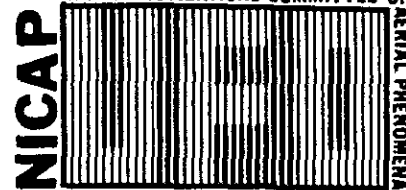


UFO INVESTIGATOR

NATIONAL INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE ON



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UFOs OVER GEORGIA

In a one month period of time, a series of UFO reports regarding sightings were received by NICAP's Marion Webb, Regional Investigator in Georgia. Mr. Webb has been active in the Fairbank Seminar programs and has become well known by Georgia residents as a serious investigator of the UFO phenomena.

SOUTH ATLANTA: A twenty-four year old college graduate who wishes to remain anonymous was traveling toward Atlanta via Interstate 85 on the evening of October 27, 1974. Her husband was driving, while the witness was enjoying the view of the clear sky in which many stars were becoming visible in the late twilight. At about 7:00 p.m. when the car was about 15 miles south of Atlanta, the witness noticed a light source low in the northwest sky. Her attention was called to the light because it was moving up and down. Both occupants of the car observed the object and compared it with planes they could see landing and taking off from the Atlanta airport located nearby. The light was about as bright as aircraft landing lights, but stayed in the same position for approximately twenty to thirty minutes. It then began to move up and down like a "yo-yo," about seven times before taking off at the peak of the last upward movement. It moved at a tremendous speed on a horizontal plane to a northeast portion of the sky. The object then made a 45° ascending turn and rose at a great speed before vanishing from sight.

CONYERS, GEORGIA: Twenty-six days after the South Atlanta sighting, Mr. Webb received a second report from a registered nurse. She claimed to have seen

UFOs while driving her car on Interstate 20. There were some similar characteristics between the South Atlanta sighting and the Conyers report

The time of the day that the sightings occurred were within a half hour of one another, the location being only twenty miles apart, and in both reports the UFOs hovered for a period of time before moving away at rapid rates of speed. No sound was heard in either case.

In the testimony received in the Conyers case, the witness stated that there were at least eight UFOs hovering in front of her car to the left of the highway. The witness described the objects' lights as being bright white, red, and green in color. She further stated that one of the objects had a definite round structure. The witness stated that she was "very frightened and wished someone else was in the car, so they could tell me they were seeing the same thing." The nurse continued to drive and exited from I-20 to route 138, when suddenly she noticed another single UFO in front of the car and to the left of the highway. The only difference was that this object did not move with rapid speeds exhibited by the first group of UFOs. The witness contacted the police, but by the time the officers arrived on the scene, the objects had vanished into the night.

LITHOMA, GEORGIA: Once again at about the same time of day (7:15 p.m.) and only seven days after the Conyers sighting, a UFO was sighted in the same general area.

Mr. Webb was contacted by the witness who stated that while driving toward Atlanta on I-20, three occupants of a car saw two bright lights in the sky ahead of

them. One of the witnesses described the lights as, "it looked like a car driving in the sky." The passengers continued watching the lights and proceeded driving toward them. The automobile eventually went under and to the left of the lights.

The intensity of the lights became greater as the car got closer to the UFOs. There were no sudden speeds connected with the phenomena such as exhibited with the Conyers and the South Atlanta sightings. The two lights remained motionless in the sky.

Mr. Webb stated that, "since the approach-departure path for Atlanta-Hartsfield Airport lies 8 miles south of I-20, it is difficult to identify the object as a low-flying airplane. The object had no red or green navigation lights, according to the witnesses, so even the explanation of a helicopter seems incompatible. As near as could be determined, the object had an elliptical shape, and it resembled a small automobile suspended in midair. No noise could be heard, and the witnesses car suffered no E-M effects. The witnesses themselves suffered no apparent physiological or traumatic effects. The terrain on both sides of I-20 in that area is rolling with heavy pine woods." An investigation of the area has been conducted, but as in many cases, there were no visible findings after the fact.

NOTICE

Because of the rising costs associated with the publication of the UFO QUARTERLY REVIEW, NICAP, unfortunately, will be unable to continue its publication in 1975.

