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***Aviation Week
& Space Technology***

June 10, 1987

Philip J. Klass

Dear Paul Steucke:

Here is the final, published version of my analysis of the now famous JAL UFO incident for your files

Although "Skeptical Inquirer" is a copyrighted publication, you have my permission to make a few additional copies if you wish.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. J. Klass', written in a cursive style.

PHILIP J. KLASS
404 N. ST. SOUTHWEST
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20024

Special Reports

FAA Data Sheds New Light On JAL Pilot's UFO Report

Philip J. Klass

THE UFO MOVEMENT, suffering from an extended drought of exciting new UFO incidents to attract media and public interest, got a sorely needed shot in the arm in early January, when it was disclosed that the pilot of a Japan Air Lines 747 cargo airliner had reported an encounter with a giant UFO over Alaska on November 17, while flying to Anchorage from France. The incident had occurred in twilight conditions, starting about 6:15 P.M. local time, with the sun about 11 degrees below the horizon.

According to initial press reports, the incident seemed a classic. The principal witness was an experienced captain, Kenju Terauchi, whose reported visual observations seemingly were confirmed by a USAF/Federal Aviation Administration radar. Additionally, the UFO seemingly paced the JAL 747 for more than 40 minutes, offering an extended period for observation by two other crew members of the cargo aircraft loaded with French wine destined for Japan.

Important new insights into the incident have since emerged as a result of the FAA's wise decision to offer a complete data package to the public at modest cost. The available data includes a verbatim transcript of the JAL pilot's tape-recorded radio communications with

FAA controllers during the incident, tape recordings and transcripts of FAA interviews with the three JAL crew members in early January, about six weeks after the incident occurred, and a copy of the revealing report that Captain Terauchi submitted to the FAA, also in early January.

In releasing all available data on the incident, the FAA's Alaskan Region public affairs officer, Paul Steucke, noted that his agency "does not have the resources or the Congressional mandate to investigate sightings of unidentified flying objects. We have not tried to determine what the crew of Japan Air Lines flight #1628 saw based on scientific analysis of the stars, planets, magnetic fields, angle of view, etc."

During the initial phase of the November 17 UFO incident, a long-range USAF/FAA radar sporadically seemed to show a *single* blip in the vicinity of the 747's radar blip—at a time when the pilot was reporting seeing *several* UFOs. Fortunately, the FAA records radar data (for subsequent analysis in event of a mid-air collision or a near-miss), and it was sent to the FAA's technical center near Atlantic City for analysis by radar specialists, to determine if the long-range USAF/FAA radar had indeed detected

an unidentified object in the vicinity of the JAL 747.

This analysis showed that the sporadic second blip was due to a phenomenon known as "uncorrelated primary and beacon target," which can occur if the radar energy bouncing off an aircraft does not arrive at precisely the same instant as the signal transmitted back by the aircraft's radar transponder. According to FAA specialist Dennis R. Simantel, who analyzed the data, "these uncorrelated primary returns are not uncommon due to the critical timing associated with the delay adjustments in the aircraft transponder . . . and the target correlation circuitry within the radar equipment."

The FAA data package reveals Terauchi to be a "UFO repeater," with two other UFO sightings prior to November 17, and two more this past January, which normally raises a "caution flag" for experienced UFO investigators. The JAL pilot is convinced that UFOs are extraterrestrial and when describing the light(s) Terauchi often used the term *spaceship* or *mothership*.

During his January 2 interview with FAA officials, Terauchi said that he believed the "mothership" intentionally positioned itself in the "darkest [easterly] side" of the sky because "I think they did not want to be seen." This enabled the UFO to see the 747 "in front of the sunset and visible for any movement we make." In his report to the FAA, he expressed the hope that "we humans will meet them in the near future."

Terauchi, who was based in Anchorage at the time but has since been transferred back to Japan, noted in his report that his flights over Alaska "generally [are] in the daytime and it is confusing to identify the kind of lights" in darkness. As an example, he described seeing lights from an Alaskan pipeline pumping station reflecting off snow-covered mountains, which initially puzzled him.

(On January 11, a few days after Terauchi gave FAA officials his recollection of the November 17 incident, he

again reported spotting unusual lights in roughly the same area while on a repeat flight from Paris to Anchorage. The JAL captain, who has a limited verbal facility in English, asked to record his description of the January 11 UFO in Japanese. Its translation, included in the FAA's data package, resembled Terauchi's description of the UFO initially sighted on November 17: "We see irregular pulsating lights just there is a large black chunk [*sic*] just in front of us. Distance is five miles. It seems to be a spaceship, ah UFO." The pilot reported a similar sighting a few minutes later. But when the USAF/FAA radar failed to confirm the presence of any object, he and the FAA later agreed that these January 11 UFOs were merely lights from small villages being diffused by thin clouds of ice crystals.)

Captain Terauchi, who quickly became an international media celebrity, provided colorful accounts of the incident. But he always failed to mention that two other aircraft in the area that were vectored into the vicinity of the JAL 747 to try to spot the UFO he had been reporting were unable to see any such object. This is revealed in the transcript of radio communications between Terauchi and FAA traffic controllers and their communications with the flight crews of United Airlines flight #69 and a USAF C-130 transport.

United #69 was headed north from Anchorage to Fairbanks at the time that JAL #1628 was headed in the opposite direction along a parallel airway to Anchorage. The FAA asked the United pilot if it could vector him slightly to the left of his intended path, to bring him within several miles of JAL #1628, to see if he could spot and possibly identify the "UFO." As United #69 approached, Terauchi reported the bright light to be at his "nine o'clock" position—roughly broadside and to the left at an estimated distance of about ten miles.

The United captain agreed, and Terauchi was asked to turn his landing lights on briefly to help the United crew



locate the JAL airliner. The United crew, looking ahead and to its left, readily spotted JAL, silhouetted against a still faintly light sky, but could not see any luminous object in its vicinity. Shortly before the two aircraft passed, Terauchi was asked again to give the UFO's position, and he reported that it was "just ahead of United"—which would place the bright light to the southeast. Despite the fact that the bright light seemed to Terauchi to be directly ahead of the United jetliner, its crew saw nothing.

In the southeasterly direction, where Terauchi was then looking, was the very bright (-2.6 magnitude) planet Jupiter, which was low in the sky (about 12 degrees) at an azimuth of about 143 degrees relative to true north. From Terauchi's vantage point, Jupiter would appear to be just ahead of United #69. But the bright planet would have been far to the right of United's flight path, and its crew would have been looking to their left at JAL #1628. Never once did Terauchi report the "UFO's" position relative to a "very bright star," i.e., Jupiter.

Also in the area at the time was a USAF C-130 transport aircraft that was

westbound for Elmendorf AFB, flying south of JAL #1628. When the C-130 pilot overheard the FAA communications with JAL, he too offered to try to spot the reported UFO when the USAF aircraft passed near the 747. The USAF crew readily spotted the JAL 747 but reported seeing no other object in its vicinity. The C-130 crew would not have noticed Jupiter, which was to their far left, because they were looking at the JAL 747 to their right.

While it is commendable that the FAA's Alaskan Region decided to conduct tape-recorded interviews with the three JAL crew members in early January, following inquiries by Japanese news media in late December, in retrospect it is regrettable that the FAA did not think to tape-record discussions with the crew immediately after flight #1628 landed in Anchorage on November 17, when recollections were still fresh. However, when crew members were interviewed separately in January, some significant differences emerged, providing useful insights.

For example, it now appears that the November 17 incident involved two different "types of UFOs," or trigger-mechanisms. As described by flight

engineer Yoshio Tsukuba (through an interpreter) during his January 15 interview with FAA officials, the initial UFO was observed for about five to ten minutes at roughly an 11 o'clock position before it disappeared. This is confirmed by the FAA radio communications transcript, which shows the pilot reported the UFO disappearance at 0223:13 GMT, roughly four minutes after it was first reported. Crew members had been observing it for several minutes prior to the initial report.

