

# THE U.F.O. Investigator

FACTS ABOUT UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS

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## PROMINENT SCIENTIST PRAISES NICAP, CALLS AF STUDY "APPALLING"

In a recent scientific address at Washington, Dr. James E. McDonald, University of Arizona physicist, strongly criticized the AF handling of the UFO problem and labeled NICAP's investigation as far more thorough and reliable. Dr. McDonald, a senior physicist at the university's Institute of Atmospheric Physics, spoke before the Washington Chapter of the American Meteorological Society on Oct. 19, 1966.

The Arizona scientist told the AMS that the extraterrestrial theory is "the least unsatisfactory hypothesis." He said he reached this conclusion after an intensive study of the UFO evidence and visits to Wright-Patterson AFB to evaluate the work of Project Blue Book.

The main force of his talk, however, was directed toward showing the need for a thorough scientific review of the facts. "The present urgent need is for much more scientific examination of the available UFO evidence in order to establish, or to reject, as the case may be, the very interesting possibility that these aerial objects may be some type of extraterrestrial probes," stated Dr. McDonald, who has been intensively studying the phenomenon full-time for about six months. Prior to that, he has interviewed witnesses off and on for ten years.

NASA and other space-oriented agencies might be appropriately involved in new investigations, he suggested.

The atmospheric physicist also praised NICAP highly and regarded the new University of Colorado program as a significant step forward. He said that, in his opinion, the figures on UFO sighting break-downs published by Project Blue Book are "completely worthless."

"The work of independent organizations such as the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (whose efforts impress me as much more thorough and open-minded than those of Project Blue Book) should be exploited and incorporated into all future studies," Dr. McDonald said.

Dr. McDonald is a member of the Advisory Panel on Joint-Navy-ESSA Project Stormfury (hurricane modification); the A.M.S. Publications Commission and the National Academy of Sciences Committee on weather and Climate Modification. He was also a research physicist for the Cloud Physics Project at the University of Chicago, 1953-1954 and served four years in Naval Intelligence during World War II.

The scientist obtained a small grant from the University of Arizona last spring to probe the phenomenon more thoroughly. Since then he has made trips and calls throughout the country, including visits to NICAP and Project Blue Book at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, Ohio, to gather data. It was at Wright-Patterson that he found evidence that the CIA in 1953, during considerations of the Robertson Panel report (see separate story), persuaded the Air Force to "debunk" UFO reports for national security reasons, despite the fact that the Air Force has repeatedly asserted that UFOs were not a danger. He first broke the CIA document story in a speech on his own campus on October 5. He further stated at the A.M.S. meeting that the official explanations often were "almost absurdly erroneous" and that Blue Book's investigations have been carried out "on a very low level of scientific competence."

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## UNIVERSITY STARTS UFO PROBE NICAP TO SUBMIT FACTUAL REPORTS

The scientific UFO investigation project arranged by the AF at Colorado University began preliminary operations early in November. Headed by Dr. Edward U. Condon, noted physicist and former Director of the Bureau of Standards, the project scientists are working out investigative methods and selecting UFO evidence from authoritative sources, including NICAP.

If this project is carried out as an independent probe, as the AF has stated it will be, this could emerge as the most important development since the first official UFO reports in World War II.

According to the official agreement with the University of Colorado, Dr. Condon will be free to make the project's findings public — even if they conclude that the UFOs are real, contrary to AF views.

Sources at the university have assured NICAP that no stones will be left unturned in regard to obtaining all significant information from the Air Force. The cases listed as "explained" by the Air Force will be spot checked where there is any reason to suspect the explanations are not valid. The group will by no means rely solely on Air Force reports, and has expressed a desire to examine the best cases NICAP can provide.



NICAP has pledged full cooperation with the Condon group, and steps are underway to make sighting data and other materials available to the investigators starting in November. Preliminary meetings with Colorado representatives, who are establishing contact with all reliable sources of information, have convinced us that the university scientists have plans for a thorough and probing review of the facts. (See Editorial Page 2)

Principal investigators at the university include Dr. Franklin Roach, astrophysicist and Dr. Stuart W. Cook, head of the psychology department. Project coordinator is Robert J. Low, Assistant Dean of the graduate school. Other scientists at the university will participate on a half-time basis. (See separate biographies).

Dr. Condon, quoted as being a "UFO agnostic," has a reputation for outspokenness, as well as a considerable scientific reputation. His choice to head the study, people on both sides of the question agree, was ideal to forestall any suggestion that the program would only be a "whitewash." To the contrary, all indications are that Dr. Condon has been given a very free hand to investigate when and where he likes, and to say what he pleases.

Other scientists also have been "agnostics" or even vehement in sharp criticism of UFO reports and any one who accepts them — only to become convinced after a detailed, careful study of verified reports by highly qualified observers. It is not unreasonable to believe Dr. Condon and his scientific colleagues will also be soberly impressed with the massive evidence on record.

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# THE **UFO INVESTIGATOR**

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## EDITORIAL

Whether the results turn out to our liking or not, the forthcoming review of the UFO problem by scientists at the University of Colorado (see separate story) is far and away the most significant development in the history of UFO investigation. For the first time, well-qualified professional scientists are planning an intensive study of UFOs and examining the adequacy of the Air Force's Project Blue Book. If all goes as planned in the next 18 months, one of our main goals thus has been achieved.

Although Dr. Condon has been quoted in some newspapers as considering the existence of UFOs "highly improbable," he has qualified this by stating he had not seen enough evidence one way or the other. Honest skepticism is one thing, a closed mind is another. Though his voiced skepticism might seem an obstacle to independent, unbiased evaluation, all indications are that the scientific investigators fully intend to have a thorough look at the facts. If this is done, we are confident that skepticism will end. As in the case of other scientists (including Dr. J. E. McDonald), scientific skepticism usually is based on lack of familiarity with the best reports, often reinforced by an overdose of "contactee" tales. Once Dr. McDonald examined specific cases in detail, he became convinced that UFOs are an important problem.

The invaluable information in our files (for which Associate Members, Affiliates, and especially Subcommittees deserve credit) will be outlined to the Condon group, and detailed case histories provided starting in November.

