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A continuation of the chapter from the book *UFOs Explained*, by Philip J. Klass, which was previously printed in the July-September issue of the *UFO Quarterly Review*. Complete copies of the book may be obtained at your local book store.

"ABDUCTION" IN PASCAGOULA

by Philip J. Klass

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When I telephoned the New Orleans polygraphist on December 28 and posed Maggard's first question, asking whether he was a member of the American Polygraph Association, the operator replied that he was "not yet." Where had he been trained? At the National Training Center of Lie Detection in New York. Later Maggard told me that this was a respected polygraph school. When I asked the New Orleans polygraphist how long he had been practicing, he replied, "Approximately a year." Later I would discover that the New Orleans polygraph operator had *not* been "certified" by the school in which he had trained and *would not* be "certified." The reason was explained to me by Richard Arthur, director of the National Training Center of Lie Detection in New York City. Arthur told me that each of his graduates, like those of other recognized schools, operate as an "intern" during his first year, and every new graduate is expected "to return his cases" to Arthur for his analysis and review. This is to assure that the new operator is following prescribed procedures and demonstrating good judgment. Arthur explained that the New Orleans operator who had examined Hickson "did *not* complete this phase of his training." When I asked if he would have another opportunity to submit his work for review and

certification, Arthur replied, "No, his year is up. He has to comply within one year and he has not."*

Returning again to my telephone interview with the young New Orleans operator, when I posed to him the more complex questions on technique and procedure that Maggard had supplied, I was glad that I had decided to tape-record the entire conversation so I could provide Maggard a precise, verbatim transcript of the New Orleans operator's answers. Later, after Maggard had had an opportunity to study my typed transcript, he called me to say that it was clear that the New Orleans polygraphist was "an inexperienced operator." Then Maggard told me, "Judging from what he told you, I doubt whether he can tell whether the subject is telling a lie or telling the truth."

I was becoming increasingly curious about why the polygraph test which had served to give so much credibility to the story of the Pascagoula "abduction" had been given by an examiner of limited experience who was uncertified by his own school—especially one who had been imported from New Orleans, which is one hundred miles from Pascagoula. My check of the Yellow Pages in the telephone directory for Mobile, Alabama—which is only thirty miles from Pascagoula—showed that there were two licensed commercial polygraph operators there, one of whom I later learned had had more than seventeen years' experience in the field. On January 4, when I talked by telephone with attorney Colingo about these and other aspects of the case, he assured me that he too originally had doubts about the Hickson-Parker story. He added that he had not been impressed by the endorsement given by Harder and Hynek after their two days of interviews with the two shipyard workers. Colingo said his reaction was "The hell with that, I want a lie-detector test taken."

I asked if the attorney had had any previous experience with polygraph examinations. Colingo replied, "I was public defender down here for a while, some years ago, and I've seen them operate. I have had people take them on numerous occasions." Based on this experience, Colingo would fully understand the important role that the expertise of the

*In an article published in the September-October, 1973, issues of *The Journal of Polygraph Studies*, Arthur discusses some of the problems that arise in this profession, especially because many states do not require examination and licensing of polygraph operators. Arthur said he knows "one rather famous [polygraph] 'expert' who—as far as I know—has never rendered a 'lying' opinion for a lawyer . . . the unscrupulous attorney can go from one expert to another until—at last—his client comes up truthful."

polygraph operator necessarily plays in the reliability of the test results. Without revealing at that point what I had already learned about the New Orleans polygraph operator, I asked whether he was an experienced examiner. The attorney replied, "Oh, Lordy, he's a graduate of Purdue University and has given *thousands* of them [polygraph tests]." When I asked how long he had been practicing, Colingo replied, "Hell, several years." Then he quickly transitioned into a discussion of the thoroughness of the test that had been given to Hickson. Colingo said that the "normal, average polygraph test will take between thirty and forty-five minutes after you go through the formality of kind of briefing them [subject] to some extent. This one *took about three hours*." I asked whether this "three hours" included the preparatory briefing of Hickson before the actual test questioning. Colingo replied, "The questioning." I did not tell him that during my conversation with the New Orleans polygraphist he had told me that he had run a series of *four* tests, each of which lasted for only three to five minutes. Based on this, the total duration of the time that Hickson was connected to the polygraph could not have exceeded *twenty minutes!* The remainder of the time, the polygraphist explained to me, was devoted to talking to Hickson "so he understands the questions and I understand what he means [by his answers] and we are just talking about things and explaining things."