The second UFO, which Tsukuba characterized as "absolutely different" was visible much further to the left ("nine o'clock") for about 30 or 40 minutes. Tsukuba described the initial UFO as a "cluster of lights . . . undulating," which were "different from town lights." Unlike the pilot, Tsukuba said he was unable to describe any particular shape for either UFO. The flight engineer said that, when he was first interviewed by the FAA immediately following the incident, he "was not sure whether the object was a UFO or not. My mind has not changed since then."

During FAA interviews in January, copilot Takanori Tamefuji, who was flying the 747 at the time of the initial sighting, confirmed the flight engineer's recollections that the UFO first sighted was "completely different" from the one later seen further to the left. Tamefuji described what at first appeared to be "two small aircraft" slightly below his own altitude. When the copilot was asked if he could distinguish these lights "as being different" from a star, he replied: "No." (The planet Mars would have been visible to the crew about 19 degrees to the right of Jupiter, but it would not have been nearly as bright.)

When a sketch made by Captain Terauchi, showing a giant walnut-shaped UFO, was shown to the copilot and he was asked if this was what he had seen, he replied: "I don't see anything like this but . . . if we can connect these lights it

[would] be a big object, but ah . . ."

There are a number of ambiguities in the report that Captain Terauchi submitted to the FAA on January 2, and in his subsequent interview with an FAA representative, despite the presence of an interpreter. Terauchi generally characterized the initial amber-white lights as resembling the exhaust of jet or rocket engines. In his report, written in Japanese and later translated, Terauchi said that a few minutes after first observing the lights ahead and to the left, "most unexpectedly two spaceships stopped in front of our face, shooting off lights. The inside cockpit shined [*sic*] brightly and I felt warm in the face." Neither of the other crew members reported such effects.

All three crew members agreed that the 747's weather radar displayed an echo at a bearing that roughly corresponded to that of the initial lights at a range of about eight miles. The radar display uses color to show the strength of the echo to alert the crew to the potential intensity of thunderstorm turbulence ahead. A red-colored echo indicates an especially strong radar echo and a green color shows the weakest. All three crew members agree that the "UFO blip" was green.

This is especially curious if the visual UFO was a giant craft only a few miles ahead, which should have produced an extremely strong (red) return. Flight engineer Tsukuba characterized it as "not a dot, but streamlike." This is confirmed by a sketch drawn by the pilot after landing on November 17. It suggests that the green "blip/stream" was an echo from thin clouds of ice crystals—like those that prompted Terauchi to mistake village lights for UFOs on January 11.

On the night of November 17, there was a nearly full moon that would have been approximately 12 degrees above the horizon at the time of the initial UFO sighting and almost directly behind the JAL 747's direction of flight. This raises the possibility that bright moonlight reflecting off turbulent clouds of ice crystals

could have generated the undulating flame-colored lights that Terauchi described.

It would also explain why the undulating lights would periodically and suddenly disappear and then reappear as cloud conditions ahead changed. When the aircraft finally outflew the ice clouds and the initial "UFO" disappeared for good, Terauchi would search the sky for it, spot Jupiter further to the left, and conclude it was the original UFO.

This case is likely to become a classic in the UFO inventory because many people assume that a senior airline captain could never mistake a bright planet or other prosaic object for a UFO. Yet when the late Dr. J. Allen Hynek re-analyzed UFO reports in the USAF files, he found that pilots were as readily misled by prosaic objects as persons in other professions. Numerous air-accident-investi-

gation reports by the National Transportation Safety Board confirm that even experienced pilots are not infallible.

I am indebted to astronomers Nick Sanduleak and C. B. Stephenson, of Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, for their valuable assistance in computing positions and bearings of bright celestial bodies relative to the JAL 747 airliner at the time of the November 17 incident. •

Philip J. Klass, who was a senior editor with Aviation Week & Space Technology magazine for nearly 35 years until his partial retirement in June 1986, has been investigating famous UFO cases as a hobby for more than 20 years. His most recent book is UFOs: The Public Deceived, published by Prometheus Books.

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The Unmasking of Psychic Jason Michaels

Richard Busch

In the early months of 1986, Jason Michaels, of Grove City, Pennsylvania, had reached his psychic peak. He had made the most of the nationwide publicity resulting from his apparent ability to predict the future. His most notable supposed predictions were the DC-8 Gander, Newfoundland, air tragedy the previous December, which killed 248 American soldiers, and the Challenger space shuttle disaster in January, in which the crew of seven died. While any performer is expected to appear on stage and entertain, Michaels was claiming real powers and doing so from TV and radio newsrooms and through the wire services. Our Paranormal Investigating Committee of Pittsburgh (PICP) in fact first heard of Michaels on the KDKA-TV news. While we believed that such precognition might be possible, we wondered if Michaels was employing physical or psychological deception. Would he agree to be tested? And what, if anything, would be proved?

When I reached Michaels by phone, the first question I asked him was, "Are you a true psychic or do you entertain with trickery?" His answer then and in subsequent signed statements was firm and clear: His psychic powers were real despite any showmanship used on stage to entertain. Yes, he wanted to be tested by us, although he waived any rights to PICP's offer of \$10,000 for validation of a psychic feat under controlled conditions, claiming he could easily win any such prize if he wanted to. We believe that a letter of scientific validation from our Committee members would be worth much more than \$10,000 in publicity and credibility.

Michaels agreed, in writing, never to consider the Committee an audience and

never to use showmanship. He would "not engage in trickery, magic tricks, or deception of any kind in any manner, not even once, for any reason" in his work with PICP. His psychic power, he asserted, was "not dependent at all, in any way, on magical techniques or any deception or trick." He would never "cheat in any way for any reason in order to achieve a positive result." Everything done would be "real." He also agreed that the Committee's presence in the testing areas would not inhibit his abilities or create any negative vibrations.

Thus Jason Michaels, who, in his words, wanted "worldwide fame" and to be "bigger than Uri Geller," began his campaign to convince us of his claims. According to Michaels, he had already been tested and validated by Berthold E. Schwarz, a psychiatrist and psychic researcher in Vero Beach, Florida.

Our testing of Michaels was essentially accomplished in three parts: a preliminary interview in the office of Donald McBurney, a University of Pittsburgh psychologist; a formal taping session in psychologist Mark Strauss's infant-development laboratory at the university; and dozens of phone conversations between Michaels and me. It seems he found me "comfortable" to be around. He said he could work with me more easily than with almost anyone he had ever met in his life. He invited us to consult a local magician to verify his honesty and even agreed to pay \$5,000 to any magician to duplicate what he does under identical conditions. He did insist, however, that James Randi be kept away.

Michaels was evidently quite pleased with his work with PICP. He mentioned us not only to others in the field around the country but to reporters as well. He



US Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Memorandum

Subject ACTION: Release of Incident Information
re. JAL 1628 (UFO)

Date March 10, 1987

From PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER, AAL-5

Reply to
Attn of

To DIRECTOR, AAL-1, CC:AAL-500

Attached for your review and information is correspondence and records of telephone conversations which document my inquiry into the source of an unauthorized and premature release of investigative information by someone in the Washington, D.C. FAA office. The material they released was created by the Alaskan Region Air Traffic Division as part of the JAL 1628 (UFO) investigation.

Premature release of this material, as cited by Mr. Klass in the attached news article, was embarrassing to me and the agency, as several hundred other news correspondents had been told that they could not review or receive the material until it was officially distributed by the Alaskan Region Flight Standards Division and the Public Affairs Office.

A considerable amount of effort went into the planned release of this material which if leaked to the press, or released to "selected" news sources, would create the impression that the agency is not to be trusted.