Clearly this is a new era of UFO research. A plateau was reached in April 1966 when one-day Congressional hearings, however incomplete, showed public unrest over a serious question. Now we have reached a definite turning point with the advent of the Colorado study—a truly crucial test. If the scientists reach a positive conclusion, undoubtedly a world-wide cooperative investigation of UFOs will ensue. If they reach a negative conclusion, rightly or wrongly UFOs probably will be a dead issue—at least for another decade. Our initial contacts with representatives of the Condon group have been reassuring; groundwork is being laid for reviewing both civilian and Air Force cases, methods of analysis, and all aspects of the controversy.

Now that the validity of Air Force explanations for UFOs has been seriously questioned and the doubts acted upon, it is time for a re-orientation of NICAP efforts. We have long been aware of the undue influence on public opinion (including scientists) that official pronouncements have had, delaying an open study and misleading those who could bring a resolution to the problem. In spite of criticism by some of our colleagues for requesting Congressional hearings and "harping on the Air Force" (some of the critics have been far more vitriolic toward the Air Force than NICAP ever was), our policies always have been designed to break the deadlock and help bring about a definite resolution by the most efficient means. We feel that recent events have vindicated our policies.

Some of our unsolicited "advisors" who pretend to be "more scientific" than NICAP apparently consider the public-at-large, the political climate, and the level of knowledge in the scientific community to be unimportant or irrelevant. We always have attempted to act in a scientific spirit, and will continue to do

## PROMINENT SCIENTIST (Continued from page 1)

Dr. McDonald said that the CIA report was aimed at decreasing public attention to UFOs with the reasoning that "in event of enemy attack on the country, the clogging of military intelligence channels with large numbers of reports of (evidently non-hostile) UFOs was regarded as an unacceptable hazard."

The scientist also added that such influences as the official debunking, the cultist groups and "journalistic fun-poking" have misled both the public and the scientific community into thinking "that no significant problem exists with respect to UFOs."

During the question and answer period at the A.M.S. talk, the ball lightning-plasma theory was put forth by Philip Klass, a senior editor of "Aviation Week." Dr. McDonald does not regard the plasma theory as scientifically valid for more than a tiny percentage of cases.

In answer to the commonly asked questions, "Why don't they land," etc., Dr. McDonald termed such questions "ill-considered." "Intriguing as those questions may be," he said, "they immediately plunge one into completely unsupported speculations."

## Hynek Campaigns For Investigation

A letter by Dr. J. Allen Hynek, first refused publication, has now been printed in the October 21 issue of *Science*, the official organ of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Dr. Hynek, the chief scientific investigator for the Air Force UFO program, states that he "cannot dismiss the UFO phenomenon with a shrug." Calling for a "meaningful scientific investigation of the residue of puzzling UFO cases," Dr. Hynek reiterates the "seven misconceptions" commonly held by scientists. (See U.F.O. Investigator, Vol. III, No. 9).

When *Science* initially rejected Dr. Hynek's letter in August, he released the contents to the press. His comments were carried on national newswires. Following announcement of the University of Colorado UFO study, and some queries from newsmen, the magazine had a change of heart.

In a recent interview with the *Washington Post*, commenting on the *Science* letter, Dr. Hynek referred to "several hundred" good cases in his files which scientists could profitably study. He said that at least half the unexplained cases in Air Force files came from "stable and reliable" people, and cited a strong consistency in the description and behavior of the objects.

NICAP has also learned that an article by Dr. Hynek will appear in an early issue of the Saturday Evening Post.

so, systematically gathering and organizing data as groundwork for scientific investigation. Now we are quite happy to have experts review the problem, and we hope our experience will benefit the new study.

For approximately the next two years, our top priority effort will be to insure that the University of Colorado scientists receive the best available data to form a judgment on, and to advise them about various pitfalls. Processing the maximum amount of information for release to the public will be a major effort, with regular publication of the U.F.O. Investigator and occasional booklets available to members. Any further Congressional hearings appear extremely unlikely for the duration of the Colorado Program. However, the continued interest and support of Members of Congress will still be important.

During the period of the Colorado study the Air Force will come under fire from us only if it releases counter-to-fact explanations for new sightings or other false information. If debunking of sightings and ridicule of witnesses continues, we will feel fully justified in criticizing and opposing these activities, which have done so much to obscure the importance of UFOs.

For the moment, at least, the UFO problem is in the hands of civilian scientists where it belongs. The anomaly of a military organization trying to cope with a world-wide scientific problem as if it were merely an Air Force public relations problem is, we hope, permanently at an end. NICAP has played an important role in helping to bring this about. But our job is not done. We will need the full support of members to enable us to process and make available to Dr. Condon's group all of the significant evidence.

# 1953 CIA REPORT DEBUNKS UFOs & THE PUBLIC

A broad program aimed specifically at "debunking" UFO reports was strongly recommended by a scientific advisory panel convened in January, 1953, by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to investigate the possibility of a national security threat by UFOs. A "sanitized" version of the panel report, first publicized by John Lear in Saturday Review (Sept. 3), was recently released to the public through the USAF office of information. The full report has been classified and declassified, off and on for years. The overriding assumption of the panel, chaired by H. P. Robertson of the California Institute of Technology, was that the public is "gullible" and generally incompetent as observers. A strong bias against the possibility of UFOs is evident in the report.

An example of the panel's determination to "de-emphasize" reports was indicated by its refusal to accept the conclusions of the United States Navy Photo Interpretation Laboratory's (P.I.L.) analysis of the famous Tremonton, Utah motion picture films taken in July 1952. One-thousand man-hours were spent in carefully studying individual frames of the films and the P.I.L. stated that the objects sighted "were not birds, balloons or aircraft, were not reflections because there was no blinking while passing through 60 degrees of arc and were, therefore, 'self-luminous.'" Despite the exhaustive study, these conclusions were not accepted by the Robertson Panel, which questioned the methods used by the analysts and assumed the objects must have been balloons or birds.

It was concluded by the panel that "reasonable explanations could be suggested for most sightings and 'by deduction and scientific method it could be induced (given additional data) that other cases might be explained in a similar manner.'" The Panel's justification for "debunking" sightings, which by itself has some merit, was that intelligence channels might be clogged by UFO reports. Such channels, they said, should be left open specifically to receive any indication of an enemy threat. (An alternative solution, of course, would have been to turn the problem over to scientists instead of the intelligence community, as has been done recently).