When I began to explore with Colingo how he had happened to select the New Orleans polygraphist, he explained, "We have *only one* [polygraph operator] in the state and that is the state agency in Jackson, the capital. And they were reluctant to want to give a polygraph test to anyone who is not accused of crime, so I had to go out of the state." Colingo said that he "not only tried in the state of Mississippi, I had the local sheriff's office try in the state of Alabama. We have an operator in Mobile, which is only twenty miles [away]. *They wouldn't agree to give it.*" Later he reemphasized this point: "I tried first through the sheriff's department to see if we could get either Mobile or Jackson to do it. The sheriff's department's answer to me was No."

Colingo acknowledged that he had been "referred to a man in Montgomery, Alabama, who wanted to charge two or three hundred dollars to come down here and take [i.e., give] a lie-detector test. I told him No. I said I don't want to pay anything." Colingo explained that he thought the test should be given without charge: "I said it's a matter of national ... it's for the good of the country ... I think the country

should know." Meanwhile, Colingo said, as he fruitlessly searched for a patriotically motivated polygraph operator who would be willing to come to Pascagoula and run the test free, "all the newsmen kept hounding us, wanting to know why they couldn't take a lie-detector test." It was at this point, Colingo explained, that he called a friend and former law-school classmate in Jackson whose two brothers operate detective agencies—one in Jackson and the other in New Orleans. The Jackson agency, which Colingo told me he had previously employed in other matters, did not have a polygraph operator on its staff, but the one in New Orleans did.

Colingo explained to me that he had "made the arrangements for them to come over here [to his own office], but prior to doing it, it was well understood with the president of the detective agency that there would be no compensation for it." Colingo then explained another reason why he had not wanted to pay for the lie-detector test. If the attorney paid for the test, he told me, some persons might infer that this could influence the results. So, on October 30, Hickson had taken the test in Colingo's office while the attorney, another member of the New Orleans detective agency, the local sheriff and a deputy monitored the proceedings in another room by means of an intercom. After the *first* in the series of tests, the attorney told me, the New Orleans polygraph operator had left Hickson and come into the room where Colingo and the others were sitting to announce, "Hell, they're telling the truth!"

As I listened to Colingo describe his difficulties in finding a polygraph operator to conduct the examination on his terms, and the pressures from newsmen to have Hickson and Parker take the lie-detector tests to which they had agreed, it might have seemed that the attorney had been lucky at last to find even a young, inexperienced, "uncertified" operator in New Orleans who worked for his friend's brother.

When I called Jack N. Wood, one of the two commercial polygraph operators listed in the Yellow Pages of the Mobile, Alabama, telephone directory, I asked him if he had been contacted during Colingo's search for someone to test Hickson. *Wood told me he had not!* I learned that Wood had practiced his trade for seventeen years, after being trained by the Army. He suggested I call Frank Schottgen, another experienced Mobile polygraph operator, the son of the owner of the Allied Secret Service detective agency where Wood himself had previously worked until he had recently gone into business for himself. I called Schottgen and asked if he or his

agency had been approached by Colingo or the Pascagoula sheriff's office. *He told me they had not*, but he said he had heard that the chief polygraphist of the Mobile police department—*Captain Charles Wimberly*—had been contacted. Wimberly, I learned, has thirteen years' experience in this field and is a member of the State Board of Examiners of Alabama, which, like Mississippi, requires that all polygraph operators pass rigorous tests for licensing. (Louisiana, I discovered, does not require that its polygraph operators be licensed. One Mississippi state law enforcement official told me that operators who fail to pass licensing tests in his state or in Alabama sometimes set up practice in Louisiana, where no examination is required.)