THE VON DANIKEN CONTROVERSY

Readers Response

The following responses are representative of those received by NICAP after the publication of Robert Shaeffer's article on Erik Von Danikens theories which appeared in the UFO INVESTIGATOR, October and November issues. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of NICAP. Both Mr. Greenwood and Mr. Moretti would be pleased to receive your comments.

ASTROANTHROPOLOGY A Stumble Toward Scientific Recognition

This is not so much a rebuttal of Robert Shaeffer's critique of von Däniken's books (1) as an attempt at reviewing the current state of the ancient astronaut hypothesis and its relevance to studies of the contemporary UFO phenomenon. Von Däniken's books (2) have provided a stimulating drive for the ancient astronaut hypothesis, but they are not science (knowledge) in the painstaking, analytical sense that anthropologists strive for in a field distinguished by its difficulty, frustrations and, regretfully, occasional fraud. Von Däniken castigates anthropologists and other scientists, and some have in turn already retaliated publicly (3). Open controversy has its place, and the Swiss author has at least achieved a wide forum for his provocative probing. However, scientists generally prefer to engage in debate in specialized publications and before specialist audiences to clarify their own ideas and invite informed criticism before offering their work to a wider public. The present writer prefers this approach and is currently employing it in his own studies on the hypothesis.

A curious element in the furor over von Däniken is that the majority of people appear to believe he is the originator of the ancient astronaut hypothesis and that he is being attacked for proposing it. The present writer first encountered the hypothesis over twenty years ago in the first section of the book by Desmond Leslie and George Adamski (4). Other writers, notably George Hunt

Williamson (5), Brinsley Le Poer Trench (6), Louis Pauwels and Jacques Bergier (7), Paul Thomas (8), Robert Charroux (9) and W. Raymond Drake (10) all examined the hypothesis with a reasonable degree of scholarship, infused with a spirit of controlled imagination, prior to the publication of von Däniken's material. Books contemporary with von Däniken's and certainly deserving of a corresponding amount of attention include those of Jean Sendy (11), Eric Norman (12), Andrew Tomas (13), Charles Berlitz (14), Peter Kolosimo (15), and Max Flindt and Otto Binder (16), together with the more recent works of many of the writers mentioned earlier. A visit to any good bookstore will yield a fruitful harvest of popular works on the ancient astronaut hypothesis to anyone desiring to pursue the matter further.

The hypothesis will be, of course, of profound importance to us all, in the event it should prove to be correct. The relevance to the UFO field resides in the context that, if UFO's are extraterrestrial in origin, then we should anticipate being able to attempt to project our data on past intervention by extraterrestrials to interpreting contemporary experience. This may well turn out to be an area of inquiry of considerable concern to science. The present writer has submitted material to scientific periodicals on this theme but they have not been accepted for publication. The developing field of Astroanthropology, the interaction of extraterrestrial intervention with anthropology, has yet to find favor with the scientific establishment, but that may be no bad thing. Scientists are generally critical and thorough, and have learned the wisdom of a substantial measure of caution. Those investigating the hypothesis of extraterrestrial intervention have to prepare their arguments with care and present them in a reasoned fashion. "Arm waving" is properly anathema to the world of science.

There are several publications affording opportunities for presentation of reasoned material on the hypothesis. As an example, the writer has been favored with acceptance of one of his articles in NICAP's excellent "UFO Quarterly Review" (17). Hopefully more will use such avenues for publication and for exposure to critical comment, and hopefully the world of science will become progres-

sively persuaded that such writers have a hypothesis deserving attention.

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THE CHARIOTS STILL FLY

First off, I should like to say that calling an author, especially one that has offered a theory that is new and controversial, a "slippery trickster" and inferring that he uses deception in his writing is not a very mature way of disproving his theories. One fails to see why Von Daniken is "slippery." I also doubt it if the word "humbug" is a word that can be intelligently used to describe Von Daniken's theories.

Secondly, for those of you who have run to your copy of "Chariots" to see if there really is no equal sign in the "basic rocket equation" there is a solution. Try fitting the word *formula* in place of *equation*. You see the problem was in the translation of the book, not in the material itself. I believe the first edition was in German.