The purpose of the "debunking" would be to induce a "reduction in public interest in 'flying saucers' which today evokes a strong psychological reaction. This education could be accomplished by mass media such as television, motion pictures, and popular articles." There would be "much less stimulation if the 'secret' is known. Such a program should tend to reduce the current gullibility of the public and consequently their susceptibility to clever hostile propaganda." These mass communication techniques would include psychologists, amateur astronomers "to spread the gospel," colleges, high schools, and business clubs. In other words, all the propaganda forces possible, the scientists suggested, should be utilized to back up the panel's recommendations.

The panel stated that any scientific investigation would be unjustified. It was agreed "that no government-sponsored program of optical nation-wide sky patrol is worthwhile at the present time, and that the encouragement of amateur astronomers to undertake such a program might have the adverse effect of over-emphasizing 'flying saucer' stories in the public mind."

"It was interesting to note that none of the members of the Panel were loath to accept that this earth might be visited by extraterrestrial intelligence (sic) beings of some sort, some day," the report states, but "present astronomical knowledge of the solar system makes the existence of intelligence (sic) beings (as we know them) elsewhere than on earth extremely unlikely, and the concentration of their attention by any controllable means confined to any one continent of the earth quite preposterous."

This statement was inserted despite the fact that no serious scientific investigation had been made of UFO reports. As pointed out by Dr. J.E. McDonald in recent talks, the secret report by an authoritative-sounding panel of scientists apparently has had a strong negative influence on the nature and course of Air Force investigations for more than ten years.

## Colorado Project (Continued from page 1)

In press interviews following announcement of the project, Dr. Condon showed some knowledge of the subject and awareness of some of the scientific problems which might be encountered. In response to newsmen's questions, he stated that in electro-magnetic effect cases engineers would be sent to study the affected devices. He was also aware of sightings in Anarctica last Summer in which it was reported that magnetometers were affected while a UFO was observed and photographed.

To further assure that accurate scientific methods have been used, the National Academy of Sciences has agreed to have a committee review Dr. Condon's report prior to publication.

To finance the scientific project the AF has approved a \$300,000 research agreement, with indications that more would be provided if necessary.

The University of Colorado grant is a direct outgrowth of Congressional and Air Force moves which began more than a year ago. Shortly after the Aug./Sept., 1965 wave of UFO sightings primarily in the mid-west, the Air Force set up a special panel of its permanent Scientific Advisory Board to look into Project Bluebook's resources and methods of investigation, and to suggest improvements.

### COLORADO UFO INVESTIGATORS

Edward U. Condon, PhD 1926, Univ. of California. Director of UFO project. Physicist. Director of National Bureau of Standards, 1945-51. Professor of physics, fellow joint institute for laboratory astrophysics, Univ. of Colorado, 1963.

Robert Low, PhD. Assistant Dean of graduate school, University of Colorado. UFO Project Coordinator.

Stuart W. Cook, PhD 1938, Univ. of Minnesota. Psychologist. Chairman of psychology department, N.Y. Univ., 1950-64. Now Chairman of psychology department, Univ. of Colorado.

Franklin Roach, PhD. Astrophysicist. Acting Director of aeronomy laboratories, National Bureau of Standards Environmental Science Services Administration. Specialist in astronomical spectroscopy and upper atmospheric physics.

William A. Scott, PhD 1954, Michigan State University. Social psychologist. Professor of psychology, Univ. of Colorado, 1962.

David R. Saunders, PhD 1950, University of Illinois. Professor of psychology, University of Colorado. Former head of Personality Research, Educational Testing Service. Specialty: Methodology of personality measurement.

While the panel met on Feb. 3, 1966, its report, dated "March 1966", was not made public until after the March wave of sightings had stirred up sufficient interest among Congressmen to warrant hearing by the House Armed Services Committee on April 5. The hearings followed heavy pressure from the nation's press and from such influential persons as House Minority Leader Gerald Ford (R., Mich.)

The Secretary of the Air Force submitted to the Committee the panel's recommendation that "contracts be negotiated with a few selected universities to provide scientific teams to investigate promptly and in depth certain selected sightings of UFOs."

During the 15-month study, the Colorado project will not deal directly with the public since it is not set up to handle voluminous correspondence. Also, it could not be expected to pass judgment on individual sightings through the period of investigation and review.

Project Blue Book will remain in operation, with copies of all their reports going routinely to the university scientists. No interim reports are anticipated, though indications are that the exact methods and procedures of the scientific team have not been decided at this time.

Since the Colorado project is presently in a formative stage, we will report more specific details as they are learned.

# UNPUBLICIZED SIGHTINGS CONTINUE POLICE, FAA

A wide variety of citizens, including experienced pilots and police officers, have continued to report *UFO sightings* throughout September and October. With the exception of flurries located on Long Island and in the greater Washington, D.C., area (including many erroneous reports), no geographical pattern is apparent.

Though they are comparatively few in number, the authentic-sounding reports involve typical UFO features such as landings and near-landings, pacing of vehicles, and sharp maneuvers.

A new case of a UFO extending a rod-like structure which touched wires (first reported by John Fuller in "Incident At Exter") came on June 16 in Mt. Sunapee, N.H. Mrs. Gordon M. Avery told NICAP investigator John Meloney that she saw a white oval object about 4:00 a.m., while investigating the source of a brilliant light illuminating her living room. To the east, she saw the UFO apparently hovering a few feet above the telephone wires. As she watched, a jagged extension protruded from the object and seemed to touch the wires. It had no apparent physical effect.

After about 5 minutes, the rod retracted and the UFO began moving northeast, accelerating and disappearing over a mountain at high speed.

During the second half of August, a number of sightings in Saskatchewan, Canada, were reported by local newspapers. The unverified reports included a car-pacing incident (August 17); the landing of a UFO which rested on tripod legs (August 18); and "intense lights" which maneuvered low over a field (August 22).

Another unverified landing report came from Gwinner, N.D., Sept. 13, where a youth said he saw a UFO about the size of a car land in a plowed field about 7:30 a.m. The UFO reportedly looked "like two bowls put together," with three "pegs" on the underside, "antennae" on top. A set of three holes arranged in a triangle were found, each measuring about 12 inches in diameter and 5 inches deep. The triangle measured 22-26 feet on a side. The youth said the UFO had a translucent bubble on top.

A similar group of fragmentary reports, including a youth's account of a disc with transparent dome, were made by residents of suburban Washington, D.C., during October (see below).