The unauthorized and premature release of investigative materials relative to the flight of Japan Air Lines 1628, (UFO) as reported by a Mr. Philip Klass in the Anchorage Daily News wire service story, (dated January 30, 1987), appears to be attributable to a Mr. John Callahan, (AAT-63) in Washington, D.C., who probably received access to the material from one of the two FAA employees who received the material from the Alaskan Region Air Traffic Division.

I am not certain by what authority the Air Traffic Division released the material when the incident was still under investigation by the Alaskan Region Flight Standards Office. It seems that if such authority is policy that it should, as set forth by the attached example, be examined for its possible negative consequences to the agency.

continued...

-2- Premature release of JAL 1628

I have drafted a letter to Messrs Harvey B. Safeer, ATS-1, and David F. Thomas, ASF-120, informing them of this premature release of information and asking them to provide me with the names of persons who they might have shared the information with prior to our release date.

I may have to pursue this to another lower level to locate the leak and the authority. I did not want to cross out of our regional jurisdiction without your knowledge or approval. I have not coordinated this with Steve Hayes, APA-1, pending your review and comment.

The following materials are attached:

- A. Draft letter to Safeer, and Thomas.
- B. Article citing Mr. Klass, "Anchorage Daily News"
- C. AAL-5 request of February 2, 1987 to AAL-500 for information.
- D. AAL-500 response of February 6, 1987 to AAL-5 request.
- E. AAL-5 request of February 2, 1987 to AAL-200 and AAL-2 for information.
- F. AAL-200 response of March 3, 1987
- G. AAL-2 response of March 2, 1987.
- H. Record of telephone conversation, 2/18/87, Steucke and Klass.
- I. Record of telephone conversation, 2/20/87, Steucke and Maccabee.


Paul Steucke

ACTION: Release of Incident
Information, JAL1628

March 11, 1987

A

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER, AAL-5

HARVEY B. SAFEER, ATS-1
Manager, Policy and Recommendation Branch
FAA, Washington, D.C.

DRAFT

A Mr. Phillip Klass, in a nationwide wire service news story dated January 30, 1987, has stated that he reviewed a complete copy of the transcript for the above flight, even though the investigation of this incident had not been completed and none of the information had been released to the public or media.

The premature and unauthorized viewing and release of this material with its subsequent publishing placed the agency in the embarrassing position of having released information which was being withheld from hundreds of other news media correspondents. This type of release places the agencies integrity in question and makes it extremely awkward for the public affairs office to respond to those correspondents who were denied the material.

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DRAFT

I spoke to Mr. Klass on February 18, 1987, regarding this subject and he informed me that he had "a chance to see a transcript, a certified transcript" of the voice transcriptions between the flight crew and the controllers at the Anchorage Air Route Traffic Control Center. When I asked him who provided him that opportunity he said " a good correspondent never reveals his sources, I'm sure you understand that." This conversation was on a speaker telephone and was overheard by several people in our office.

On February 20, 1987, I was called by Mr. Bruce Maccabee, Naval Surface Weapons Center, Silver Spring, Maryland, requesting the status of the JAL1628 investigation and the release of materials. He also informed me that he "and several other people had been invited by Mr. John Callahan (FAA-AAT-63) to see the (UFO Air Traffic) material." This occurred, he thought in late January, 1987. He said the material was "thick, contained the transcript, color photos of the radar screen, interview of Captain Terauchi, controller statements, some maps and other material." He

③

DRAFT

also said that Mr. Callahan told him about the C130 (SAC Military flight) and Alaska Airlines sighting of unidentified air traffic that occurred on January 29, 1987. He did not say if the revelation about the C130 occurred at the same time as the review of the JAL1628 material.

A regional inquiry by this office has revealed that the only investigative material forwarded out of this region prior to the completion of the investigation and the coordinated release of materials by the public affairs office, was the material sent to Mr. Harvey B. Safeer, (ATS-1), and Mr. David F. Thomas (ASF-120) by the Alaskan Region Air Traffic Division.

Although embarrassing, this particular breach of policy was not as damaging to the agency because it was related to the sighting of an "unidentified flying object". If this had been an aviation accident involving a major air carrier with fatalities it would have created monumental problems for the public affairs office.

4

DRAFT

I would appreciate your informing me of who else had access to the investigative materials that were sent to you, and what controls are in place to prevent the premature and unauthorized release of agency investigative materials which are a part of your authority.

Paul Steucke

UFO expert says it was Jupiter

Editor Philip Klass believes planets were in the sight line of JAL pilot

Daily News staff and wire services

NEW YORK — A Japan Air Lines pilot who claimed to have seen an unidentified flying object alongside his airplane in the skies above Alaska last November was actually seeing an unusually bright image of the planet Jupiter and possibly Mars, an investigator said Tuesday.

Philip J. Klass said astronomical calculations show that on Nov. 17, when the pilot, Capt. Kenju Terauchi, claimed to have seen the UFO, Jupiter was extremely bright and was visible precisely where the pilot reported that he saw the UFO.

Mars was just below and to the right of Jupiter, and may explain the pilot's initial report that he saw two lights, Klass said.

Terauchi Wednesday rejected Klass's explanation.

"It was not a weather phenomena," Terauchi said. "Not a star. It moved with you."

Terauchi said he did see Jupiter during his flight, but he said the planet was not the UFO.

Klass, an editor with the magazine *Aviation Week and Space Technology* and a long-time investigator of claimed UFO sightings, said the pilot's claims that the object followed him as he made

a 360-degree turn are contradicted by what he told flight controllers at the time.

John Leyden, a spokesman for the Federal Aviation Administration in Washington, quoted from a summary of conversations between the pilot and ground controllers in which the pilot reported losing sight of the object after completing his turn.

The object reappeared a few moments later, according to the FAA summary quoted by Leyden.

Terauchi was over Alaska enroute from Europe, via Iceland, to Tokyo when he reported sighting the object.

Paul Steucke, a spokesman for the FAA in Anchorage, said that Terauchi told FAA officials in an interview that the object stayed with him as he turned. Terauchi, in a Wednesday interview, said he did lose sight of the object during part of the turn.

Steucke said the FAA would be releasing the results of its own investigation in mid-February.

According to Klass, who reviewed a complete copy of the transcript, the pilot never reported seeing Jupiter or Mars, even though they were clearly visible.

Klass's report was issued by the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of

Claims of the Paranormal in Buffalo, N.Y., an organization of scientists who investigate claims of UFO sightings, ESP occurrences and other so-called paranormal phenomena.

Klass, who heads the organization's UFO subcommittee, is the author of "UFOs: The Public Deceived." He has been investigating UFO sightings for more than 20 years.

"Jupiter was only 10 degrees above the horizon, making it appear to the pilot to be roughly at his own 35,000-foot altitude," said Klass in his report. Mars was visible closer to the horizon and to the right of Jupiter, but was not as bright, the report said.

"This is not the first time that an experienced pilot has mistaken a bright celestial body for a UFO, nor will it be the last," Klass said.

A United Airlines flight and an Air Force C-130 cargo plane that were in Terauchi's vicinity at the time of the claimed sighting were asked to look for the object, and neither reported seeing it.

"I think that the Japanese pilot should have been a little more skeptical when the United airliner and the Air Force plane reported seeing nothing," Klass said Tuesday in a telephone interview from Colorado.

W



US Department
of Transportation

**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Memorandum

Subject INFORMATION: Release of Incident Information Date. FEB 6 1987
JAL1628

From Manager, Air Traffic Division, AAL-500 Reply to
Attn of

To Public Affairs Officer, AAL-5

This is in reply to your letter dated February 2, 1987, on the release of accident investigation material, data, and information on JAL1628.