Thirdly, I don't think Mr. Shaeffer is in any position to say whether or not the Earth was closer to the sun or not. Everyone should know that the climate of a planet is not solely dependent upon the closeness to the sun. What affects the climate is how much sunlight is absorbed by a particular planet, and the angle of direct sunlight hitting the planet. It is interesting to point out that Shaeffer feels no Ice Age could have occurred if the Earth was twenty million miles closer to the sun. He does not see how anything could have moved the Earth's orbit, how then could the Earth have gotten warmer than it was in the Ice Age, since he feels that warmth depends on closeness to the sun?

Everybody seems to have their own ideas about Von Daniken and his theories. And I admit that everybody's theories (including Von Daniken) has loopholes. However, I feel that everyone is missing the point when they attempt to argue Von Daniken's theories. The books "Crash go the Chariots" and "Some Trust in Chariots" are perfect examples of what I am attempting to say. They both think they can disprove Von Daniken by proving some of "proofs" wrong. This is absurd. Does proving that one UFO case was a balloon prove that no UFOs exist? I'm sure that NICAP does not want the public to make such random generalizations about UFOs. How then can we allow ourselves to make them against

someone else's theories? Fifty-one percent of the people of America believe that UFO's exist and yet only a very small percent of reported UFO cases turn out to be real UFOs. While on the other hand, there is a lot of credibility in much of what Von Daniken has to say. Why then are his theories so hard to accept? Is it because man is afraid to admit that the God he has worshipped for thousands of years is not really a God at all, while seeing that only a few people connect today's UFOs with God!

I think that the NICAP should concern itself deeply with Von Daniken's theories, since if it happened then it raises the possibility of it happening again. All readers should keep his or her minds open to every possibility until the ultimate proof either way has been confirmed. And while it may be a tragedy to find out that our God doesn't really exist, it might be more of a tragedy to overlook something out of fear, and believe in a God that doesn't exist forever.

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UFOs AND THE ENTERTAINMENT MEDIA

During the past few months NICAP has been contacted by numerous organizations requesting information for a motion picture and television shows on UFOs that they are planning. These organizations include: National Broadcasting Co., American Broadcasting Co., Canadian Broadcasting Co., Sandler Institutional Films, Universal Motion Picture, American National Films, Allen Landsburg Productions, and others. Each of these companies will be including UFO case material in their productions.

The choice of UFO case material is varied, and is of course, a decision reached by the producer. Since the entertainment media is involved, the choice of cases usually is made by selecting cases with the greatest public appeal. Cases which

have previously received wide publicity are usually among those considered by producers. Some of the widely publicized cases are very strong, while others are very weak or already explained by UFO researchers.

In this, and future issues of the UFO INVESTIGATOR, you will find some of the cases being used in these productions. We know NICAP members are often asked their opinions on cases, and we present this series for your information.

WASHINGTON NATIONAL AIRPORT

July 19, 1952

The eight men on duty in Washington D.C.'s National Airport radar control center reported for work expecting this warm Saturday evening to be no more than a routine night with light traffic and good flying weather. The shift had been on duty for less than one hour before the routine of a Saturday night was shattered. Air traffic controller, Edward Nugent suddenly saw seven unusual "blips" (display of radar returns) on his radar scope. He called his supervisor, Harry G. Barnes, senior airport traffic controller, over to the scope in an attempt to receive assistance in identifying the "blips." The scope was showing seven returns in an irregular cluster positioned in one corner. These returns indicated that objects were located in the air about fifteen miles southwest of Washington, and were in an airspace which was about nine miles in diameter.

The radar scope showed that these objects were not following a set course, not in formation, and were moving in a completely different manner from that of an ordinary aircraft. They were tracked for about five minutes to determine their speed which was between 100 and 130 miles per hour. Two other experienced radar controllers, Jim Copeland and Jim Ritchey, were called over to give their opinions. They confirmed the unusual findings.

The airport control tower was called to see what their radar scope showed. The tower operator verified that his radar scope was also showing the same thing. Mr. Barnes then ordered technicians to check out the radar equipment. They found that it was operating perfectly. Barnes then notified the Air Force of

these strange radar targets fully expecting them to dispatch jet fighters.