More substantial reports came in late September, from Florida to eastern Canada, Massachusetts to Indiana.

## "Satellite" UFO Landing Case in Massachusetts

A huge UFO, surrounded by a series of maneuvering lights, was seen resting on Crane's Beach, on Ipswich Bay, Massachusetts, at approximately 4:45 a.m., by Mr. and Mrs. Ronald MacGilvary on September 17. An object that "glowed with a golden-white light, sometimes dim and then bright enough to see the sand around the base" was observed near the water's edge, according to NICAP Investigator H. W. Eismann in a report to NICAP Massachusetts Subcommittee Chairman Raymond Fowler.

Description of the phenomena place them in the category of "Satellite Object" cases (UFO Evidence, p. 16), a pattern which has persisted for many years.

The UFO, which appeared to tilt at times, disappeared with the break of dawn. A "dotted line effect" seemed to extend from the middle of the object to the ground.

During the one hour period that the object was sighted, the witnesses watched two bright lights above the beach moving toward the UFO with a "skipping motion," alternating between a fast and slow speed. As they appeared to "come together" at the top of the landed UFO, a third light was seen. The lights then left the UFO "from time to time," flying over the bay and occasionally disappearing behind the Crane's Beach hills. One of the objects, elliptical and with a faint glow that showed its outline, flew close to the water toward the MacGilvary home. It went from sight behind a small island about one-quarter of a mile from the house.

The Brookline police station received two calls that evening of a large, bluish-green, egg-shaped object hovering over a park.

Further checking by Raymond Fowler revealed that the Coast Guard was not aware of any aircraft in the area. Fowler also

reported that Echo II passed over the area more than four hours before and Venus did not rise until one-half an hour after the sighting occurred. The time and description of the sighting would rule out any of these natural explanations, he said.

## Plane Paced Over Florida

A cone-shaped UFO described as "a good city block" long completely shadowed and paced a small private plane piloted by James J. O'Connor at approximately 10 a.m. on "a beautiful clear day," September 20 over Sebring, Florida.

Flying at an altitude of 9,500 feet, the pilot who spent 8 years with the Army Security Agency, first saw the object "about 500 or more feet above me." He then began an ascent and leveled off at 10,000 feet. The UFO "began to get bigger," taking "37 seconds for it to enlarge from the size of a silver dollar to the size of what I would estimate a football field," the shadow of which completely engulfed the small plane. The noise that came from the object was described as being like rubber tires screeching on a rainy road.

O'Connor said he was in the shadow of the object for about three minutes.

"I then pulled power off on my craft," he said, "put on carburetor heat, pulled the nose up until I stalled out, and I dove as fast as permitted without placing undue strain on my airplane. I dropped to 3,500 feet before I looked up again, and that's when I was frightened; that thing had not changed size at all, but was still with me and pacing me. It was still as big as a football field; I banked to the left, it was still above me, or beside me . . . I banked to the right - same thing. I pulled up in a power stall, and peeled off . . . the thing was with me all this time . . ."

Just as he was ready to shoot at the UFO with a .38 caliber pistol, the object appeared to change shape, first to a wedge, then a thin line, and then disappeared.

"I realized it was climbing, doing a reverse peel off in a 360-degree turn," O'Connor continued, "we don't have an aircraft that could do this, I think. It was more like the thing was falling 'up' . . ."

O'Connor, an insurance adjustor with a law degree, said he felt apprehensive during the sighting but experienced no air turbulence.

## Near-landing Observed by RCAF

A round, shiny UFO that hovered close to the ground, then shot straight up and disappeared at a tremendous speed was observed by eight members of the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) and two fishermen in two places 45 miles apart on the Canadian province of Prince Edward Island (off-shore north of Maine).

According to the *Journal-Pioneer*, the RCAF members were refuelling an aircraft in the Prince County town of Summerside, about 6:30 a.m., Sept. 21, and spotted the object in the east traveling at a great speed. The UFO then abruptly came to a complete stop, descended straight toward the ground and hovered close to the land for approximately 20 minutes. It then shot straight up and disappeared very quickly.

Meanwhile, Ivan Collicut and Patrick O'Halloran, were out for an early morning catch of fish in the West Prince County town of Burton, 45 miles northwest of Summerside, when they saw a rapidly-moving light they thought was a "particularly bright star" traveling high in the sky from west to east. Since Summerside lies to the southeast, this could conceivably put the object on a course toward that town.

Both coastal towns face the Northumberland Strait, which separates Summerside by less than 50 miles from the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia. There last November and December three UFO sightings were reported, two of them involving low-hovering objects that apparently swept away the sand and snow.

# INVESTIGATE Pacing Of Vehicles, Landings, Reported

## Police Sight UFO Near Indiana Hospital

Two Anderson, Indiana, police officers sighted a highly maneuverable UFO shortly after 2:00 a.m. September 30 after leaving Community Hospital. The incident was investigated by the Anderson NICAP Subcommittee; another NICAP member obtained a copy of the police log on the case.

Just after turning south on Madison Avenue, Officer Dave Lehr noticed an object in the western sky, moving south. He called it to the attention of his partner, Officer Phil Carr, who was driving. Officer Carr pulled the police cruiser to the side of the road and the two men observed the aerial phenomenon.

The UFO resembled a satellite, except that it was below the over-cast, and made a sharp turn to the southwest as they watched. It was a plain white color until it neared a group of trees to the SW; then it suddenly changed appearance to a red flashing light. Shortly afterwards, it hovered, then began descending toward the ground. For about 5 minutes, the UFO seemed to hover, at times rising and descending again.

A very large bluish-white light pulsed around the object as it maneuvered near the trees. Lehr and Carr radioed for another

cruiser to witness the UFO, but about 15 seconds before the second vehicle arrived, the object disappeared behind the trees.

Officers Lehr and Carr said they heard no sound from the UFO, but the head nurse at the hospital reported hearing a humming noise overhead just as the officers were pulling away. The sound lasted for several seconds, then faded away.

In October, most of the sightings seemed confined to the East Coast, from New York to Washington. Strange aerial objects also were observed over eastern Tennessee October 11, and again October 12 followed by a fall of so-called "angel's hair."

