travis Walton case. Klass has done an excellent job

of collecting evidence in favor of deliberate fraud by Walton. But, of course, Klass has not proven fraud. Walton has not admitted fraud.

Suppose that the UFO reality picks its "abduction" targets carefully, it picks humans who do not have too good a reputation. It picks a man like Travis Walton with a desire to be taken aboard a UFO, a man who has flirted with drugs, and then sends him back to earth, with an abduction story, but not an air tight story. How's that for cover?

Ernest P. Moyer has, in fact, argued, in his book **The Day of Celestial Visitation**, that UFO contactee targets are carefully chosen, in such a way that they will tell their story, because they have an inner need to tell it, but they will not be believed. He mentions George Adamski and Daniel Fry as examples.

My personal view is that Klass is right, and Walton is probably a fraud. But the other possibility is there, the possibility that the UFO beings have contacted us, and covered their trail beautifully again.

There is one piece of evidence, which Klass does not appear to examine carefully, which might point to the possibility that Walton does not tell a reliable story precisely because the UFO beings tampered with the evidence. According to Klass, of the six men who reported seeing Travis Walton running toward the UFO, none failed a lie detector test administered by C.E. Gilson of the Arizona Department of Public Safety of Phoenix, and five were judged to "pass" it. This would be pretty strong evidence in favor of Walton

coming in close contact with the UFO reality. Furthermore, it would be strong evidence against mass conspiracy to commit fraud, which is Klass's thesis.

I believe that any further investigation of the Walton case should focus on those other than Walton who were witnesses to his apparent abduction. If their testimony stood up under further examination by a competent polygraph operator, where would we be?

We would be left with the possibility Walton appeared to be abducted but wasn't, by the possibility that he was abducted, but is lying about what he saw, he was abducted and is telling some mixture of truth and falsehood about what he saw, is really telling what he saw, but has been programmed by the UFO reality in such a way that he thinks he is lying about what he saw, or that he really saw what he says he saw, but it was all "staged," for some mysterious purpose of deception, or combination of deception and revelation, as part of what Vallee calls the control process.

Would God lie to us? Or, more likely, the devil? Does anything turn out to be "real" when you get to the bottom of the UFO story? Or are we like the physicists who are in search of the "atom," who keep looking for the "smallest" particle of energy, only to discover atoms can divide into protons, neutrons, electrons, and these, in turn, broken into "quarks," and quarks into who knows what?

The difference is that physicists can get government grants

to go chasing after quarks. Students of UFOs just have to keep going on faith. But if it weren't for deception, would we really love truth?

To many, the idea that God would deceive people deliberately seems unethical, and, therefore, ungodly. Whatever the ethics of it, it seems firmly a part of the biblical God.

The disciples of Jesus asked him why he taught in parables. He answered: "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given." Furthermore, "This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand." (Matthew 13:10-13) This was all to fulfill the words of the prophet Isaiah, who had said that men would see God in action, but not understand what they saw.

Thus, Old Testament and New Testament testify to a God, who as part of his plan, confounds, fools, blinds, deceives and confuses the wise men of the day. The biblical rationale for this is that God wants to crush the pride of the wise men of each age.

If UFOs are in fact the angels of God, doing their thing, God has indeed done it again. After all, who among the Christian wise men has suggested that UFOs carry the angels of God? Needless to say, I have sent many articles to this effect to Christian magazines, and have been quietly rejected.

But, of course, maybe I am confused, deceived, and deserve to be rejected. No matter how you look at it, deception looks like a good bet, except that deception can be deceiving.

UFO Sighted from Police Helicopter

by Ann Druffel

On February 2, 1977 Sgt. Roger Stevens of the Glendale Police Department called. There has been a standing agreement between Sgt. Stevens and SKYNET (MUFON) for about two years that if a worthwhile sighting occurred over Glendale, he would call us. He informed me that a Glendale police helicopter had sighted an unusual object the previous evening February 1, 1977 (Tuesday) at 8:40 p.m.

I spoke with one of the two witnesses, Officer Richard Quinn, who had given the report to Sgt. Stevens, his immediate supervisor. He was interviewed initially by phone. The following is his statement, paraphrased as exactly as possible from notes taken during the conversation:

"I and Officer Robert Doom were flying police patrol in the Glendale area, southbound near Glorietta and Canada Blvd. We were at 2000 feet mean sea level, about 1100 feet off the ground.