When I called Captain Wimberly, he told me that he had been approached by the Pascagoula sheriff's office to see if he would test Hickson and Parker. When I asked him, "Did you turn them down?" he replied, "I didn't turn them down in that sense. I turned them down in the sense that if I was involved in running a polygraph test on those individuals it would have to be [done] in my environment and on my terms." Wimberly wanted the tests run in his office, not in Colingo's, which other polygraphists confirm is the standard practice to accentuate the psychological impact of the tests. In other words, Wimberly simply wanted to conduct the examination in the conventional manner in which he normally ran lie-detector tests.

This hardly seemed an unreasonable requirement. Nor did Wimberly's other conditions under which he would be willing to run the test. Wimberly wanted to bring in another experienced commercial operator to participate in the tests, and the results released in the name of the commercial operator because "I didn't want my police department switchboard lighting up with all those phone calls" (from UFO buffs), the officer told me. He said he explained to the Pascagoula sheriff's office that "I would physically run it, but it would have to be on my terms." In response, Wimberly was told that the test was being arranged for attorney Colingo, who would have to decide whether to accept the tests under Wimberly's conditions. *The Mobile police polygraphist told me that he never heard further from the Pascagoula sheriff's office or from Colingo.* When I asked Wimberly if he was still willing to test Hickson and Parker, he replied he was, providing he could "run the examination the way I felt it should be run."

The Pascagoula sheriff's office had earlier released an official statement saying it "has no public or private opinion

about whether the [UFO] report was true or false. The responsibility of the sheriff's department is not to prove people right or wrong in their complaint."

Police chief Craig M. Monroe, Jr., of Gulfport, Mississippi, took quite a different position on October 16, five days after the Hickson-Parker incident, when a Gulfport taxi driver reported that he had also had an encounter with a strange-looking creature from a UFO at 3 A.M. Chief Monroe decided he *did* have a responsibility to try to prove or disprove the driver's story, in view of growing UFO hysteria in the area—if only to calm local citizens, or to prepare for more UFO abductions! While Colingo and the Pascagoula sheriff's office were, according to Colingo, vainly searching for an experienced polygraph operator, the Gulfport police chief had no trouble finding one. He called Truth Incorporated, in Jackson, Mississippi, a company that specializes in polygraph examinations. Within forty-eight hours after the cab driver had reported his UFO encounter, he had taken a test in Jackson, administered by Truth Incorporated, and had flunked it badly. The taxi driver then admitted it was all a hoax that had been concocted to explain why he had been found asleep in his cab by a fellow driver. Thanks to police chief Monroe's good judgment and prompt action, the citizens of Gulfport could relax—while the citizens of Pascagoula were still jittery.

If the Pascagoula sheriff's office was not familiar with Truth Incorporated, despite its national reputation, the sheriff could have learned of the company as I did when I called the Mississippi State Identification Bureau and talked with Dewey Weames, an experienced polygraph operator and past secretary of the state polygraph examiners' board. When I asked Weames if he or his associates had been called by the Pascagoula sheriff's office, Weames said he was not aware of any such inquiry. He acknowledged that state operators would not have been able to give Hickson and Parker an examination because it was not a criminal matter.

Robert Alexander, who runs Truth Incorporated, has ten years' experience as a polygraph operator, and his part-time associate is Max Burleson, with twelve years' background and more than twenty thousand examinations under his belt. Burleson told me that he operates a similar business in Memphis and that he and Alexander often collaborate on important cases—such as the one involving the Gulfport taxi driver. Burleson told me that he and Alexander had followed the Pascagoula case casually in the newspapers and that when they read that the two men were eager to take a polygraph

examination, they had thought that Truth Incorporated might be asked to give the test—especially in view of their experience with the Gulfport case. But Burleson told me that the call never came either from Colingo or from the Pascagoula sheriff's office. Instead, more than a week later, the young, inexperienced polygraphist from New Orleans and his boss journeyed to Colingo's office to test Hickson and then make the widely publicized pronouncement that the lie-detector tests seemed to substantiate the UFO abduction.

Perhaps none of these many experienced commercial polygraph operators would have been willing to conduct the examination without charge—but Colingo could not have known this without at least asking them. Burleson explained to me that for a case of this type, the subject ought to be tested for a *full day*, and that both he and Alexander would have participated (providing a total of twenty-two years' experience). Under these circumstances, he said, the fee would probably have been around five hundred dollars. To me, this does not seem like an excessive price to pay to determine whether extraterrestrial visitors are abducting innocent victims, or whether instead the citizens of Pascagoula and the nation were the real victims—of a hoax.