## FAA Investigates in Tennessee

Two UFOs, one of which appeared to "shoot out a straight beam of light" toward a plane, were sighted by Maxie J. Fox, a student at East Tennessee State University (ETSU), his mother, Mrs. Burnette S. Fox, and neighbors, at approximately 7:10 p.m., October 11 in Jonesboro, Tennessee, about five miles southwest of Johnson City. This and other reports from the Johnson City area were investigated by David Kammer, Chairman of NICAP's Tennessee Subcommittee, who flew up from Chattanooga to personally interview the witnesses. Federal Aviation Agency (FAA) officials responded to citizens' reports and attempted to verify them.

According to Fox, his mother first called his attention to a cigar-shaped object "about four times as long as a star." After watching it for about two minutes, it lit up brightly and moved quickly toward the north. Fox and his mother then drove to the home of a neighbor. Before Mrs. Melba Jones and her son, Steve, could get outside the object had disappeared. A few moments later, however, two other round objects appeared.

"You could see a bulge on top of them and a bright light came from the bottom," Fox said in his report to Kammer. "It changed from white to red to green. The objects looked like they were playing with each other."

Frightened, Fox called the Tri-Cities Airport and got the FAA approach control. The line was held open for the next two hours.

"We are sending a plane out," Fred Akin, FAA Supervisor, reportedly said. "Watch for it and let us know if you see it."

The witnesses saw the plane approach, but, as it got near the objects, the UFOs "just went out like a light."

"Keep watching," Akin urged, "we're sending another plane."

"We could hear the second plane," Fox wrote, "and this one put its landing lights on and the objects turned off or went out again. A third plane was sent out (actually these planes were coming into Tri-City airport and were rerouted over the area) and we directed the plane by phone toward the objects."

Fox was interrupted by the two ladies, who excitedly said the plane was closely approaching one of the objects, which was now egg-shaped.

"As the plane passed by the object," Fox stated, "we saw the object shoot out a straight beam of light—similar to the way a shooting star looks—toward the plane. The length of the beam of light was about three inches at arm's length. The pilot said he thought he saw a meteor."

Three FAA men, including Akin and John Bolus, investigated. They left word for the witnesses to call back if they sighted anything else unusual.

The NICAP investigator listened to the tapes of the air to ground communications, cleared for him by the FAA, but none of the pilots of the rerouted planes said they saw anything unusual.

The following noon, Mrs. Fox said she, Mrs. Jones, and some neighbors saw a number of silvery objects discharge "some substance in sheets" that broke into spider Web-like strands. Although NICAP is investigating the possibility of migrating spiders, there were some interesting physiological effects reported by Mrs. Fox.

"I caught some of the substance . . . in my hand . . . and it burned my little finger," Mrs. Fox said. "I tried to get it off quick but it was sticky and stuck to everything . . ."

"We all got a little nauseated and we all itched. Everyone itched that came in the yard until it rained Saturday. I got real sick that night and the next morning." (Continued on Page 6, Col. 1)

## The Ravenna Report

After allegedly reviewing all the evidence in the Ravenna case, due to scientific and Congressional pressures, the Air Force stated September 30 that its original evaluation—a satellite and the planet Venus—will stand. Portage County, Ohio sheriffs, other police officers and citizens across the state, had reported a disc-like object with large antenna on the top rear, operating at low level and illuminating the ground on the morning of April 17. The Air Force refusal to re-evaluate the case was reported in a letter to Congressman William Stanton from Colonel Hayden P. Mims, Congressional Inquiry Division, Office of Legislative Liaison.

One of the witnesses, Dale Spaur, received nation-wide publicity in October when an Ohio newspaper revealed that the pressures on him as a result of the sighting had caused a break-up of his marriage and the loss of his job. Spaur was pictured as severely disturbed by the specter of the strange object he saw. His partner in cruiser P-13, Deputy Sheriff Barney Neff, witnessed the UFO at the same time. Most readers have been sympathetic of Spaur's plight, and the fact that he has had emotional problems after the sighting in no way discredits the case. It still remains one of the best-witnessed and most thoroughly investigated cases on record.

Later a college student in Ohio received local headlines by claiming he hoaxed the April 17 witnesses. He described in detail a balloon, batteries, lights and balsa-wood frame gadget which, he claimed, was launched with the help of an unnamed accomplice the night before, powered by "escaping gas." Even Project Blue Book Chief, Major Quintanilla, was quick to discount the alleged hoax as an explanation. Examination of the aerodynamics of the device described by the student is sufficient to discredit his claim. When last seen, the UFO was making a rapid vertical climb after outspeeding police cruisers for over 70 miles.

As announced in the previous issue, NICAP plans to publish the full story in booklet form if enough advance orders are received to justify the costs. As of this writing, we have approximately 600 orders, short of the necessary 1000. Since this reminder will not be received until after the original October 31 deadline, we will extend it another 15 days after mailing of this issue. Then, if 1,000 orders have not been received, all checks will be returned.

In ordering, please write a separate check or money order (please do not combine with membership payments) at \$2.00 each copy for book rate mailing (\$2.50 if you wish first class mailing). Please write "The Ravenna Case" on your check. Enclose a slip with your name and address typed or clearly printed. Until a decision is made on publication, the envelopes are being bundled and stored. Please do not enclose anything other than your check, and your name and address.

### FAA in Tennessee (Continued from page 5)

Mrs. Jones said the telephone pole in front of her house was littered with odd material. She "rolled a large amount of the sticky substance on a stick" and saved it. Later, Charles Armstrong, a reporter for the Johnson City Press Chronicle, stopped by the Jones home and asked for some of the substance.

"Even though the night was very cold," Mrs. Fox reported, "the stick was so hot to touch that he was forced to drop it when he picked it up."

Later that afternoon, an FAA secretary visited the Fox home and clipped a rose off a bush that still contained some of the strange material.

By the next morning, however, the material has apparently evaporated. Dr. D.G. Nicholson, an ETSU professor, examined the rose and stated that it contained "neither acid nor base."

Mrs. Fox also stated her dog wouldn't leave the house and her cows refused to enter the field where the substance fell until the Saturday rain. Other farmers, she said, had similar experiences.

An article concerning the sightings appeared in the Press Chronicle and Mrs. Fox was flooded with visitors on the evening of October 13.

"Everybody that was there saw the objects . . ." Mrs. Fox remarked. "One came down low and followed the transmission line that runs behind the house. It was so low that it went behind the trees in the distance and was still visible behind them."