The Air Traffic Division has given a complete air traffic package to the Director of Air Traffic Evaluations and Analysis, Harvey B. Safeer, ATS-1; and the Manager of Policy and Recommendation Branch, David F. Thomas, ASF-120. ATS-1 is responsible on a national level for the investigation of air traffic accidents and incidents, and they have a need to know and to have copies of information concerning accidents and incidents as soon as possible. David Thomas received an AT package because of a congressional which he is/was working on, however, a copy was not sent until we had coordinated with Alaskan Region Flight Standards.

AAL-1 and AAL-2 had a copy of the tape and prepared a transcript.

AAL-1 sent several pieces of information to Mr. Engen's special assistant, and also authorized Major Jim Johnson from Elmendorf AFB to obtain a cassette tape recording and a transcript.

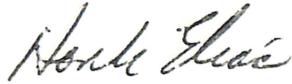
A copy of the transcript dated January 6, 1987 was rapid-faxed to ATS-1, attention Dick Wise, on January 7, 1987, by AAL-515.

The only other copies, that the Air Traffic Division are aware of, are the ones in reply to the Freedom of Information requests, which are in the possession of Ivy Moore, AAL-5, and the copy given to you on January 30, 1987 in the AT package.

The Air Traffic Division is very cognizant of the policy on release of information and does not give investigative data and material out to other than need-to-know parties. We have no further control on the handling of information after it has been released from our office.

Perhaps it would be beneficial to contact Mr. Klass and ask him where he obtained his transcript.

If we can be of further assistance, please contact Bobby Lamkin, 271-5889.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Henry A. Elias".

Henry A. Elias



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Memorandum

Subject: ACTION: Release of accident investigation
material, data, information - JL #1628

Date February 2, 1987

From: Public Affairs Officer, AAL-5

Reply to
Attn. of

To: Deputy Director, AAL-2
Manager, Flight Standards Division, AAL-200

Attached is an article about the JAL flight #1628, (UFO), which appeared on the wire service, and in the January 30, 1987, Anchorage Daily News.

In the article, a Mr. Phillip J. Klass, editor with the "Aviation Week and Space Technology" magazine, is reported as saying, "According to Klass, who reviewed a complete copy of the transcript..."

The investigation of this incident has not been completed to date and release of information or material prior to the completion of an investigation is not in keeping with existing policy. Mr. Klass used this reference to substantiate a position regarding his theory about the sighting.

As a result of this published reference we received several telephone calls from correspondents throughout the nation wanting to know why they did not get a complete copy of the transcript as promised when Mr. Klass was able to obtain a copy. We told them we had not released the material to date.

Has the Flight Standards Division provided anyone, other than AAL-5, with a copy of the transcript, or other materials included in the investigation, from the ARTCC, ROCC or pilot?

If copies have been provided to others I would like to have the names, titles and routing codes.


Paul Steucke

cc: AAL-1
AAL-500

E



US Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Memorandum

Subject INFORMATION: Release of Accident Investi-
gation Material, data, information - JL #1628;
your memo of 2/2/87

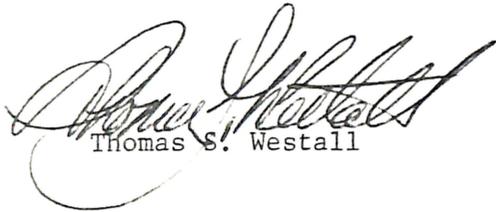
Date: **MAR 3 1987**

From Manager, Flight Standards Division, AAL-200

Reply to
Attn of Beckner:5520

To Public Affairs Officer, AAL-5

This division has not released any information, transcripts, or other materials relating to the investigation of Japan Airlines Flight #1628 of November 17, 1986 to anyone, except your office.


Thomas S. Westall

F



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Memorandum

Subject INFORMATION: Release of accident investigation
material, data, information - JL #1628

Date MAR - 2 1987

From Deputy Director, AAL-2

Reply to
Attn. of

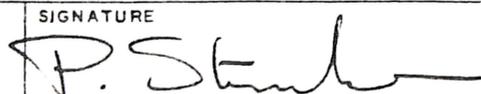
To Public Affairs Officer, AAL-5

In response to your memorandum dated February 2, 1987, I have not
released any ^{FAA} transcripts or any part of a ^{FAA} transcript to anyone,
including Phillip J. Klass of "Aviation Week and Space Technology."

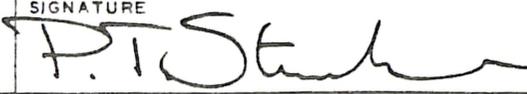
A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Don Keil".

Don Keil

G

RECORD OF <input type="checkbox"/> VISIT <input type="checkbox"/> CONFERENCE OR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TELEPHONE CALL		TIME 1:00 pr
NAME(s) OF PERSON(s) CONTACTED OR IN CONFERENCE AND LOCATION Mr. Phillip Klass, Writer/Journalist, 404 "N" Street, NW, Wash. DC 20024		
SUBJECT JAL 1628, UFO and his article of January 30, 1987 re UFO FAA report.		
DIGEST I called Mr. Klass to see if he wanted to be on our mailing list to receive the FAA materials re the above JAL flight, which we will be releasing to the media on March 5th., and to find out the source of the "complete transcript" that he quoted in the article, implying it was the complete FAA transcript, controller to pilots, ARTCC. He said yes he would like the opportunity to obtain additional materials. He also said when I asked him, that he would not reveal the source of his being able to read the transcript. "When I finally had a chance to see a transcript I thought the controllers did a fine job." "I had a chance to see a transcript, a certified transcript." (He also made reference to the UAL flight). His conversation was on the telephone speaker-phone and was also overheard by the AAL-5 staff Writer/Editor, Ms. Gloria Moody.		
CONCLUSION, ACTION TAKEN, OR REQUIRED AAL-5 is documenting the available sources for possible followup re Agency policy.		
DATE Feb. 19, 1987	TITLE Public Affairs Officer	SIGNATURE 

H

RECORD OF <input type="checkbox"/> VISIT <input type="checkbox"/> CONFERENCE OR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TELEPHONE CALL		TIME 10:00 am	DATE 2/20/87
NAME(s) OF PERSON(s) CONTACTED OR IN CONFERENCE AND LOCATION		ROUTING	
Called by Mr. Bruce Maccabee, Naval Surface Weapons Center, Code R42, Silver Spring, MD 20903-5000		SYMBOL	INITIALS
SUBJECT JAL 1628, UFO, Material			
DIGEST Mr. Maccabee called requesting the status of available materials from the JAL 1628 UFO flight, Nov. 17, 1987. I told him about the order form just finished, and he said send him one. He also asked specific questions about the more expensive items, and if the U.S.Navy would have to pay. I suggested he wait for the list. ***** He also informed me that he " and several other people had been invited by Mr. John Callahan (AAT-63/FAA:D.C.) to see the (UFO AirTraffic) material." This occurred, he thought in late Jan or early Feb. He said the material was "thick, contained the transcript, color photos of the radar screen, interview of Captain Terauchi, ^{controller statements,} some maps and other material." He also said that Mr. Callahan told him about the C130 (SAC Military flight) and the Alaska Airlines sighting of unidentified air traffic.			
CONCLUSION, ACTION TAKEN. OR REQUIRED AAL-5 is investigating this unauthorized disclosure of material.			
DATE 2/20/87	TITLE Public Affairs Officer	SIGNATURE 	

I.

PHILIP J. KLASS
404 "N" ST. SOUTHWEST
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20024
—
(202) 554-5901

Feb. 24, 1987

Mr. Paul Steucke
Public Affairs Officer
FAA Alaskan Region
701 "C" St., Box 14
Anchorage, Alaska 99513

Dear Paul Steucke:

Enclosed is my check for \$15.85 for the JAL/UFO incident materials indicated on the order form.