"We saw what at first appeared to be a fixed wing aircraft flying about 100 mph northbound. It was about 200 feet below us on our left. Since the object only had one yellowish-white, bright light and no other identifiable navigation lights, I turned the helicopter in a left turn to investigate. The light came up to our level and began an orbiting maneuver with us.

"As the helicopter went into a left-hand orbit, the object followed suit. For one to two full minutes the helicopter orbited with the object maintaining a perfect 180 angle from their chopper, going the same speed (60 miles per hour) and at the

same altitude as the helicopter, maintaining a distance of 300-500 feet.

"The object looked like a long cylinder, 10-15 feet high and 5-8 feet wide. Its one light was bright yellowish-white. One one occasion it looked as if the object was coming toward us. I quickly turned the helicopter to the right and the object seemed to recede to its original 300-500 feet distance. We continued orbiting.

"After one to two minutes the object started rising. It climbed about 500 feet and started away in the direction of Chevy Chase Canyon (southeast). The object appeared to turn on this maneuver and momentarily (1-2 seconds) it appeared as if it had two or a dual light. Then the light and the entire object vanished. It did not disappear into the distance as if it put on speed. One moment it was plainly visible; the next instant the light and cylinder were not there.

"The sighting lasted 4-5 minutes in all. Neither Officer Doom or I noticed any effect on the helicopter motor, controls or gauges. The radio continued to work without static. We talked about the encounter for an hour afterwards, trying to figure out what the object could have been.

"The light was positioned directly at the bottom and sent a glare upwards onto the cylinder, showing its outline. The cylinder was dark black, against an average clear sky with a near-full moon. I was stunned at the encounter. I never believed in UFOs before, but now I believe that people have really seen things."

At the investigator's suggestion, Officer Quinn that afternoon called

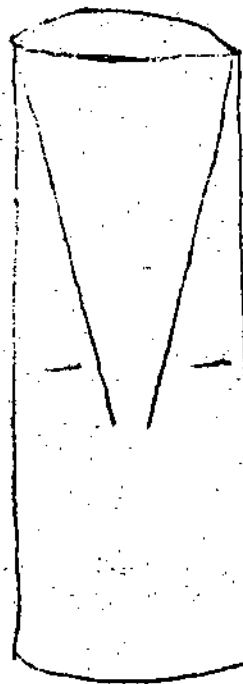
the Hollywood-Burbank Airport to inquire if the chopper and/or the object had been caught on radar. He learned that the chopper was outside the airport's five mile radar limit and that it had not been seen on radar at the time in question.

FOLLOWUP: On February 3 Officers Doom and Quinn were interviewed in person at their ground rest quarters at the police heliport, 1000 Flower St. Present on behalf of MUFON and CUFOS were Ann and Charles Druffel and Dr. William Hassel. The witnesses were interviewed for two hours, and a 90-minute tape recording was made.

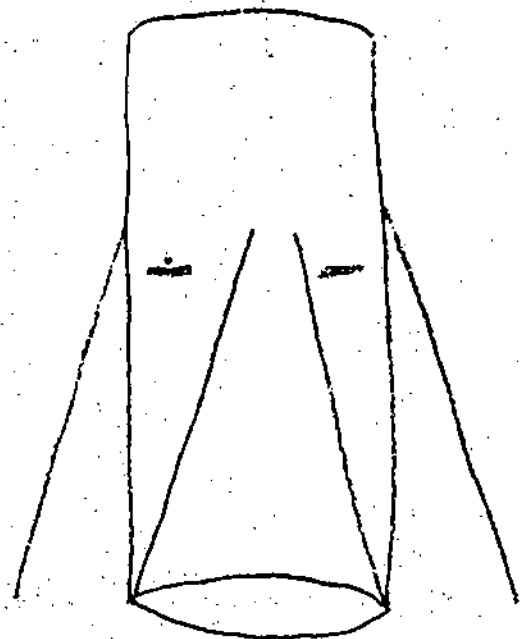
Officer Doom fully confirmed Officer Quinn's description of the object and the encounter. They drew sketches, copies of which are attached to this report. Some new information concerned the witnesses' sighting of "struts" which were seemingly attached to the object's cylindrical body. The two witnesses saw these "struts" in different positions on the body. This could be due to two causes: 1) that the angle at which Quinn was viewing the object was sufficiently different from Doom's vantage point that the struts seemed to be projecting away from the body rather than closed in onto the body or 2) that the object had, in reality, four or more "struts" and the two witnesses viewed or homed in on different ones, not noticing the others. An interesting fact here is that if the two sketches are put together (see drawing), the result is very similar to a UFO reported from Bebedouro, Brazil in the FSR Vol. 19, No. 6 November-December 1973. In an