## UFOs Return to Wanaque Reservoir

A UFO that hovered low over a reservoir, seen by a police officer, performed erratic maneuvers at a tremendous speed, and left behind a "slight mist", is only one of many reports from Wanaque, N.J., about 40 miles northwest of New York City, during the month of October, 1966. Sergeant Ben Thompson, of the Wanaque Reservoir police contingent, who made the sighting, said in a taped interview with NICAP member Dr. John Pagano that he saw the strange object between 9:15 and 9:30 p.m., October 10.

Thompson said his office had received many calls from people seeing strange lights that night, including one from the police in a neighboring borough, Pompton Lakes, requesting that he be on the lookout for a "light" that appeared to be heading for Wanaque. After arriving at the reservoir, the sergeant saw a "very brilliant light." He parked his patrol car, turned the flashing light on, and watched as the UFO performed a series of fantastic maneuvers.

"This thing kept going from my left to right, then it would shoot straight up with a square return and then straight down and then back left or right or vice versa, right to left and then it went so fast you didn't know whether it was going right to left or left to right. . . this bright light . . . lit up the whole area . . . It blinded me so bad I couldn't even see the light flashing on the jeep . . ."

Sgt. Thompson said it was at least a minute or so before he could see sufficiently to call in the report to the Pompton Lakes police.

"I noticed a little mist wherever this thing'd leave . . ." Thompson elaborated. "In other words, when it would go to the left, where it had been a second before that, there would be a slight mist."

The officer described the object as being like a basketball with a hole cut through the middle, and a football stuck through the hole, so that about a quarter of the football protruded from one side. He also said the object was "as big as an ordinary car." At one time, the object appeared to descend to within 150 feet of the reservoir.

The UFO "shot up" as it began its disappearance, turning "back to the left and as it went to the left . . . just before it got to the mountain or right near the mountain somewhere it disappeared."

Thompson also stated that, on another night, he and a policeman from a neighboring town, Ringwood, watched a red and a white light that seemed to be playing tag.

"Every time the red one seemed to go toward the white one," Sgt. Thompson continued, "the white one would . . . just take off in a straight line and then it would stop and . . . go up and down for maybe 10 or 15 minutes at a time before it would move. The closer the red one . . . came towards this white one, it would take off and move out."

AFR 80-17

AIR FORCE REGULATION  
NO. 80-17DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
Washington, D. C. 19 September 1966

Research And Development

## UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECTS (UFO)

This regulation establishes the Air Force program for investigating and analyzing UFOs over the United States. It provides for uniform investigative procedures and release of information. The investigations and analyses prescribed are related directly to the Air Force's responsibility for the air defense of the United States. The UFO Program requires prompt reporting and rapid evaluation of data for successful identification. Strict compliance with this regulation is mandatory.

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## SECTION A—GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Explanation of Terms. To insure proper and uniform usage of terms in UFO investigations, reports, and analyses, an explanation of common terms follows:

- a. *Unidentified Flying Objects.* Any aerial phenomenon or object which is unknown or appears out of the ordinary to the observer.
- b. *Familiar or Known Objects/Phenomena.* Aircraft, aircraft lights, astronomical bodies (meteors, planets, stars, comets, sun, moon), balloons, birds fireworks, missiles, rockets, satellites, searchlights, weather phenomena (clouds, contrails, dust devils), and other natural phenomena.

2. Program Objectives. Air Force interest in UFOs is two-fold: to determine if the UFO

is a possible threat to the United States and to use the scientific or technical data gained from study of UFO reports. To attain these objectives; it is necessary to explain or identify the stimulus which caused the observer to report his observation as an unidentified flying object.

a. *Air Defense.* The majority of UFOs reported to the Air Force have been conventional or familiar objects which present no threat to our security.

(1) It is possible that foreign countries may develop flying vehicles of revolutionary configuration or propulsion.

(2) Frequently, some alleged UFOs are determined to be aircraft. Air Defense Command (ADC) is responsible for identification

This regulation supersedes AFM 200-2, 29 July 1962  
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## AF Regulation 80-17

New AF Regulation 80-17, replacing 200-2, reflects change of Air Force UFO program from Intelligence to Research and Development Command. New Program Monitor is Deputy Chief of Staff, R & D. Paragraph 3d, states that, in addition to analysis by Foreign Technology Division, assistance will be obtained from "other Government agencies, private industrial companies, and contractor personnel. . .", the latter an allusion to the University of Colorado project. Information is still to be released only through the Pentagon.

Sgt. Thompson was also a witness to the highly publicized sightings at Wanaque in January and again in March. The same area was also apparently visited by UFOs in September, 1962.

A series of reports by teen-agers October 12 in the vicinity of the Reservoir were investigated by NICAP member Ronald Simjian. These sightings took place between 6:30 and 7:00 p.m. One UFO was described as "like the cap of a mushroom," glowing green, with a flat underside that appeared fuzzy. The object was observed below the crest of a hill, moving up over the crest and down the other side, apparently only 100 feet off the ground.

Simjian reported that, reminiscent of the reaction in Exeter, N.H. last Fall, cars were lining the road around the Reservoir for nights following the police sighting. Except for the small towns, the area is largely uninhabited. There is one radar installation near Patterson; a high tension line running NE-SW east of Oakland, and another NE-SW just east of the town of Greenwood Lake. Townspeople mentioned deposits of iron ore and old mines dating back to Revolutionary times.

Because of the large number of inexperienced observers "looking for a flying saucer," there is no doubt many of the New Jersey sightings are only honest mistakes. A similar pattern emerges from widespread sightings in and around Patchoque, L.I. on October 21 and 30, some still under investigation.

## HASTY BALL LIGHTNING THEORY

The cancellation of a UFO symposium, by a major engineering society has been attributed, in large part, to the author of the recently publicized ball lightning theory to explain UFOs. This disclosure was made by John Lear, science editor for Saturday Review (October 1). Mr. Lear, himself a UFO skeptic, indicates that the plasma/ball lightning theory was hastily evolved by Phillip Klass, an editor of Aviation Week, this Summer.

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), co-sponsors last Fall of a discussion of "Communications with Extraterrestrial Intelligence," reports Lear, had scheduled a UFO symposium in Washington for October 1966. In a special hearing by the convention committee in June, Klass objected to the program (before he had even looked into the subject carefully). Partly at his urging, the topic was changed to "IFOs" (Identified Flying Objects) and subsequently canceled.