During my January 4 telephone conversation with Colingo, the attorney repeatedly stressed the great difficulty he had encountered in his search for a polygraph operator to test Hickson and Parker: "Everyone kept saying, 'When are they going to take a polygraph? When—if they're telling the damn truth—? Why don't they take a lie-detector test?'" Then, Colingo's voice became tense as he said, "Well, I could not and would not make it publicly known that I couldn't get anyone to give them the damned test!"

When I asked Colingo if Hickson would be willing to take another test from a different polygraph operator, the attorney retorted sharply, "Why should he? Why should he?" When I posed this question again later, the attorney said he had already raised the issue with Hickson: "I've talked to him. I've said, 'Now, we've had one test . . . if there are any more tests that they can think of throwing at us I want 'em to do it.'" Colingo told me Hickson had replied, "Joe, as far as I'm concerned, I went through the hypnosis. I've gone through this. I've taken every test imaginable, and to hell with it. If people don't want to believe me, to hell with them. I don't give a damn." To this Colingo added, "And that's just the way he feels, and it's a very, very sensitive area."

Then I inquired about a polygraph test for young Parker,

who by this time had recovered sufficiently from his "nervous breakdown" to appear with Hickson on NBC's Mike Douglas TV show, telecast on December 31. Parker had by this time quit his job in Pascagoula and returned to his home in Laurel. Colingo replied, "Parker is ready, willing and able. I would say that as far as—if there were any more lie-detector tests to be taken, I would be more prone to say that, since Mr. Parker didn't take one the first time, I've told him sometime down the road I'm going to give him one. So if there was one taken, I'd be more—we'd be more—it would be much more favorable if Parker took it." Because of Colingo's aversion to paying for a polygraph test, I told him I would be willing to underwrite the cost for both Hickson and Parker and that he would have full access to the results. Colingo replied, "Why should I—for your benefit—subject my client to a lie-detector test when I am satisfied, and that's the only one that counts right now."

But later in our conversation, Colingo admitted that I was not the only one to suggest that Parker take a lie-detector test and that Hickson take another. He said he was currently negotiating with companies that "want to buy a story on this." One of the prospects, he said, had insisted on a new polygraph test for both men as a condition to the contract. But the attorney said he had told the prospect that the two men would take such a test only after there had been an agreement on financial arrangements.

When Colingo once again asked why he should have the two men take a new polygraph test, I acknowledged that there was the risk that "if they fail, then you have lost a client." Colingo replied indignantly, "I'm not making any money out of it anyway . . ." When I asked whether he wouldn't share in the proceeds of the deal he said he was currently negotiating, the attorney replied, "But the time and money that I have had to, that I've lost in this office, there would be no way on that penny-ante thing that I would be halfway compensated—if I got *all* of the money." Then he added, "There's been no money, absolutely none."* As our long telephone interview came to a close, Colingo said, "Well, I'm certainly not saying that I won't give them another test. That's not my position at all. But I'm not sure I would do it at *your* request. I'm sure I

*In the *Rolling Stone* article of January 17, 1974, reporter Eszterhas says that Colingo asked him: "How much do you think we can make on their Exclusive Story?" Eszterhas said he replied that it would depend on how well the Hickson-Parker story could be verified. To this, Eszterhas said, Colingo replied: "A million, you think? I figure if we sell magazine and book and movie rights to one of the big studios, that can be a lot of money. I wish to hell *Life* magazine was still in business."

would do it *when I get ready to do it*. And I will be happy, if and when I do it, to notify you and you can come down here and sit and watch it."

When five months had elapsed without hearing from Colingo, I took the initiative to contact him to determine if there had been any new developments in the case. When we talked by telephone on June 7, 1974, Colingo said he had not seen or talked with Parker for four or five months because he had moved to Laurel, Mississippi. The only significant new development, Colingo said, was that a team from the National Broadcasting Company had recently visited Pascagoula to talk with Hickson in preparation for a special UFO television program that NBC planned to produce. Colingo volunteered: "I don't want you to get the impression that either one of these fellows has made any money off this because they have not."