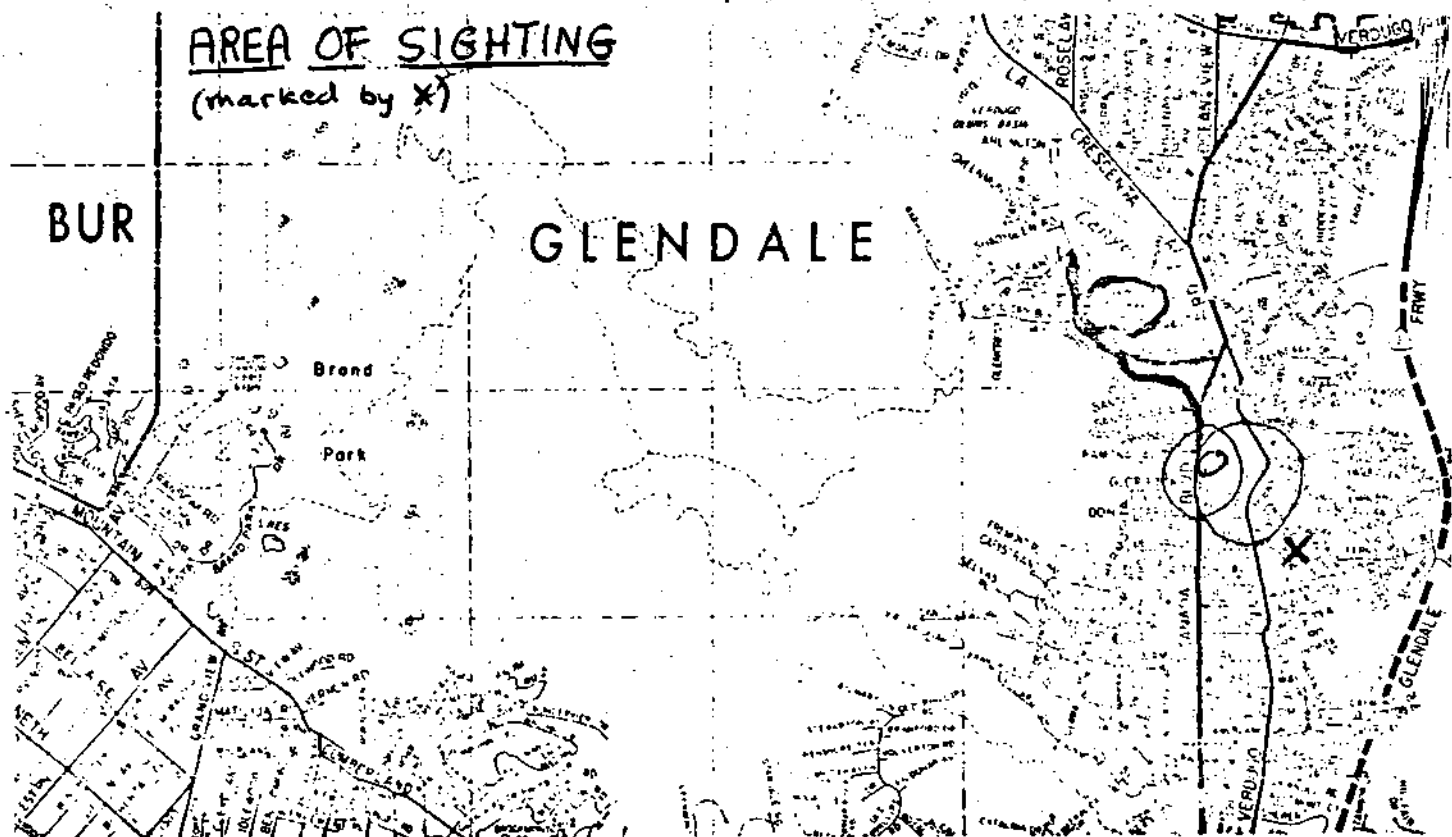
Officer Quinn's sketch of the UFO. The body was black with a yellow light at the bottom. "Struts" were seen projecting downwards.



Officer Doom's sketch shows UFO with "struts" pulled in against UFO body. He reported the same color configuration as Officer Quinn.



Composite sketch by Ann Druffel shows features of both drawings and a marked similarity with a UFO seen over Bebedouro, Brazil, several years ago.



attempt at correlation, it is pointed out here that the Bebedouro object was about 2 meters wide and about 4 meters high, corresponding generally with the Glendale object, and the color was similar.