After the June meeting, Lear states, Klass began examining some UFO literature—specifically John Fuller's book "Incident At Exter"—and, in time for the August 22 issue of Aviation Week, had evolved his plasma theory. (After that, Klass read The UFO Evidence report and claimed in the October 3 Aviation Week that his plasma theory could account for the reports).

Physical scientists consulted by NICAP give very little credence to Klass' theory, except as a possible explanation for a tiny percentage of UFO reports.

When news came in August that the IEEE UFO symposium had been canceled, Lear says, Klass was disappointed. Obviously, he could not now expound his plasma theory (though he has lost no opportunity to do so in other forums). Instead of UFOs, the IEEE decided to discuss the role of electronics in the Vietnamese conflict.

Attempts by NICAP to learn the official reason for the cancellation have been futile to date. The convention's chairman, Delmar C. Ports, stated that "difficulties in scheduling" prevented the UFO symposium.

## UFO with Flashing Lights Seen Over Newark

A solid UFO with "flashing red lights across the middle" was seen moving slowly across Newark, New Jersey, at 8:15 p.m., October 16, by Joseph A. Montana, a design layout draftsman. The round object seemed to have a "pulsating effect" and appeared about 20 feet in diameter.

"The red lights were blinking on and off at approximately 60 flashes per minute," Montana said in a report to NICAP. "Also there was a bluish green glow on one side looking somewhat like a short tail. All the while the main source of light, which was white in color, was pulsating from bright to medium at approximately 30 pulsations per minute."

The UFO moved slowly to the left, then right. It then stopped and hovered for about five minutes before moving off again.

The witness stated that his mother also watched the object for about 20 minutes before it disappeared "behind a roof top several houses away."

## Capital Area Sightings

Fast-moving, rotating UFOs have been reported frequently in the suburban Washington, D.C. area during October. Late in the month, an unusual amount of ground smoke causing stars to flash and pulsate strangely touched off some false reports. None of the sightings were reported in the local press. Citizens independently reported them to NICAP.

A bright object with a greenish-white glow was observed moving erratically over Galesville, Md., October 12 by Mr. & Mrs. S.B. Wright. When an airliner passed below the UFO, the object emitted a streak of light downward, then disappeared. About 10 hours later over suburban Silver Spring, Mr. N. Smith reported seeing a red object leaving a short vapor trail, moving very rapidly. The UFO made a sweeping turn, then reversed its direction.

## CASE BOOK

(Note: Case Book is a special feature which will report older UFO cases showing important patterns, correlations or other special features, for the record. Often we obtain full details of substantial cases months or years after they occur. They are no longer current "news," but they are important as evidence. When space permits, significant cases will be printed in future issues regardless of when they occurred).

## Antarctic Sighting Disclosed in London

A scientist at a British scientific station near Halley Bay in Antarctica observed and officially reported a UFO on November 20, 1965.

This disclosure, based on official reports of the British Antarctic Survey, was made in the London Daily Telegraph (August 20, 1966) by Dr. Anthony Michaelis. Sightings and reported color photographs of UFOs at Argentine, British and Chilean scientific stations just across the Weddell Sea made headlines world-wide in July 1965, followed by a major wave of sightings in the Western Hemisphere in August.

At 1720 (GMT), geologist J. Ross and diesel mechanic B. Porter were approximately 18 miles SW of Bird Rock, returning to Halley Bay, when they noticed a bright circular object in a cloudless sky, approaching from the northeast. Porter viewed the UFO through binoculars for a few seconds "before it turned and made off at high speed in a westerly direction."

In the same article, Dr. Michaelis reported that fully one out of every four cases investigated by the Royal Air Force during 1965 were officially labelled "unknown." RAF figures for the past three years showed an average of almost 13% unexplained—far higher than comparable figures released by the U.S. Air Force.

During 1965, the RAF investigated 56 cases, of which 14 are carried as unexplained. Though no security restrictions were claimed, the RAF turned down Dr. Michaelis' request to inspect the 14 cases.

## Commercial Pilots Report 1957 UFO

A multi-colored UFO, estimated to be 40-50 feet in diameter that maneuvered sharply near their aircraft at high speeds was reported by two commercial pilots near Pampa, Texas, about 8:15 p.m., Oct. 23, 1957.

In a detailed report to NICAP, pilot Emerson E. Goff said he was descending from 14,500 feet to 10,500 when both he and his passenger, Harold Briggs, saw "an exceptionally bright star" above and to the left. Moments later, the "star" appeared to approach them at high speed, its apparent size increasing rapidly.

"At that point, I could make out a faintly solid elliptical shape with an apparent rounded upper portion," Goff stated. "It was (Continued on Page 8, Col. 1)

A near-landing was reported by a prep school student, who said the UFO was just above the ground near his Potomac, Md., home October 5, It was disc-shaped with a transparent dome on top. Though it was daytime, lights were visible rotating around the perimeter. A wave of heat was felt as the UFO rose quickly and entered a cloudbank. No other witnesses have been located, and NICAP is still investigating.

Other area sightings include: A cigar-shaped object bobbing up and down, visible from Arlington, VA., about 6:30 p.m., October 11; a cylindrical object observed at low level about an hour later near Indian Head, Md., making a whirring-clicking sound; two sightings October 16 in Maryland, one of a rotating red-orange object moving rapidly at 3:10 p.m. over Kensington, the other a high-flying grayish object near Glen Burnie at 6:10 p.m.

Two sightings of odd aerial objects were made near the Germantown Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) facility. About 8:30 p.m. October 17 Mrs. Nancy Carr and Mrs. John Roths saw an oval UFO with revolving lights, over a field. Two sisters driving on Route 15 about 11:30 p.m. October 24, about 10 miles from the AEC turn-off, saw an "elliptical bank of red lights" with flashing white lights above. The lights maintained position relative to each other, as if on a solid object. The UFO hovered over some trees, "bounced" in the air, veered, went straight up and disappeared.

## CASE BOOK (Continued from page 7)

lit up so brilliantly in a bluish, greenish, white brilliance that it was really hard to discern just the exact shape it did have." A separate yellowish-white "brilliance" was noted on the top.

Now ahead of Goff's plane, the UFO suddenly began a rapid vertical climb, quickly levelled off and continued horizontally. The movements were abrupt, but did not appear to affect the object. Finally the UFO vanished into storm clouds.