Barnes continued contacting other airport personnel and incoming and outgoing pilots of commercial aircraft. Ground personnel and pilots were now reporting seeing bright lights in the sky.

Captain S.C. Pierman, shortly after he had taken off from National Airport in his regularly scheduled flight for Capitol Airlines, was one of the pilots who spotted the lights. For the next fifteen minutes he was able to continually report visual observation of the lights. Each light under observation coincided with the radar returns from the area.

By this time, radar operators at nearby Andrews Air Force Base were picking up unusual returns on their scopes. These returns correlated with those being observed at National. However, it was 3:00 a.m., at least three hours after Barnes' call before Air Force fighters arrived from their Delaware base. The Air Force later denied that the planes had even been sent. The fighter pilots were unable to see anything, and during the time they were in the area, there were no radar returns from the objects. Almost as soon as the fighters left the area, radar "blips" again appeared on the controllers scopes. Radar and visual sightings continued until just before dawn.

SECOND OCCURRENCE

July 26, 1952

At 9:00 P.M. controllers at National again observed unusual radar returns on their scopes. This time five or six objects were shown as moving in a southerly direction. Mr. Barnes was again called to the scopes, and once more confirmed the unusual "blips" with National's control tower and operators at Andrews Air Force Base. For the next two hours, pilots, ground personnel, and private citizens reported seeing lights which correlated with the radar returns. Mr. Barnes again called Air Force officials, but this time with better results. Within a few minutes (at 11:25 p.m.) F-94 jet interceptors arrived at the scene.

Radar returns were still being received, but only one of the F-94 pilots reported a

SIGHTING ADVISORY

Preliminary information on new reports. Details and evaluations will be published when available.

June 15, 1974 — Newfoundland, New Jersey. Mrs. Laura Socha claims she observed a UFO at 12:20 a.m. The sky was cloudy and showers were in the forecast. Mrs. Socha stated to have seen the object for approximately 20 to 30 seconds before it sped to her left at an incredible speed almost impossible to follow. The witness claimed that it was flashing, but did not change shape.

August 23, 1974 (approximately) — Frankfurt, Germany. A passenger recounted to NICAP an observation that he had made, while in route by air to Germany. At approximately 8:00 a.m. a solid disc shaped object passed through the witnesses focal range. The witness claimed that the object was sharply outlined and traveled at a steady, directed speed.

October 5, 1974 — Tyber, Texas. Mr. Charles Murray reported witnessing an enormous, moving, white light that changed in color to a reddish-orange. The witness viewed the light through 10 x 50 binoculars. Mr. Murray stated that there was no sound emitting from the light, and estimated its size to be fifty feet in diameter. The object moved at incredible speed in a northwesterly direction.

visual sighting. He saw four lights and attempted to reach them. A two minute attempt to close on the lights while pushing the F-94 to its maximum speed was unsuccessful.

Reports, visual and radar, continued for the next four hours before the radar "blips" disappeared and the visual reports ceased.

ized in space and time. Meteorologists who have analyzed weather data from the time of the occurrences, have stated that it is quite clear that weather conditions did not exist which could have produced the solid radar returns observed by the operators.

The Washington National Airport case remains unsolved.

AIR FORCE EXPLANATION

"The radar and visual sightings were because of mirage effects created by a double temperature inversion."

NICAP COMMENTS

The highly experienced controllers who manned the scopes were well aware of radar displays caused by temperature inversions. They did not accept this "explanation." Pilots and ground observers saw lights from many angles, which corresponded in position to that plotted by radar. Mirage effects are not that local-



MEMOS
FOR
MEMBERS

Correction: November 1974, UFO INVESTIGATOR, Sighting Advisory. Keysport, N.J. The September 4 date was a Wednesday rather than Saturday as previously stated.

A group of amateur ham radio enthusiasts have planned a discussion on UFOs over the radio on February 9, 1975 at 1:00 p.m. on 14,300 MHZ. Anyone having the equipment, may want to tune in. The radio call letters are WB20GS or WB2E00.