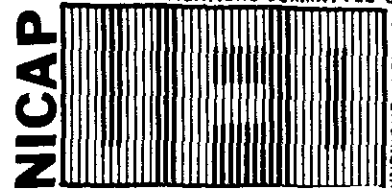


UFO INVESTIGATOR

NATIONAL INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE OF



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THE SONIC BOOM CONTROVERSY --

WHERE ARE WE TODAY?

This report is a follow-up by NICAP Regional Investigator, Ernest Jahn to his investigative report on the air quakes published in the May, 1978, issue of the UFO INVESTIGATOR.

Back about December 2, 1977, the East Coast of the United States as well as portions of Canada were abruptly introduced to a new phenomenon which came to be known as the sonic boom or in some quarters, air quakes, and as could be expected, with the introduction of any new occurrence not immediately identifiable by scientific logic or political rhetoric, they became the subject for much discussion and investigation.

In the first few weeks following the initial booms along the East Coast, several theories were brought forth which ranged from exploding gas from garbage dumped off the coast of New York, to sonic aircraft, unusual atmospheric conditions, re-entering satellites and even a few articles which alluded to their connection to interplanetary craft. But fortunately from all of this surface excitement came serious and scientific examination of the facts surrounding them.

At the request of NICAP's director, Mr. Jack Acuff, I, as a regional investigator in an area directly affected by the quakes, conducted an investigation into these occurrences. The results were forwarded to NICAP headquarters, and in keeping with the organization's policy of open cooperation with all military and private agencies in matters of this nature, a report was in turn forwarded to all those agencies who requested information from NICAP as part of their ongoing studies. These included the Naval Research Lab, Mitre Corporation and units of the U.S. Geological Survey. Now some eight months and several reports later there still appear to be many theories and unanswered questions.

On January 5, 1978, at the direction of the Department of Defense, the Chief of Naval Research directed the Naval Research Laboratories to form a study team to conduct a short but intensive investigation into the acoustic events. This team included selected Naval personnel as well as scientific experts in such fields as combustion phenomena, atmospheric dynamics, undersea acoustic phenomena and other related fields.

The culmination of this research was an indepth report by N.R.L. consisting of approximately 150 pages that was released on March 10, 1978, with listings according to times and locations and selected graphs of each of the occurrences from December 2, 1977, to February 1, 1978. The bottom line of this report stated that the N.R.L. as well as NASA and the Navy had traced all of the booms to their satisfaction to the activities of either Marine and Navy fighter aircraft or to flights of the Concorde. The large distances over which the booms occurred were tied to an unusual inversion layer which may have reflected the booms more than one hundred miles to shore. The report goes on to state that in many cases the aircraft concerned were not aware of the effects they were causing.

The N.R.L. report was followed by a several page release in the May, 1978, issue of the FAS Public Information Report (Federation of American Scientists). While this report paralleled that of the N.R.L. in some respects, the FAS indicated that the stronger evidence lay in attributing the quakes to flights of the French and British Concorde as opposed to those of military aircraft, and presented its own charts and time tables to support this theory.

From the onset of this phenomenon NICAP has been working closely with representatives of Mitre Corporation in attempting to fully evaluate all data received. Of the nearly 600 incidents investigated, approximately 2/3 are felt to be accounted for by actions of the supersonic aircraft to one degree or another. The remaining incidents are felt to be caused by natural phenomena. (Mr. Jahn elaborated on this point in a telephone conversation with NICAP headquarters, stating that Mitre Corporation asserts that 1/3 of the air quake incidents cannot be shown satisfactorily to be the effects of supersonic aircraft activity. For this significant number, other possible explanations must be examined.)

The full results of this research will be released as of October 1, 1978, in a Mitre report that will evaluate and consider all theories put forth by the above-mentioned organizations as well as their findings. The purpose of this report will not be to specifically answer the question as to what the cause of this phenomenon may be, as it would appear that in all probability there is no singular cause, but instead to present as objectively as possible the pros and cons of those theories put forth as of this date.

Copies of this report will be available from the Mitre Corporation for the cost of mailing and handling. Requests for information pertaining to this report should be addressed to: Dr. Gordon MacDonald
Mitre Corporation / Metrek Division
1820 Dolly Madison Boulevard
McLean, Virginia 22101

SIGHTING ADVISORY * * * Frederick Valentich, 20, on a short solo flight from Melbourne, Australia, to King Island across the Bass Strait, October 21, 1978, radioed air traffic controllers on the mainland that he was being approached from the east by a UFO about 1,000' above him. After about a 10 minute recorded conversation, he reported rough engine idling and said, "It isn't an aircraft. It's . . ." Nothing more has been heard from him or his single-engine Cessna 182.

WE APPRECIATE!

NICAP wishes to thank those members who have made contributions to the organization. Your support is both reassuring and appreciated.

Your donations are, of course, tax deductible.



Locations of sightings reported in article which follows on pp. 3-4.

N U M E R O U S S I G H T I N G S I N D E T R O I T A R E A

A flurry of UFO sightings, concentrated mainly in the Detroit, Michigan, area were reported to NICAP's regional investigator, Jack Thompson. The first occurred in December, 1977, but most were reported from early February to mid-March of this year. Many of the sightings, curiously, have details in common. Following is a summary of Mr. Thompson's findings.