The sighting had lasted about six minutes, and the speed of the UFO was estimated to be around 600 m.p.h.

"I must conclude that the object was of an unknown, airborne phenomenon," Goff said, "of immense brilliance . . . and apparently under some kind of remote or onboard intelligent control."

## Theodolite Tracking of UFO

A bright bluish-white UFO that turned, stopped and reversed course was tracked with a Theodolite by two well-trained, experienced observer-employees of a major aerospace company near St. Petersburg, Fla., at 9:17 p.m., Sept. 21, 1966.

Robert W. Elliot and Marlin H. Eldred were preparing to make reference shots on the North Star when they observed a bright bluish-white UFO about 5 above it. Elliot swung the instrument and picked the object up in his field of view.

"The object traveled on a course of 90 degrees East for about a half minute, or 10 degrees of arc," Eldred reported. "It then gradually turned to a North heading and appeared to stop and then reversed course. It then started a turn to the East and settled out on a course of about 30 degrees East and an elevation of about 40-45 degrees."

Growing dimmer until it disappeared, the object was traveling at a speed "about twice that of Echo satellite."

"I have never seen any object of this nature before," concluded Eldred, who has four years' experience with making astronomical measurements and is a pilot with 1100 flying hours.

"I have been making astronomical sightings here for the past eight years," Elliot reported. "I was trained as a navigator and was a navigator and navigator instructor in World War II and also during the Korean Conflict. I have observed stars, planets, satellites, comets, and airplanes, and I cannot place this object in any of those categories."

## BE SURE IT'S A UFO

Members can perform a valuable service over the next 18 months by helping to minimize the number of false UFO sightings that are publicly reported. All UFO investigators (except the rabid cultists) generally agree that a large percentage of things reported as UFOs really are conventional objects or phenomena. Estimates range from 50% to 80%. It is of utmost importance that the University of Colorado group, and the re-awakened public, not be deluged by erroneous reports. In the past, the high percentage of explainable sightings has misled a great many people into believing all sightings were easily explainable.

If you, your friends or neighbors see any unusual aerial phenomena, please check very carefully before reporting it to anyone. Be aware of bright planets which, when low on the horizon or viewed through clouds or haze, can give the illusion of rotation and/or erratic motion. During November and December, Venus is rising between 6-8 A.M. remaining visible in the east until sunrise. In late November and December, Jupiter will be prominent in the early evening sky, visible throughout the night. Mars will be rising after midnight, climbing higher through the early morning hours.

Balloons, particularly the large plastic models used for research, have caused many sightings. They can drift for days across several states, and local authorities may not be able to account for them. When becalmed, they can hover for hours. When the sun is at a low angle, plastic balloons are particularly striking, brightly reflective. At higher sun angles, careful observation should reveal the translucent plastic material. Instrument packages may be visible beneath the balloon.

Meteor showers for November-December include: the high-velocity Leonids Nov. 15-20; lower velocity but more frequent,

Geminids Dec. 9-13, and the Ursids Dec. 21-22. The annual showers (check almanac for other dates) sometimes produce reports of "objects" darting here and there. Fireballs (extremely bright meteors), which can occur at any time, have caused many false UFO reports. To inexperienced observers, they do not seem to fit the stereotype of a meteor; they are "too big, too bright, and last too long." A fireball normally is seen over a wide geographical area, often resembling an airplane on fire or gliding majestically along for 10 seconds or longer. Their fiery appearance is obvious, and they often emit a trail so that their overall shape resembles a tadpole or a teardrop.

Among the other causes for erroneous reports, when something of strange appearance is honestly reported, are advertising planes with moving lights, rocket launchings, aircraft with brilliant anticollision lights, and a planet or bright star viewed from a moving vehicle.

## INVESTIGATION NET EXPANDED

New NICAP Subcommittees have begun operation near Harrisburg, Pa. and in Chicago, Illinois. About 15 additional units are being formed across the country. The rapidly expanding investigation network continues to improve NICAP's coverage of UFO sightings. By mid-1967, we expect to have close to 50 teams of field investigators covering virtually every state.

Pennsylvania Unit #4 (mentioned in the previous issue) was publicized in the October 4 Harrisburg Evening News. Chairman, George B. Cook, head of a collection-investigative agency, has obtained the services of scientists, engineers, and local officials to assist with interviews and report writing.

The new Chicago area Subcommittee, which will coordinate its activities with the Chicago NICAP affiliate, will also cover southwest Michigan, northwest Indiana and southern Wisconsin. Chairman is Roy E. Murdock, insurance salesman, who has been vice-president of the Chicago Affiliate. Investigators will include Dr. Lawrence H. Niece (nuclear chemist); John J. Andrews (artist-designer, builder of master models for USAF identification program); Richard P. Seaman (engineer); Mrs. Gloria Hillert (biologist); John P. Oswald (research chemist); Robert J. Runser (airline Captain); and William B. Doe (chemical engineer).

Other NICAP members with scientific or technical training or other appropriate backgrounds are invited to submit resumes.

## New View of Mars

The idea that Mars "is a geological body much like the Earth, with large-scale continental blocks and basins" was suggested by two scientists, Dr. Carl Sagan, Harvard University astronomer, and Dr. James B. Pollack of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, according to an article in the October, 1966, issue of "The Griffith Observer" (published by Griffith Observatory). The red planet has been generally regarded in scientific circles as a "flat, barren plain with no elevations over one-half mile high."

Based on a news release from the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, the article, entitled "Smithsonian Scientists Report Continents on Mars," said that Sagan and Pollack concluded the planet's bright areas may be lowlands and the dark areas huge plateaus or continents rising six to nine miles above the dusty deserts. The estimates of the elevation differences were based in part on the analysis of radar surveys by means of the 85-foot radio telescope of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory's Goldstone tracking network.

The findings, reported on July 26, 1966, before the American Astronomical Society meeting in Ithaca, New York, contradict previous thoughts that atmospheric pressure on the red planet would prevent soft landings of spacecraft without retrorockets. The scientists reported that "atmospheric pressure on these elevations would . . . be considerably less than the pressure in the lowland," indicating that much less difficulty would be encountered in landing a vehicle on the high plateaus.

Heretofore, say the scientists, "the dark highlands have escaped optical detection because their long, gentle slopes . . . and relatively level 'tops' preclude any shadows or reflection of sunlight once in the Martian twilight."