Also, there is possible correlation here with the Yorba Linda, California photo. This object had four thin "legs" protruding from the bottom, and there is evidence that one "leg" had been retracted or otherwise "folded up" out of view before the photo was taken.

The transcript is cut short because of a malfunction within the machine. In addition to the dialogue in the transcript, the witnesses stated that they did not notice any physical or physiological effects from the sighting---no reddened eyes, etc.

Dr. Hassel went over the helicopter concerned with a compass, comparing the results with another helicopter stationed nearby. The compass needle deflected in different directions on the two craft, but there was no evidence of any meaningful magnetic residual effect on the helicopter from the encounter. Most of the helicopter's structure was of magnesium and aluminum, and very little steel was used in the manufacture.

On February 4th CUFOS was informed of the sighting. Allan Hendry stated that he would try to see if any meteorological radar records had by chance captured the images, or partial images of the helicopter and/or the object's circling maneuvers. He also stated that he would contact complete radar coverage for Southern California regarding the sighting.

On February 9th the investigator discussed the case once more with Mr. Hendry. He had contacted all available radar facilities up and down the coast and none of them had

any confirming data on the sighting.

Mr. Hendry raised the possibility that the object could have been a large helium-filled balloon, perhaps from a private source such as pollution research. He suggested the possibility that the witnesses were, in fact, circling around a balloon slowly rising up into the air, rather than the object actually following them around in a circular orbit. He had learned that the winds on the night in question were light and variable, generally northerly (20-30 degrees east and west of north), at 3 knots. Since the object seemed to move southeast before disappearing, if it had been a balloon it could have caught a northwesterly breeze. Also, he wondered about the witness being able to see the light (positioned on the bottom of the object) when the object was 200 feet below them. The following facts would seem to work against the balloon theory:

1. the object, even at 200 feet lower altitude, was clearly visible to both pilot and observer; therefore, it would have had to be at such an angle that the light would be visible even when at a lower altitude, even at the bottom of a solid black cylinder.

2. The statement that the object was proceeding northward at 100 miles per hour (against the wind).

However, since the balloon theory cannot at this time be completely discounted, continued efforts will be made to locate witness on the ground especially persons who might have viewed the circling maneuver described. A notice is appearing in the Glendale Ledger on February 9th asking for "witnesses to a aerial object, cylindrical with a large light, on Feb. 1st, about 8:40 p.m."

The possibility that a meteorological radar record would confirm a true circling maneuver with the object is being checked out by Mr. Hendry.

1976 MUFON SYMPOSIUM PROCEEDINGS

(84 pages)

"Swamp Gas Plus Ten - And Counting" by Dr. J. Allen Hynek, Director of the Center for UFO Studies.

"Canadian UFO Residuum" by Henry H. McKay, MUFON Canadian Regional Director.

"Heavenly Chariots And Flying Saucers" by Dr. Ted Peters, MUFON State Section Director for Central South Carolina.

"UFOlogy and the Digital Computer - A Lesson In The Evaluation Of UFO Secondary Evidence" by William H. Spaulding, Director of Ground Saucer Watch, Inc.

"The Operation ARGUS Concept - A New Look At UFO Event Sharing And UFO Data Sharing" by Ray Stanford, Director of Project Starlight International.

"Analysis Of Humanoid Reports" by David F. Webb, MUFON Eastern Regional Director and Co-Chairman of the MUFON Humanoid Study Group.

"Must We Stand Idly By? Social Reaction To UFO Reports" by Dr. Ron Westrum, MUFON Consultant in Sociology.

The 1976 Proceedings is available from MUFON, 103 Oldtowne Rd., Seguin, Texas 78155 for \$5.00 post-paid.



MUFON

103 OLDTOWNE RD.
SEGUIN, TX 78155

Phones:

512-379-9216
(MUFON headquarters and
Walt Andrus' home)

ANCIENT ASTRONAUTS?

BY STUART W. GREENWOOD
DEPT. OF AEROSPACE ENGINEERING
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
COLLEGE PARK, MD 20742

Did our planet receive visits from extraterrestrials in prehistoric or early times? There are those who say yes and those who say no. At the time of writing I regard both positions as indefensible.

We have no unquestionable proof of such visits, in my opinion. Nor do we have any reason for excluding the possibility of such visits. To be dogmatic about the question of ancient astronauts either way is therefore to invite the contempt of rational scholars. What is evidently required is a sincere approach to the hypothesis of extraterrestrial contact with Earth.