If Hickson and Parker do submit to a rigorous polygraph examination, given by a team of experienced operators, there is *no way of knowing what the result will be even if the case is a hoax, as I firmly believe it is*. Burlison told me that once a subject has gained confidence that he can "beat the machine," it makes a falsehood more difficult to detect. Burlison also described another technique that can be used to enable a subject to tell falsehoods without being detected even by an experienced examiner. (I will not divulge it here lest it be used to handicap polygraph examiners in their important work.) Even if the two men take a test and fail it, news of this event will never receive the widespread publicity given to their original account. (I doubt that the polygraph examiners will be invited to tell their story on the Cavett or Douglas shows.) As a result, many people who were exposed to the original UFO abduction account will never learn the full story.

If the Pascagoula case is positively exposed as a hoax by such tests, it will leave a void in the "Land of UFOria"—but only temporarily. Within a few years, two campers in Colorado, or perhaps two hunters in Minnesota, will report an equally fantastic encounter with space creatures that allegedly were only two feet tall, or stood ten feet high. Like all previous accounts, there will not be a single shred of physical evidence to support the story. But UFO investigators with impressive-sounding credentials will quickly arrive to interview the principals. And then they will issue their pronouncements to the news media, certifying the authenticity of the latest wild UFO case. These "experts" will make headlines because journalists, under pressure of deadlines, will not take time to

investigate their past record of similar pronouncements on cases that turned out to be hoaxes. Overnight, the campers or the hunters will be catapulted from obscurity to international fame. You will see and hear them on all the network talk-shows.

It will happen again and again unless law-enforcement officials and national news media—including network radio and television—show the same good sense demonstrated by police chief Monroe of Gulfport, and promptly ask the principals to submit to a rigorous polygraph examination conducted by a team of experienced, licensed operators. They are not hard to find. One need only look in the Yellow Pages of the telephone directory for any sizable city, either under "Lie Detection Services" or under "Detective Agencies."

The Editor,
UFO Quarterly Review

Dear Sir:

I was interested to read 'Theories about the Properties of Rotation' in the April/June issue of the UFO Quarterly Review. While the experiments and deductions therefrom may give us pause for thought, I submit that the authors may have neglected to consider several well-known physical phenomena that could explain the noted effects. There is certainly some confusion in the paper regarding gyroscopic precession. If a force is applied to any rotating mass which tends to change the direction in space of the spin axis, the motion resulting from that force application is perpendicular to the applied force—but only if the spin axis is free to rotate. If precession is prevented by restraining the motion of the spin axis, as was done in the experiment, the spin axis will rotate in the direction of the applied force as if the rotor were not spinning. Precession tends to move the plane and direction of rotation of the gyroscope into alignment with the applied force. Thus,

mounting the flywheels on parallel axes does not cancel the precession but rather causes the effect to be doubled. Deductions based on the elimination of precession are invalid in this case.

The inertia forces possessed by the flywheels do not appear to be fully accounted for. No measurements were apparently made of the location of the principal axes of inertia. If these axes do not coincide with the physical axes, and I doubt that they do, then products of inertia will appear as extraneous forces. Similarly, no account is made of out-of-balance forces of the flywheel nor of the frictional forces introduced by the bearings and supports. At high speeds, these would be considerable. I should also mention that air set in motion by the flywheels will also possess inertia.

The experiments conducted with machine suspended as a pendulum are invalid since the observed difference (0.1 sec) between periods of the energized and quiescent machine is greater than the observed average difference. May I ask how a stopwatch was used to measure time to within one thousandth of a second? The radio frequency shift is to be expected since the flywheels are acting as weak generators through interaction with the earth's magnetic field. If the same experiment were to be conducted in a Faraday cage there would be no detectable change in the oscillator frequency.

I respectfully submit that proper application of inertia theory, a full understanding of gyroscopic motion, and consideration of the many extraneous forces which are unavoidably introduced in the experiments would show, to the relief of us all, that basic physics remains inviolate.

Very truly yours,

R.D. Manners
Arlington, Va.