

# UFO INVESTIGATOR



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## UFOS IN THE USSR

The USSR is synonymous with secrecy. There are thousands of aspects of life which, in the West, are regularly discussed by TV and the press but which are tightly held in the USSR. When did you last see a public opinion poll on the views of the Soviet man-in-the-street? The subject of UFOs in the USSR is one about which we know very little. Now, we have obtained a copy of a Soviet report which sheds a bit more light on the subject. The report tells the story of widespread interest in the matter by scholars and by the public. It describes some 190 sightings of UFOs, all within the USSR. It tells how attempts to form organizations in the USSR to study UFOs were twice squelched by the Government with statements that the problem of UFOs does not exist. And it considers some explanations of what UFOs may be.

### The Report

The report is in the form of a 156 page English translation. There is no indication that the original Russian document carried any security classification or that it is an official Soviet Government document (except to the extent that *all* organizations in the USSR are branches of the State). The author of the report is Professor F. Yu. Zigel of the Ordzhonikidze Aviation Institute in Moscow. Despite the fact that there is nothing secret about this report, the source that made it available to NICAP asked that we use discretion on the subject of how we acquired it as well as how it was acquired from the USSR. We can state positively that no organization of the U.S. Government helped NICAP get a copy of this document.

### The Sightings

The sightings will make familiar reading to those in the West who have followed UFOs during the past thirty years. All of the Soviet sightings fall into categories that are known to us. But the reverse is not true. We have a number of cases involving physical traces left by UFOs but the Soviet report does not mention any. Close encounter cases involving crew members of UFOs and abduction cases are a part of our history of UFO sightings. But the Soviet report mentions no examples of either of these. Perhaps the explanation for this difference lies in the nature of the Soviet report. In the U.S. and in the West, sightings are most frequently reported openly in the press, without censorship and without initial attempts even at believability. On the other hand, the Soviet report admits that it is an editing of raw sighting reports. Thus, the Soviet author may have rejected all reports that he considered questionable or controversial.

## Crescent-Shaped UFOs

In this section of 88 sightings, many objects are described as being about the size of the moon. The tips of the crescent are sometimes equal in size, sometimes asymmetrical and sometimes point in the direction the object is traveling. The outer edge of the crescent is usually sharp while the inner edge is often fuzzy. In some cases bright discharges come out of the points of the crescent and in other cases star-like objects fly in apparent formation with the crescent. Here are some excerpts from the reports.

Early August 1967, 9:20 p.m., Rostov Oblast. An object moved across the southern sky from west to east. It was about the same size as and looked like a bright half moon. It was clearly outlined on all edges but was brighter on the leading, convex edge. A yellow light discharged from the tips. It appeared that the rear end of the object consisted on a tapered, streamlined black body. A white light with the brightness of a first magnitude star was two star diameters above and one half star diameter ahead of the object. The "moon" and the "star" moved together so evenly that "they seemed to be connected by a rigid coupling."

The objects were about 30-40 degrees above the horizon. During the minute and a half they were in view, they covered about one third of the arc of the sky. They made no noise. Five other persons witnessed this sighting. The author of this sighting wrote down his version and then separately questioned the other five. One of them was the author's brother, who was 15 kilometers north, on the steppe. All of the others agreed on the details, except the brother who saw two bright "stars" near the object.

8 August 1967, 9:45 p.m., Samakovo, Northern Caucasus. Four members of the Geographical Society of the Academy of Sciences saw a crescent, convex side forward, moving across the sky about 50 degrees above the horizon. The thickness of the crescent was about one fifth of a circle and the distance between the points was about 15 minutes of arc. At first only the crescent was seen. Then a luminescence filled the rest of the circle only to disappear a few moments later, replaced by "a formless flaming mass from which reddish tongues of flame licked out." In another three or four seconds the whole object rapidly shrank to a single dot of light "like on a TV set that has been turned off."

8 August 1967, 8:38 p.m., Halchik city. A fiery sphere "the size of a large watermelon" flew by from west to east, low over the horizon. "I have seen almost all the satellites launched, including the one with the red neon beacon but I have never seen anything like I saw yesterday."

October and November 1967, 8-10:00 p.m., Rostov-on-Don. A retired army colonel saw a burning crescent, hollow side forward, flying across the sky. Because of the fire and luminescence the outline was not clear, the upper part being fuzzier. A "star" flew ahead and to the side. Residents of the colonel's apartment house saw this phenomenon five times between August and November 1967.

7 November 1967, 5:15 p.m., city of Kazan. An astronomer at the State observatory in Kazan was asked by a colleague to come to the observatory to be an official witness to a UFO sighting. The astronomer didn't believe his colleague but he went anyway. At about 5:15 p.m. a "half moon appeared in the area of Alpha of the Corona Borealis." It was about one quarter to one third the size of the lunar disc with brightly outlined tips and a bright tail. The object suddenly disappeared and then just as suddenly reappeared. The astronomer observed it for four seconds.