Daniel Leonard, a 33 year-old boring mill operator, was traveling the M-97 in Roseville last December 2, 1977. At 12:15 A.M. he stopped his truck and got out, walked over to a building, and looking up, noticed five airborne objects about the size of oranges not more than 150 yards away. They made no sound, merely hovered. As he watched them, three more joined them, and all eight rose slowly in a northwest direction and disappeared from view. The sighting lasted about two minutes.

The gray-white, sharply outlined, dome-shaped objects appeared to have translucent tops and what looked like two beings inside. Mr. Leonard estimated them to be 40-50' in diameter and 8-10' in depth.

On February 15, 1978, at 7:40 A.M., Ann Schulkins, a 22 year-old accounting clerk, was driving east on W. Maple in West Bloomfield when a brightness off to the right in the sky caught her attention. It appeared to be a bar-shaped craft, fiery reddish orange, with a horizontal gap or beam of white light in the center. The object glowed sharply and had rather a halo effect. It was fairly large, 2" on a ruler held at arm's length. Ms. Schulkins observed the craft for two minutes before turning off onto another road and losing it behind some trees. Through the duration of her sighting, she claims it never moved.

Diane Slezak, age 24 and in personnel marketing, was also driving on February 19, 1978, at 11:55 P.M., when she sighted two very bright lights in the sky in Roseville. She observed them for a couple of minutes, when they then seemed to become five lights in a straight line. As the car got closer, the lights took the form of a "V" and then became faint blue and red blinking ones. Their speed was so great, they disappeared in seconds.

On March 1, 1978, at 9:00 P.M., Judi Sist, a 35 year-old homemaker, was watching T.V. in her Sterling Heights home. She noticed a helicopter outside and went to the window to watch it. As it flew out of sight, something more interesting caught her attention. Two craft were moving slowly around the sky. The first was smallish, 1 1/2" if compared to a ruler held at arm's length. The second, 6-8", was larger.

The first was a solid cigar shape with red, green and yellowish-white blinking portholes. It moved in an easterly direction, then changed to northeast. She observed it for about one minute.

The second was a pulsating blue and white haze. Mrs. Sist's daughter, Karen, babysitting next door, said she saw a dome shape on top. Mrs. Sist observed this object for about 15 seconds before it disappeared as though someone had flicked a switch.

At 9:15 that same night, in Utica, Michigan, Jean Gross, 31 year-old homemaker, had just put her daughter to bed when she noticed bright lights outside. What she saw appeared to be a large, round area of bright white light with a horizontal strip of about 9 green, red and white lights through the middle. A helicopter in the area was traveling towards the lights, and the witness feared a collision. As the helicopter neared, the large white light began to flash; then

suddenly, all the lights cut off completely. The helicopter turned and went a short distance away; the lights reappeared. The helicopter again moved towards the device, and again it disappeared. When the lights appeared again, they were moving slowly in a southerly direction at a low altitude. Mrs. Gross observed them for 6 or 7 minutes more when they went off and did not reappear. Total time of sighting was 30 minutes.

Jean Gross' description bears marked similarities to the smaller object that Judi Sist, only a few miles away, saw, but what about the second object in Mrs. Sist's report?

That same March 1st evening at 9:30, a 25 year-old interior designer, Lynn Holley, was driving in Romulus, listening to her radio. As she turned a corner, she saw a glowing ball of blurred, pulsating light hovering about 20' over the road. She reports that the light appeared white in the center, red-orange around the center, and phosphorescent greenish at the outside. Four glistening beams of light projected from the object in north, south, east, and west locations. Ms. Holley reported hearing a low, "whishing" sound, as well.

As she viewed the object, her car radio crackled and went out. It continued to malfunction and later had to be replaced.

She observed the object for about 50 seconds before it moved straight up at high speed, turned parallel to the ground, moved north over the Detroit Metropolitan Airport, and finally continued straight up as before and disappeared. This sighting parallels, in some ways, the second object seen by Judi Sist.

Four days later on March 5, 1978, at 4:30 A.M., Gail Vandebrook, a 40 year-old homemaker who watches the sky regularly, noticed two very bright lights outside. As she watched, another appeared, forming a triangle. Then a fourth appeared in the middle of them. They looked like bright stars and were self-luminous. Mrs. Vandebrook estimated the size to be equal to or larger than a DC-10 at the same distance. She observed the object for about 15 minutes, when it began to rush off, hesitated, then rushed off again in a westerly direction, adding another light. She estimated the distance of the lights to be about 5 miles away.

Mrs. Vandebrook's two sons, Paul and Michael, also saw the craft. Mrs. Vandebrook feels that what she saw was a UFO. Certain similarities exist between this sighting and that of Diane Slezak on February 19.

Then on March 12, just outside of Sarnia in Ontario, Canada, Joseph DeFrancesco, age 56 and a professor of commercial art, was enjoying a peaceful return from a ski weekend by bus. It was a clear night; the stars and moon were visible. Looking out the window, he noticed a very bright object about the size of a nickel held at arm's length. It was moving slowly across the sky in a northwest direction, stopping from time to time. The craft, which appeared to be about 10 miles away, had revolving portholes and a halo of orange light about it. The bright orange light glowed from the portholes as well. Mr. DeFrancesco viewed the object for about a minute before it crossed the path of the bus and disappeared.

In view of recent October sightings over Lake Michigan in the vicinity of the Ludington Coast Guard Station, these reports have an added interest. The Detroit/Ontario area in eastern Michigan where they occurred is only an approximate 200-250 miles southeast of Ludington on Michigan's northwest shoreline. It is hoped that a detailed report on the more recent sightings will be available for publication soon.