My compliments to you and those responsible for offering such a full spectrum of data, including especially both the tape recordings and transcript of same.

Having spent more than 20 years in the "strange land of UFOria," I know all too well the harsh charges typically levelled against the U.S. Government, the U.S. Air Force and and CIA of trying to "cover-up the truth about UFOs"--a charge that I consider to be demonstrably false.

By offering both a transcript (which is the most useful) and a copy of the voice tapes to allow the "conspiracy-mongers" to verify the accuracy of the transcript, you should spare FAA and yourself such "coverup" criticism.

But don't be surprised if such charges are later made if the hard-core "UFO-believers" are unable to find a "smoking gun."

Cordially,



RECEIVED
2 MAR 27 11 28 AM '87



US Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Alaskan Region
(907) 271-5296

701 C Street, Box 14
Anchorage, Alaska
99513

April 1, 1987

Mr. Philip J. Klass
404 N Street Southwest
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Mr. Klass:

In answer to your question regarding the correct flight path of JAL Flight 1628 on November 17, 1986, the path marked on the aero chart is the correct flight path. Our Air Traffic Division evaluation specialists assure me that the flight path was charted from the recorded radar data.

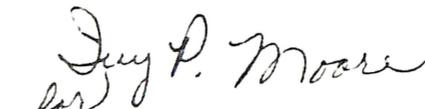
Also, the transcription of communication between the air traffic controller and the pilot shows that the controller (after JAL 1628 had changed altitude and had done a 360° turn) said:

"Japan Air sixteen twenty eight heavy roger at your discretion proceed direct Talkeetna Jay one two five Anchorage"

While we appreciate your offer to speak to our air traffic controllers on the subject of UFO issues, the FAA is not concerned with UFO's per se. The FAA's primary concern in all cases is the safety of the airspace. The controller is expected to maintain separation of air traffic and to determine whether any unauthorized aircraft is in the area. That is just what the controllers did at the time of the JAL flight 1628 sighting.

The enclosed statement, "Lack of 'Scientific' Investigation," explains our position on the matter.

Sincerely,


Paul Steucke
Public Affairs Officer

Enclosure

Paul Steucke
FAA, Public Affairs Officer
Alaskan Region
701 C Street, Box 14
Anchorage, Alaska 99513

March 5, 1987

LACK OF "SCIENTIFIC" INVESTIGATION

The Federal Aviation Administration has a number of employees who do scientific research with regard to aircraft, aviation, and related electronic equipment. The FAA does not have the resources or the Congressional mandate to investigate sightings of unidentified flying objects.

We have not tried to determine what the crew of Japan Airlines flight 1628 saw based on scientific analysis of the stars, planets, magnetic fields, angle of view, etc. We have received letters from several persons suggesting that we ask the crew and others a variety of detailed questions from a scientific viewpoint. This we have not done and do not intend to do. We reviewed the data that was created by our systems, the interviews that were done by FAA to determine the status of the crew and the aircraft, and have provided that information to the public.

The FAA has completed its investigation of JAL flight 1628, and does not intend to pursue it any further."

#

PHILIP J. KLASS
404 "N" ST. SOUTHWEST
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20024
(202) 554-5901

27 MAR 87 10 30

RECEIVED
March 21, 1987

Mr. Paul Steucke
Public Affairs Officer
Fed. Aviation Admin.
701 "C" St., Box 14
Anchorage, Alaska 99513

Dear Paul:

Your package of JAL-UFO goodies was waiting for me on my return from a ski vacation with friends in Switzerland, and I found it most interesting.

Especially that Capt. Terauchi had two previous UFO sightings, which makes him a "UFO Repeater" and which automatically makes any of his UFO reports suspect to an experienced UFO investigator--even many of the "believers".

Multiple UFO sightings (by one person) are sort of like multiple divorces. One is OK. (Even Jimmy Carter had one which turned out to be Venus.) Two makes one a bit cautious. But three or more--as in baseball--you're "out." (And, as we both know, Terauchi reported two more UFO sightings on Jan. 11, giving him a grand total of five--unless he has added to that figure since Jan. 11.) (And unless JAL has chastened him severely, I would predict that Terauchi will see many, many more UFOs in the coming years, while most folks are not privileged to see even one.)

A question: In Terauchi's own report on the incident (submitted to the FAA on Jan.2), he says that his original flight plan called for him to fly J-529 to Ft. Yukon, then J-125 via Nenana, and on to Talkeetna.

But Terauchi then says that "Anchorage ordered (authorized) us to fly direct to Talkeetna." This would seem logical because of the very light traffic situation, and the fact that the JAL-747 was equipped with inertial nav systems and could save a little fuel by flying direct from Potat.

However, the flight path you shown on your marked-up aero chart shows the original route via VOR airways.

QUESTION: Which is the correct flight path?

Incidentally, 20+ years experience in investigating UFO reports has shown that a witness observing one "trigger-mechanism," which disappears, can readily "glob" onto another light source and believe it to be the same "UFO."

Paul Steucke:

-2-

May 21, 1987

While I am convinced that Jupiter was the "UFO" for the latter portion of the flight from Nenana south, I no longer think it was the "culprit" for the earlier portion of the flight but have another candidate which I am now exploring, and which explains why I need clarification of the precise flight path

Finally, there is a good chance that I may be flying to Seattle on/about May 7 to appear on a TV show there dealing with UFOs.

I would be delighted to fly from Seattle to Anchorage to give my standard UFO lecture to your controllers, to provide them with a better understanding of the issues. Most of the lecture deals with incidents involving airline and military pilots and demonstrates how easily they can mistake prosaic objects for mysterious UFOs--even in broad daylight.

If there is any interest in such a lecture among your controllers, I'd be delighted to come up if FAA can underwrite transportation from Seattle and back to Seattle. (The TV station will underwrite my travel costs from D.C. to Seattle.)

Would appreciate a prompt response to my flight path question.

Cordially,



Philip J. Klass

Philip J. Klass
Technical Journalist

Contributing Avionics Editor:
Aviation Week & Space Technology
High Technology

404 "N" St. Southwest
Washington, D.C. 20024
(202) 554-5901



US Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Alaskan Region

701 C Street, Box 14
Anchorage, Alaska
99513

April 17, 1987

Mr. Philip J. Klass
Contributing Editor
Aviation Week & Space Technology
404 "N" Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Mr. Klass:

Thank you for your recent correspondence which included your analysis of the JAL flight 1628 UFO sighting that occurred in Alaska on November 17, 1986. It is very interesting. I would like to be able to share this with others at some time but will withhold doing that until you have had sufficient time to publish your findings and have granted me permission. There is no rush.

Your series of questions regarding the actual course of the aircraft are both pertinent and interesting. Enclosed is a detailed map that has plotted on it the actual radar returns. This was in the original air traffic material (folded) that was sent in response to persons who ordered item #10 from the Order Form. The copy most people received, having been duplicated, is difficult to read and track, hence we have obtained and special second generation copy for your use. I know the actual route is very important to your calculations and I wanted to be sure you received a legible copy.

Your kind comments about our intent to provide everything on this sighting to the public have been most helpful. Some colleagues would like to have FAA "wash its hands" of the whole affair and your earlier letter was most helpful in reaching my goal of full disclosure.

Sincerely,

Paul Steucke
Public Affairs Officer

PHILIP J. KLASS
404 "N" ST. SOUTHWEST
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20024
(202) 554-5901

April 8, 1987

Mr. Paul Steucke
Public Affairs Officer
FAA Alaskan Region
701 "C" St., Box 14
Anchorage, Ala. 99513

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13 APR 87 11 00

Dear Paul:

I must again ask you to recheck the question of JAL-1628's flight path on the basis of the following:

Your marked flight path shows JAL flying J-529 to Ft. Yukon VOR, then J-120 to the Fairbanks VOR, followed by a (roughly) single 45 deg. turn to the right to Nenana VOR, then J-125 to Talkneetna.