A hypothesis is, after all, no more than a proposition to be used as a basis for further study and reasoning. As with other areas of scientific inquiry, pursuing the ancient astronaut hypothesis may lead to sufficient progress that it becomes an established scientific discipline. On the other hand it may flourish for a while and then become no more than a historic curiosity. No true scientist will object to either development as in either event we shall all end up the wiser for the experience.

The above preamble is by way of appealing to anyone who gets involved in the subject to take it seriously as a subject. Too many books and articles have claimed to have proven the reality of extraterrestrial contact when such proof has not, in my view,

been forthcoming. Too many books and articles have attacked the hypothesis on the grounds that the so-called evidence offered is insubstantial thereby throwing out the baby with the bathwater.

I already have five different books devoted almost exclusively to attacking the book "Chariots of the Gods?" by Erich von Daniken. It really is time the critics spread their net wider if they wish to perform a service to contemporary ideas. To this end I offer the following list of my favorite half-dozen books dealing directly with the ancient astronaut theme.

1. Erich von Daniken, "In Search of Ancient Gods", Souvenir Press, 1973.
2. Josef F. Blumrich, "The Spaceships of Ezekiel", Bantam Books, 1973.
3. Max H. Flindt and Otto O. Binder, "Mankind-Child of the Stars", Fawcett Publications, 1974.
4. W. Raymond Drake, "Gods and Spacemen Throughout History", Henry Regnery, 1975.
5. Zecharia Sitchin, "The 12th Planet", Stein and Day, 1976.
6. Peter White, "The Past is Human", Angus and Robertson, 1974.

The last-named book is in fact a critical treatment of the hypothesis

distinguished from the other "anti" texts in its generally restrained and objective approach. In the other critical books there is all too frequently a concentration on a few specific and easily dismissed ideas that have been offered in some of the ancient astronaut books. For my part, I have never imagined that the markings on the Nazca plain in Peru showed that it was an extraterrestrial landing site, and it is time the suggestion was laid to rest by both proponents and critics alike. There are more promising indications from the past that deserve our consideration and I will offer a few possibilities that have attracted my own interest:

1. The symbols on the Nazca plain were formed to attract the attention of overflying vehicles approaching a landing site to the East (Tiahuanaco?).

2. Cast gold pendants from Columbia, South America dated at around 1000AD, exhibit many features one would expect to observe on one-way supply vehicles from orbit designed to be flown down to a landing.

3. Single-eyed figures among the rock paintings on the Tassili Plateau in the Sahara Desert may be connected with the cyclops myth. The Tassili Plateau lies close to the Tropic of Cancer--locations close to either Tropic are ideally positioned for launch

base operations for flights within the Solar System.

4. Many of the early centers of cultural development lie close to the Tropic of Cancer, notably the river valleys East of the Mediterranean. They are suitably placed for interplanetary flight operations.

5. One the American continent, the Tropic of Cancer passes through Mexico. The myth of Quetzalcoatl (the winged serpent) is one of the most suggestive in relation to the ancient astronaut hypothesis. There are exciting possibilities relating the symbol to the appearance of Florida and the South-Eastern United States when viewed from space during an approach to a landing.

The Ancient Astronaut Society, founded in 1973 by Gene Phillips, an Illinois attorney, prints the invitation "Come Search With Us" beneath the title of its bi-monthly publication "Ancient Skies". That is surely the right spirit in which to approach the question we are considering. Just as it would be absurd to claim premature proof of extraterrestrial contact so it would be absurd to condemn the whole concept just because we interpret a particular myth or artifact as a purely imaginative expression.

So let us join in a search for our past, including a search for evidence of extraterrestrial visitors. It may tell us much about our present.

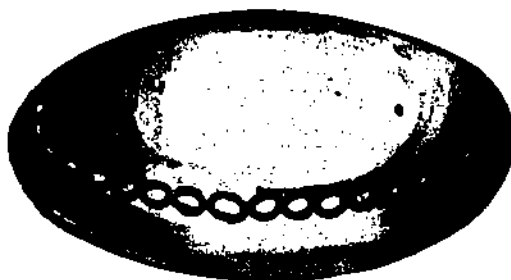
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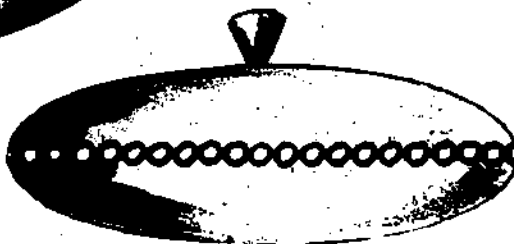
Follow-Up at Asservant

by Richard Hall

MUFON International Coordinator



from *Nostradamus* No.
184, October 15, 1975.