## Discs, Spheres and Cigars

2 September 1967, 11:35 p.m., Pskovskaya Oblast. An electronic physicist and three camping friends noticed a luminous patch of fog in an otherwise cloudless night sky, about 20 degrees above the horizon. Suddenly the foggy area changed into a moon-sized yellow disc which rushed toward them at high speed. After five or six seconds the disc changed back into a patch of fog, beneath which a cone-shaped glow of light could be seen. In a few seconds there was a yellow flash in the fog patch and the disc reappeared, this time orange. In another five seconds the disc again changed back into fog, moved slowly to the east, climbed upward for about 12 minutes and disappeared.

6 November 1967, night, Kazan city. A husband and wife were waiting at the airport for a plane. They were attracted by a reddish body that approached from the horizon, flying in circles as it came closer and spinning on its own axis. It looked like Saturn: a sphere surrounded by a flat ring. Red light shone from the sphere on to the ring. The "Saturn" object hovered for 7-10 minutes and then flew off rapidly. Then, two more spherical lights appeared from the direction of the first one. The distance between them increased as they got closer. They hovered near the airport for five minutes and then disappeared at great speed.

March 1966, 8:00 a.m., Tyumenskaya Oblast. A Moscow geologist on a survey trip in the Urals saw two bright objects almost overhead. Both were about half the size of the full moon. The first was a yellow-white color. The second was the color and intensity of the moon but slowly was obscured by its own smoke. Then it reappeared as a bright disc. Twice, it shot out beams "like those from an automobile headlight" for about a half minute each time. Both objects moved to the northeast, drawing closer and then moving away from each other, finally disappearing behind the mountains.

## More Sightings But No Explanations

Other observers tell of such things as flame trails which separate from the main body of the object but continue to burn, of colored rectangular objects which hang in the sky, and of stars visible through the body of an object. One couple standing in an open field heard a very loud swishing sound, "like a branch of leaves being waved back and forth." But the leaves of nearby trees were still and although they were near an airport they could see no object that made the noise.

In reading the report one is constantly struck by the excitement of the observers and their interest in learning more about these unexplained events. "Our entire school saw it and we wonder what it was." "We are all experienced scientists and ask that you give us an explanation of what it was we observed." "We hoped to find an explanation on the radio or in the papers, but nothing appeared anywhere."

## Some Explanations Considered

The report next considers some possible explanations. Hoaxes? There are grounds for considering this because of "the notorious Adamski and his followers." But "Soviet reports are serious in tone and serious in content." Hallucinations? "Obviously absurd" that the UFO psychosis affects people who are fully competent in other respects. Optical atmospheric? Some basis for this. Menzel's book cited. Spacecraft from Earth? Some could be, but many UFOs were seen before the first sputnik. Spacecraft from Other Planets? Perhaps, but there is no direct proof. A Natural Phenomenon as Yet Unknown?

For example, radioactivity and the magnetic field of electricity were once unknown. This hypothesis seems the most promising, but there is not yet enough material to study, "not even one spectrogram of a UFO."

#### Attempts to Form an Organization

In 1956, Yu. A. Fomin and several other Soviet engineers and scientists started a small, informal group to study foreign literature on UFOs. They made the first attempts to collect information on sightings of UFOs in the USSR. By 1959 they had progressed to a point where they were giving lectures and making reports on the subject. But all during this time their efforts were undercut by the staff of the Moscow Planetarium, which took the position that the problem of UFOs was non-existent. The many people who wrote to report their sightings were answered by a printed letter which said that they were probably seeing a scientific experiment involving the release of sodium clouds at very high altitude by rockets.

The chill of the Soviet Government's official view of the matter was made thunderously explicit in a Pravda editorial of 8 January 1961. "There is not one fact to indicate that UFOs are flying above us. All discussion of this subject comes from the same place--the unscrupulous and non-scientific reports of completely irresponsible persons. These reports relate fairy tales taken primarily from the American press." As a result of this blast, Yu. A. Fomin was fired as a member of the All-Union Society for the Spread of Political and Scientific Knowledge, and the study of UFOs in the Soviet Union halted for a number of years.

#### Further Attempts

But the UFO question would not go away. Again attempts were made to set up a UFO organization. And finally, in October 1967, there was established, and announced at a large Moscow meeting with press and TV, a Department of UFOs in the nationwide military support organization, DOSAAF. Lots of publicity was generated. The heads of the new Department went on national TV to announce the establishment of the organization and to ask viewers to send in reports of their sightings.

Three weeks later the new Department was dissolved, without explanation.

To end, the report prints a February 1968 letter to Aleksey Kosygin, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, signed by 13 engineers and designers. Appealing to the highest political authority, the letter asks the chairman's support in establishing a ground observer corps, an organization for collecting and evaluating sightings, the systematic analysis of all UFO information, and research on unconventional modes of flight.

The last sentence of the report reads: "No reply received."

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