This is in conflict with the transcript of pilot-radio communications where two heading changes were requested and both were approved without pilot withdrawing first request.

0223:37 Controller reports JAL is about "40 miles south of Ft. Yukon."

0230:23 JAL asks to change to mag heading of 240.

0230:31 Controller approves change to heading of 240

0234:56 JAL asks to change to mag heading of 210.

0235:02 Approval granted.

1. The foregoing implies that JAL made a right turn of roughly 57 deg. (240 - 183) shortly after 0230:31. And that roughly five minutes later, JAL turned 30 deg. to its left, to a heading of 210 deg.

2. Yet your reconstructed flight path shows only a single right turn of roughly 45 deg. to a heading of roughly 210 deg.

3. Further, at 0235:30, Controller D-15 (communicating with Fairbanks approach control) says that JAL was "about five miles north of Fairbanks VOR." Your reconstructed flight path shows JAL passing directly over the Fairbanks VOR.

4. Your reconstruction shows JAL making its 360-deg. turn over Fairbanks. But approval to make the turn was not given until 0236:47--more than one minute after JAL was reported 5 miles north of Fairbanks--during which time the aircraft would have travelled a distance of roughly 10 miles.

Mr. Paul Steucke:

-2-

Apr. 8, 1987

5. The 360 turn should have required roughly two minutes (using standard 180 deg./min. turn rate) and been completed at approximately 0238:57. Approximately one minute later, at 0240:10, JAL then was cleared direct to Talkeetna.

6. QUESTION: At 0231:40, Controller R15 reported JAL is "one two miles southeast of the Alpha (unintelligible)..." Where/what is the Alpha fix?? (I have an aero chart for the region but cannot find an Alpha.) And did controller mean "one to two miles" or did he mean "12 miles"?

7. If your original flight path is correct, then Capt. Teruchi's memory was flawed when he claimed in his detailed account (submitted to FAA on Jan. 2) that immediately after his first contact with Anchorage he was cleared "to fly direct to Talkeetna." He refers to making a "left rotation" (turn) which would be required to fly the direct route to Talkeetna from his Alaska entry location.

I have numbered the paragraphs above for your convenience in replying.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip J. Klass". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "K".

Philip J. Klass

P.S. I can appreciate your official position on the question of UFOs. Hopefully, controllers in the Alaskan Region have learned, the hard way, that even experienced pilots can sometimes mistake prosaic objects for UFOs. Recently heard from a Northwest Airlines pilot who flew into Anchorage on Nov. 22 who told me "Jupiter was positively brilliant--like a beacon in the sky."

PHILIP J. KLASS
404 "N" ST. SOUTHWEST
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20024
—
(202) 554-5901

Feb. 24, 1987

Mr. Paul Steucke
Public Affairs Officer
FAA Alaskan Region
701 "C" St., Box 14
Anchorage, Alaska 99513

Dear Paul Steucke:

Enclosed is my check for \$15.85 for the JAL/UFO incident materials indicated on the order form.

My compliments to you and those responsible for offering such a full spectrum of data, including especially both the tape recordings and transcript of same.

Having spent more than 20 years in the "strange land of UFOria," I know all too well the harsh charges typically levelled against the U.S. Government, the U.S. Air Force and and CIA of trying to "cover-up the truth about UFOs"--a charge that I consider to be demonstrably false.

By offering both a transcript (which is the most useful) and a copy of the voice tapes to allow the "conspiracy-mongers" to verify the accuracy of the transcript, you should spare FAA and yourself such "coverup" criticism.

But don't be surprised if such charges are later made if the hard-core "UFO-believers" are unable to find a "smoking gun."

Cordially,



RECEIVED
2 MAR 87 11 17

PHILIP J. KLASS
404 "N" ST. SOUTHWEST
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20024
(202) 554-5901

May 2, 1987

Mr. Paul Steucke
Public Affairs Office
FAA Alaskan Region
701 C St., Box 14
Anchorage, Alaska 99513

Dear Paul:

Thank you for the JAL1628 radar plot data provided with your letter of April 17.

It has been most useful in enabling me to plot the JAL flight path on an aeronautical chart for the region and to show the approximate position of the aircraft, the relative bearings to Jupiter, Mars and the full Moon at key points in the flight, as well as "highlight" remarks by the pilot on the approximate position of the reported "UFO."

I enclose a copy of my plot and invite you to submit it to any interested parties who might wish to comment (unofficially). An extra copy is enclosed so that any errors can be noted and it can be returned to me.

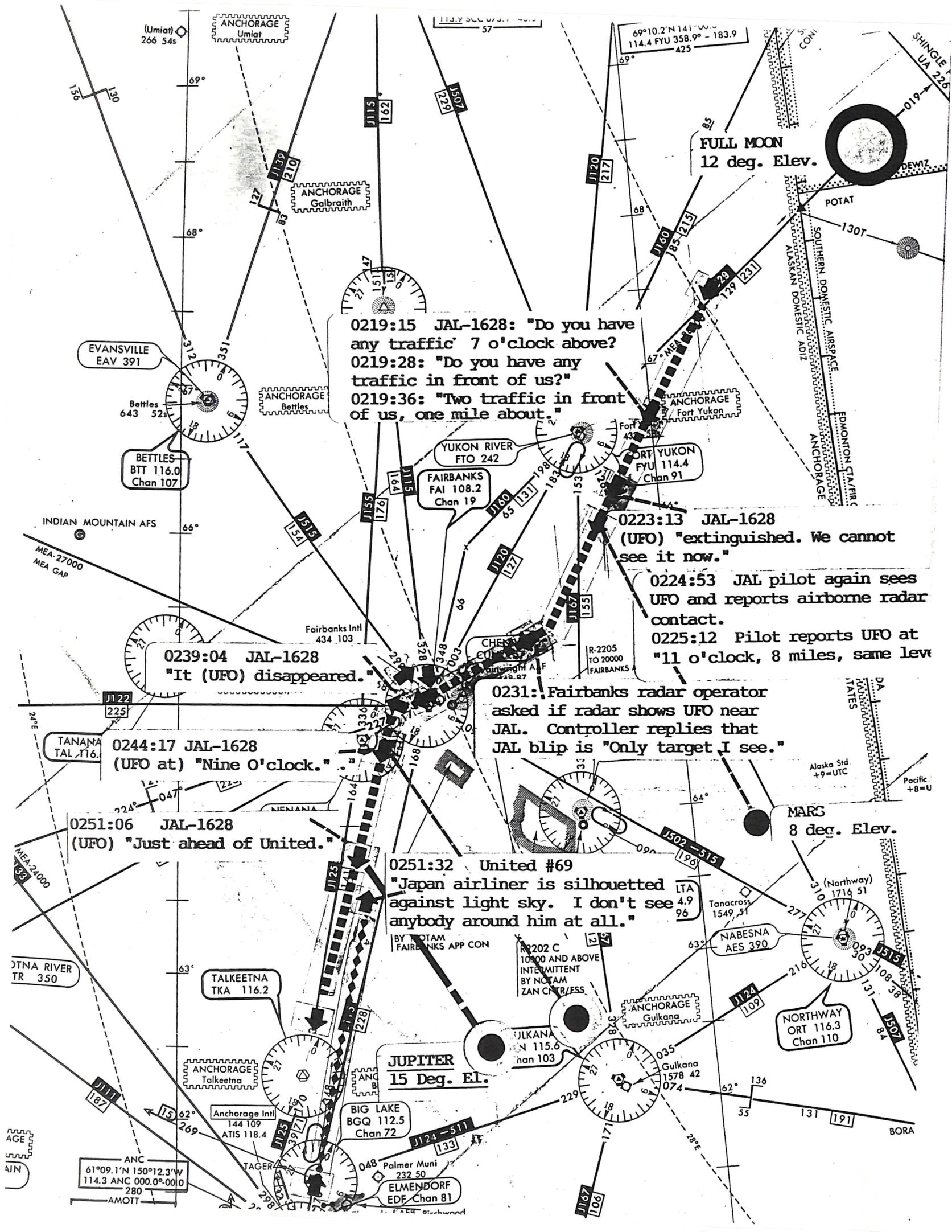
Because the arrow-head used to show aircraft location is roughly 10 nautical miles in length in terms of the aero-chart scale-factor, the JAL1628 and UA69 positions necessarily are only approximate.