In the *Journal* for July 1976 (No. 104), I summarized on Page 7 a report from the French tabloid *Nostradamus* describing a huge disc that emitted a cone-shaped satellite object. French UFO investigators were invited to comment on the case, which allegedly took place September 26, 1975 at Asservant, a small village near Maubege. Because of the reported qualifications of the witness and the apparently careful observation, the case seemed to be a good one.

Now Jean Bastide of Aix-en-Provence, France (who will soon be a regional representative for MUFON) informs me that some French investigators have doubts about the case. Bastide received a letter dated 20 December 1976 from Rene Fouere of GEPA (69 rue de la Tombe-Issoire, 75014, Paris) with the following comment:

"Unfortunately, Mr. Jean-Marie Bigorne (a well-known French UFO investigator), who had made a persistent investigation of the case of Asservant, has recently sent us a very long report of his investigation, and his conclusion is that the observation is without value. It seems that deluded people mistook the flames of blast furnaces, lighting the night in the distance, for a strange object. Anyhow, no flying saucer here!"

The details of the sighting, including electromagnetic effects on the car, would seem to cast doubt on this interpretation unless *Nostradamus* has distorted the facts. Therefore, we hope to obtain more details of the GEPA investigation and more information about the now-disputed reliability of *Nostradamus*.



Lucius Farish

In Others' Words

UFO-related material is not as frequent in the weekly tabloids these days (or not in the ones I read, at least). However, two recent issues of *National Enquirer* have contained such articles. The Feb. 1 issue reported on a number of sightings near Indian Point nuclear power plant, 30 miles north of New York City. These sightings were publicized by the wire services soon after they occurred in August and September, 1976. The Feb. 8 *Enquirer* told of a poll of airline pilots which indicated that 46% of the 88 pilots questioned believed UFOs may be of extra-terrestrial origin. Ten of the pilots reported personal sightings of UFOs and four of these accounts were presented in the article.

In addition to the profusion of newsstand magazines on UFOs and related subjects, there are some more-or-less "private" newsletters and bulletins which carry very good and interesting information. One of these, which has improved markedly in the course of its four issues, is **Anomaly Research Bulletin**, edited and published by David Fideler (7098 Edinburgh Drive, Lambertville, MI 48144). Perhaps the highlight of ARB's #4 issue, recently released, is a report on a "spook light" investigation in New Jersey which was conducted by Vestigia, a recently-formed Fortean organization. ARB is available by subscription for \$3.00 per six issues and is well worth the money. It is

published bi-monthly and back copies of the #2 and #3 issues are available at 25c and 50c, respectively. —An excellent tri-weekly publication from Canada is the **Res Bureaux Bulletin**, produced by the highly capable Fortean researcher, Mr. X (yes, that is his legal name!). It is a six-page effort which covers the entire field of anomalous events. There is no actual subscription price for RBB, but donations of clippings and other materials are accepted as "payment." Mr. X's address is Box 1598, Kingston, Ontario K7L 5C8, Canada. —Tim Church's monthly publication, **Shadows**, is designed as a "newsletter of 'cryptozoology'," meaning that it concentrates on material relating to Bigfoot, water creatures, etc. A good mixture of articles, clippings and news notes makes **Shadows** worth the 25c per copy Tim asks. You might also enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope to help him along a bit. His address is P.O. Box 932, Missoula, MT 59807. —**The Seeker** is the latest entry in this field, being published tri-weekly by Roberta Floyd-Kresse of 608 7th Street, Clarkston, WA 99403. It is also 25c per issue. Like ARB and RBB, it covers the full range of Fortean, from UFO reports to mysterious disappearances to cattle mutilations. Two issues have been released thus far and it promises to become a worthy addition to the ranks of such publications.

The March issue of **Ancient**

Astronauts, like the January issue, contained some very speculative material, somewhat offset by good articles from Dr. Barry Downing and *UFO-LOGY* editor Bruce Schaffenberg. Dennis Hauck's editorial message in this issue was also quite good.

Official UFO for March was another good issue, with several interesting articles and features. Errors are inevitable, but they are kept to a minimum and this magazine still represents one of the best buys on the newsstands.

The **Saga 1977 UFO Annual** is on sale as this is being written. It consists almost entirely of reprinted material from past issues of **UFO Report**, along with a couple of new columns from regular contributors.