And I am not seeking comment on the bearings shown to Jupiter, Mars or the Moon. That info comes from Cleveland astronomer Nick Sanduleak who, incidentally, discovered the star "Sanduleak" which recently exploded to produce a Supernova. (How would you like to discover a star, have it named in your honor--only to have it explode and disappear a few years later??)

Reference the "highlight report" sent to you earlier, you do have my permission to share it with anyone in the FAA who might be interested. As indicated therein, the data accumulated and released by the Alaskan Region has been invaluable in analyzing this incident and in finding a prosaic explanation. You have my permission to use my favorable comments on your procedure in any way you think appropriate.

Cordially,





0219:15 JAL-1628: "Do you have any traffic 7 o'clock above?"
 0219:28: "Do you have any traffic in front of us?"
 0219:36: "Two traffic in front of us, one mile about."

0223:13 JAL-1628 (UFO) "extinguished. We cannot see it now."

0224:53 JAL pilot again sees UFO and reports airborne radar contact.

0225:12 Pilot reports UFO at "11 o'clock, 8 miles, same level."

0239:04 JAL-1628 "It (UFO) disappeared."

0231: Fairbanks radar operator asked if radar shows UFO near JAL. Controller replies that JAL blip is "Only target I see."

0244:17 JAL-1628 (UFO at) "Nine O'clock."

0251:06 JAL-1628 (UFO) "Just ahead of United."

0251:32 United #69 "Japan airliner is silhouetted against light sky. I don't see anybody around him at all."

MARS 8 deg. Elev.

JUPITER 15 Deg. EL.

ANC 61°09.1'N 150°12.3'W
 114.3 ANC 000.0°00.0
 280
 AMOTT

FULL MOON
 12 deg. Elev.



JAL UFO INCIDENT: Summary White Paper, by Philip J. Klass

In early January, 1987, extensive news media coverage was given to a UFO incident involving a Japan Air Lines 747 crew that had occurred on the evening of Nov. 17, 1986, while flying over Alaska, enroute from France to Anchorage. Initial media accounts, understandably, were based largely on the six-week old recollections of the JAL pilot, Capt. Kenju Terauchi.

In early March, the Alaskan Region of the Federal Aviation Administration released, and offered to the public at modest cost, a detailed data package. It included a transcript of all communications between FAA controllers and the JAL pilot, as well as with two other aircraft in the vicinity of the JAL airliner. Also included are transcripts of tape-recorded interviews with the JAL pilot, copilot (first officer) and flight engineer, conducted by the FAA in early January. Also the results of an analysis of original radar data, recorded at the time of the incident, performed by radar specialists at the FAA's Technical Center, near Atlantic City, N.J.

Analysis of the FAA data provides new insights into the incident which will be published in the Summer issue of The Skeptical Inquirer. Highlights of that analysis include:

1. The JAL pilot is a five-time "UFO repeater," having reported two UFO sightings prior to the Nov. 17 incident, and two others afterwards, on Jan. 11, 1987. After landing and conferring with the FAA, Terauchi agreed with the FAA that both Jan. 11 "UFO" sightings probably were caused by village lights reflecting off clouds of ice crystals. Reports from "UFO repeaters" are viewed with extreme caution by most experienced UFO investigators.
2. At the time of the initial sighting on Nov. 17, when the pilot was reporting seeing multiple lights, FAA controllers noted a single unidentified blip which appeared intermittently in close proximity to the JAL radar blip. Subsequent analysis of the recorded radar data by FAA Technical Center specialist showed that this was due to a not infrequent radar anomaly that can occur if the echo from an aircraft does not arrive back at the radar at precisely the same instant as the signal transmitted back by the aircraft's radar transponder.
3. Independent evidence that shows that the intermittent radar blip was not generated by a UFO can be found in FAA transcript of pilot-controller communications on Nov. 17. At approximately 6:35 p.m., as JAL was nearing Fairbanks, the FAA's enroute control center in Anchorage called to ask a Fairbanks controller if there were any unknown blips near JAL on the Fairbanks airport radar. (The Anchorage center was using a different, longer-range radar.) The Fairbanks controller checked and

promptly reported that his radar showed only the JAL airliner.

4. The flight crew's description of the white-amber lights first seen slightly to the left (south) shortly after sunset as the JAL 747 crossed into northeastern Alaska, and the single UFO, further to the left, reported as the aircraft approached Fairbanks, indicate that they looked significantly different. The initial UFO was observed for roughly 10 minutes while the second was in view for about 30 minutes.

5. The recently released FAA data confirm's CSICOP's earlier report on the incident which first revealed that two other aircraft (United Airlines flight #69, and a USAF C-130) that were in the area, searched for a UFO as they passed near the JAL airliner. The United flight, headed north from Anchorage to Fairbanks while JAL was headed south to Anchorage on a parallel airway, passed within several miles of JAL. Shortly before the two airliners passed, the JAL pilot--looking to the southeast--reported that the UFO was "just ahead of United," but the United crew saw nothing. At the time, the JAL pilot was looking in the direction of a very bright planet Jupiter, then low on the horizon. The United crew would not have noticed Jupiter because it was to their far right while they were looking ahead and to their left for something near the JAL 747. A short time later the USAF C-130, heading west, passed to the south of JAL and also failed to see any bright light. The C-130 crew would not have seen Jupiter, which was far to its left because they were looking at JAL to their right.

6. The initial "UFO(s)" of Nov. 17 were described by the pilot as resembling the exhaust of jet/rocket engines, and he later described and sketched a giant UFO shaped like a walnut. But when the FAA later showed the pilot's sketches to the copilot, he responded: "I don't see anything like this." All he reported seeing were "like landing lights" of an aircraft.

7. Based on the pilot's report at the time of the Nov. 17 incident, confirmed by flight crew interviews, it is evident that there were thin, spotty clouds at about or slightly below the JAL flight altitude of 31,000 ft.--at roughly the same altitude as that reported for the UFO. On Nov. 17 the moon was almost full and at the time of the initial sighting and almost directly behind the 747, low in the sky.. This suggests that the amber-white lights observed by the crew were caused by bright moonlight reflecting off spotty clouds of ice crystals. (Village light reflecting off such clouds on Jan. 11 prompted Capt. Terauchi to report UFOs, and his Jan. 11 description resembled that of Nov. 17.)

8. If this hypothesis is correct, when the JAL airliner overflew the region of spotty clouds, the initial UFO would

disappear--as reported by the pilot. When the pilot searched the skies for the UFO and spotted the very bright Jupiter, further to the left of the original "UFOs," he could easily conclude it was the same UFO, even though the copilot and flight engineer would later tell the FAA that it looked distinctly different.

9. During the initial sighting, the 747's weather radar detected and displayed a "target" slightly to the left and at a distance of about eight miles--in roughly the location that the amber-white lights were visible. The flight engineer described this airborne radar target as "not a dot, but stream-like." And his description is confirmed by a sketch drawn by the pilot for the FAA shortly after JAL landed at Anchorage. The 747's weather radar is equipped with a color display to alert the pilot to the strength of the radar echo, with the strongest echoes shown in red and the weakest in green. All three crew members agree that the "UFO" stream-like blip was green--which would be appropriate for an echo from thin clouds of ice crystals. The echo from a giant craft only eight miles distant would certainly be very strong and would have been displayed in red.