The March/April issue of **Beyond Reality** has an interesting article by Hugh F. Cochrane on "Religious Scriptures and Ancient Astronauts." This issue also contains psychic Alex Tanous' ideas relating to UFOs.

The April issue of **Cosmic Frontiers** represents something of an improvement over the past two issues, but it is still a bit overpriced at \$1.50 per issue. A considerable amount of UFO/space material may be found in each bi-monthly issue.

An interview with Dr. J. Allen Hynek is scheduled for the April issue of *OUI*. I suppose we can stand one more!

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

by
Walt Andrus

The Eighth Annual MUFON UFO SYMPOSIUM in Scottsdale, Arizona on July 16 and 17 at the beautiful Safari Resort Hotel and Convention Center will feature the following speakers: Thomas M. Gates, Sunnyvale, Calif.; Alvin H. Lawsoln, Ph.D, Garden Grove, Calif.; Bill Pitts, Ft. Smith, Ark.; William F. Hassell, Ph.D, Woodland Hills, Ca.; James M. McCampbell, Belmont, CCalif.; Stanton T. Friedman, Hayward, Calif; and William H. Spaulding, Phoenix, AZ. Advance reservations may be obtained by writing to GSW/MUFON, 13238 North 7th Drive, Phoenix, AZ 85029, for the package price of \$16.00 including the banquet.

Thomas A. Long, former State Section Director of 2110-43rd Avenue (P.O. Box 167), Meridian, MS 39301 has been appointed State Director for Mississippi. Roger C. Hight, 6433 Longneadow, Corpus Christi, TX 78413, a State Section Director since 1971 has been reassigned the Counties of Nueces, Kleberg, San Patricio, and Jim Wells. Vicel A. 'Sonnie' Herron, 506 Beaufort Drive, Augusta, GA 30904 has assumed the post of State Section Director for the Georgia Counties of Richmond, Burke, Jefferson, Columbia, and Duffie.

Joan L. Jeffers and Robert L. Cowell have become Co-Directors of the Pennsylvania Center for UFO Research replacing Stan Gordon who has elected to take a less active role in UFO research. Ms. Jeffers, 3408 Parkview Avenue, Apt. 19, Pittsburgh, PA 15312 has been appointed to MUFON's State Section Director for Allegheny, Butler, Beaver, and Washington Counties. Robert L. Cowell, 287 Colony Drive, Irwin, PA 15642

will be responsible for Westmoreland, Fayette, Camberia, Indiana and Somerset Counties. Paul C. Cerny, Western Regional Director, has selected Wayne R. Edmiston, P.O. Box 411, Durham, CA 95938 to be the State Section Director for Butte, and Glenn Counties and Thomas D. Page, 5385 Volkerts Road, Sebastopol, CA 95472 to cover Sonoma and Lake Counties as State Section Director.

Richard H. Hall, International Coordinator, has appointed M. Jean Bastide, 5 Avenue Maurice Blondel, 13100 Aix-en-Provence, France as Regional Director working with Joachim Fernandez, the MUFON Director for France.

New Consultants joining MUFON's advisory board of Consultants are Dr. Will Franklin, Physics Dept., State University, Kent, Ohio 44242; Consultant in Paraphysics and Burt L. Monroe, Ph.D, P.O. Box 23447, Anchorage, KY 40223, who is Chairman, Dept. of Biology at the University of Kentucky. Burt becomes a Consultant in Biology. Peter A. Gersten, J.D., c/o Szapiro, 40 Clinton Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201 has joined MUFON's Legal Staff in the specialty of Funding Proposals.

John F. Schuessler, MUFON Deputy Director for Administration, has recommended Peter McNeill, 7550 Long Point Road, #87, Houston, TX 77055, as a Research Specialist in Gravitation. John will be featured speaker at the Ninth Annual UFO Picnic in Carlyle, Illinois on Sunday, June 26th, hosted by Rosetta and Dick Holmes and sponsored by the UFO Study Group of Greater St. Louis. The Skywatch will be Saturday evening, June 25th. Further information may

be secured by writing to Mrs. Rosetta Holmes, 1690 Hill Drive, Carlyle, Ill. 62231. There is no charge for attending this enjoyable affair which grows in size every year. Bring food and your appetite. It will be held at the Fish Hatchery Park on Highway U.S. 50 just east of Carlyle.

Curtis Fuller, publisher of Fate Magazine and sponsor, has announced that the FIRST INTERNATIONAL UFO CONGRESS will be held in Chicago at the Pick-Congress Hotel, June 24-26. This is exactly 30 years after Kenneth Arnold reported his now famous sightings over the Cascade Mountains in Washington State. Arnold will lecture and be an honored guest at the Congress. Other Internationally famous academic authorities, lay researchers and writers on the subject have accepted Fuller's invitation and will speak such as; Betty Hill, James Harder, David M. Jacobs, Coral and James Lorenzen, Dr. J. Allen Hynek, Raymond A. Palmer, Frank Salisbury, R. Leo Sprinkle, Berthold E. Schwarz, and Dr. J. Gordon Melton. Cost for the three-day Congress will be \$30.00 on day of registration, or \$25. if advance reservation are sent to International UFO Congress Ltd., 500 Hyacinth Place, Highland Park, Ill. 60035.

Since the MUFON Eighth Annual UFO Symposium is being held this year in the Western Region, some of you may like to make plans for the 1978 MUFON UFO SYMPOSIUM to held July 29 and 30th. at the Dayton Convention Center in Dayton, Ohio with motel facilities at the Stauffer Inn and Holiday Inn. Richard Hoffman, Charles Wilhelm, and Len Stringfield are spearheading the planning.

RECAPPING AND COMMENTING

By Richard Hall (MUFON International Coordinator)

(Comments in this month's column are based, in part, on articles appearing in the October 1976 issue, No. 107)

What is a UFO journal all about, or what should it be about? The October issue (released in February 1977) strikes me as coming pretty close to a model of good content. Some very unfortunate typographical errors have detracted from the overall quality of recent issues, but hopefully more careful proofreading will eliminate this during the trying hurry-up period of rushing to get back on schedule.

The wide range of detailed case reports (with photographs and diagrams), international news, special effect cases, controversial abduction and time-lapse cases, columns and general newsnotes provide a coverage that is, first and foremost, **informative**. That, with a sprinkling of judgments by experienced UFO researchers, is what it should be all about. UFO publications presumably reflect the ultimate purposes of UFO groups, most of which profess to be in the business of better informing an ill-informed public.

UFO Conferences & UFO Groups

The recent spate of UFO conferences world-wide is a noteworthy social phenomenon. I think it indicates a widespread discontent with official non-explanations and a ferment that could lead to some new and possibly more meaningful governmental initiatives. The refreshingly high caliber of the participants, on the whole,

and their theme of "upgrading UFO research" seems to be commanding the respect and attention of news media and officials who could influence things for the better.

Another name for what is afoot might be "internal house cleaning" — eliminating careless and inexperienced investigations and unwarranted theory-spinning from within our own ranks. If we hope to be taken seriously, that is certainly an essential and long-overdue exercise. Surely the mish-mosh of pseudo-science that constitutes "UFOlogy" has been a handicap in trying to call attention to serious facts.

The other major handicap has been the sometimes ludicrous image of UFO groups as squabbling, self-important clubs bent on glorifying themselves. The cross-group cooperation evident in many of the conferences is helping to counteract this image, an image which delights UFO skeptics and provides cork for their pop-guns. Still, I doubt that there is any field of human endeavor for which one organization or society commands sole support.

Pluralism and a healthy form of competition which prods the competitors into producing better products is a natural and desirable state of human affairs. Among other things to be gained in this way are different perspectives and insights, and a preventative for dogmatism (or monopoly). There is a good analogy here with business firms, who generally have the good sense to stop short of destroying the "product" or

alienating the "market." Businesses recognize the importance of banding together in associations designed to further their common goals while preserving their individuality and integrity.

The parallel question in the business world is whether corporations owe sole allegiance to themselves and stockholders, or whether they have a "social responsibility" transcending success measured by profits. The theory is that, in a larger sense, corporations serve society and better it, and that capitalism is a means to the end of a better society. However far some corporations may depart from that ideal, the analogy holds for UFO groups: Do they serve only themselves, or do they have a larger purpose in serving society?

Mark R. Herbstritt

Astronomy Notes

MARCH 1977

MERCURY - It is too close to the sun for observation, superior conjunction being on the 16th.

VENUS - It reaches greatest brilliancy at the beginning of the month, but as it approaches the sun it is now perceptibly lower in the sky at sunset and sets within three hours (on the 15th). By the end of the month it is very close to the western horizon at sunset.

MARS - It is in the morning sky but still too close to the sun for easy observation.

JUPITER - In Taurus it is past the meridian at sunset and sets before midnight.

SATURN - In Cancer, it is well up in the east at sunset and sets before midnight.