10. Claims made by some UFOlogists that the U.S. Government tries to withhold or cover-up information about UFOs and UFO sightings is denied by the action of the FAA in making available, at modest cost, all data in its possession involving the Nov. 17, 1986, JAL "UFO" incident.

11. The FAA even included in its data pack a brief note by one of its officials which says: "Through a confidential source at Japan Airlines, it was stated to me that this was not the first sighting of an unidentified aircraft by Capt. Terauchi."

Persons interested in obtaining some or all elements of the FAA data pack can contact:

Paul Steucke, Public Affairs Officer
FAA Alaskan Region
701 "C" St., Box 14
Anchorage, Alaska 99513 (907) 271-5296

Philip J. Klass, Chairman
CSICOP UFO Subcommittee
404 "N" St. Southwest
Washington D.C. 20024
(202) 554-5901

March 27, 1987

325 Langton Avenue
Los Altos, CA 94022
January 18, 1987

Paul Steucke
FAA - AAL5
701C Street
Box 14
Anchorage, Alaska 99513

Dear Paul:

This is to pass on some further information concerning the unusual visual/radar sighting of November 17, 1986 by the JAL crew of flight 1628. By now your office is probably calming down a bit. My work load has been consistently high since getting involved in this particular incident. I have had an excellent opportunity to talk with Capt. Terauchi and both flight crew on United Flight 69. I am still awaiting some details on the winds aloft and satellite photographs.

For your information, this JAL flight originated in New York. The JAL crew boarded the B-747 in Paris with a gross take-off weight of about 770,000 pounds which explains why they had to refuel in Keflavik, Iceland (not Reykjavik) and again in Anchorage. When asked specifically about seeing any green lights associated with the unknown, Capt. Terauchi steadfastly said "no." He also said that the two rectangular lighted patches seemed to wobble a little while seeming to move together through the air... as if they shared a common center of mass. His X-band on-board radar was on the 20 n. mile scale. I still am trying to determine the hull number for this aircraft through JAL contacts at SFO. I am also making arrangements to interview the other two JAL crewmen. Capt. Terauchi said that all of the lights on the "object" went off together and completely, rather than in some random sequence. For the human eye to perceive a complete "OFF" of such lights they likely would have had to stay off for from 100 - 200 milliseconds. Tungsten light sources probably couldn't do this so these lights were more probably gas discharge (or other) sources of luminous radiation. His use of the term "amber" and rocket nozzle yellowish-white strongly suggests a broad spectrum source with many different wavelengths rather than so-called line spectra like mercury or xenon (etc.) sources. Regarding the VHF radio static, my sources indicate that this really isn't that unusual in that vicinity (on 120.6 & 133.1 MHz), however, Capt. Terauchi said that he had never heard this type of static before in his aviation career? This is puzzling. Due to the angular elevation of the lights above the local horizon it is quite unlikely that they were reflections from ground lights, particularly considering the exceptional clarity of the air that evening. My preliminary calculations show the sun to be about 8 - 10° below the horizon 0216Z (6:16 pm local) with Venus below the horizon, Mars very dim ($M_v = 0.2$) in the ESE, and Jupiter very intense ($M_v = -2.1$) in the SE at 8.5° above the local horizon.

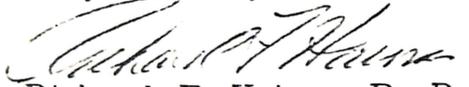
I would greatly appreciate a favor if it is possible. I am trying to obtain a copy of the tape (voice) transcript between JAL/1628 and Anchorage and/or Fairbanks ATC on the night in question. It would greatly clarify my flight-

January 18, 1987

path reconstruction. Could you help? In a similar vein, could you perhaps find me a copy of the official weather that night (+/- 6 hrs) for NE Alaska down to Anchorage? Of particular value would be a pressure and temperature sounding as a function of altitude, a so-called lapse rate diagram, also known as a Struve Diagram. The winds aloft along the flight path of the aircraft would also be very useful. I imagine that your meteorology division has that type of information. Thanks in advance for anything you can find.

As I learn more I will pass it along to you. Until later I remain

Very sincerely Yours,


Richard F. Haines, Ph.D.
Research Consultant

P.S.

Give my regards to Jim Derry. You may want to share this letter with him.

RECEIVED

23 JAN 87 14 23

cc: files

325 Langton Avenue
Los Altos, CA 94022
February 16, 1987

Steve Hayes
Public Affairs Office
FAA - Headquarters
Washington, D. C.

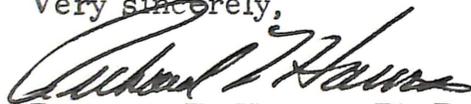
Dear Mr. Hayes:

Before I explain my reason for writing to you let me explain that I am a full time NASA scientist (now in management) at Ames Research Center and have worked with the FAA on several projects including head-up display (Flight Standards, Hqs.). I am also a member of the International Society of Air Safety Investigators and have served on an FAA investigation (for the NTSB) of the China airlines (flt. 007) some time ago. My ongoing personal hobby is that of unidentified aerial phenomena; my specialty is that of sightings by pilots. My files now number over 3,000 cases. I believe that a colleague of mine, Dr. Bruce Maccabee spoke with you recently concerning the Japan Airlines flight 1628 incident of 17 November 1986 over Alaska. He filled me in on a number of radar track details which are very useful in my flight path reconstruction. He also indicated that the FAA may release the voice tape transcript of that incident and the full file.

I am now writing to obtain a copy of this voice transcript for my further study and the entire case file. Of course I will be glad to pay for all copying charges. While I can imagine that you would rather just get on with your other work and forget this incident, I imagine that you would be interested in reading my case report when it is finished. Of course I will be pleased to send you a copy. Thanks for anything you may be willing to share with me.

On another related matter, I understand that central Alaska experienced another strange sighting by an Air Force crew and the crew of an Alaskan Airlines commercial flight in January or early February 1987. What do you know about this later incident? A colleague at Stanford University is helping to obtain satellite coverage for the November 17, 1986 incident and I would like to save time and expense by also ordering it for the second incident if possible. Another professional meteorologist is doing a weather reconstruction so I can recalculate the JAL flight path, etc. I spent about 3 hours by phone with Capt. Terauchi and he was very cooperative, considering my long list of technical questions. Apparently he is now back in Tokyo and doesn't want to talk anymore, which I can fully understand. My phone has also been very busy on this matter. Finally, does the FAA plan to keep the radar tape of the November 17th incident? How about the more recent incident? I plan to be in Washington on NASA business in March or early April and would very much like to come by to see it myself, just to clear up some unresolved questions. Thanks for your consideration of my questions and requests. I will look forward to hearing from you.

Very sincerely,


Richard F. Haines, Ph.D.
Research Consultant



US Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Alaskan Region

701 C Street, Box 14
Anchorage, Alaska
99513

March 18, 1987

Dr. Richard F. Haines
Research Consultant
325 Langton Avenue
Los Altos, CA 94022

Dear Dr. Haines:

Steve Hayes, Assistant Administrator for Public Affairs in our Washington, D.C. office has forwarded your letter of February 16, 1987, to me for reply.

Most of the material you requested in your letter, ie JAL 1628 voice transcripts, etc. have been sent and you should have received the material by now. This also includes our file on the Alaska Airlines report which occurred on January 29, 1987.

The original recorded radar tape of JAL flight 1628, November 17, 1986, is kept in a secure vault at our Air Route Traffic Control Center in Anchorage. I don't know if the FAA Technical research center in Atlantic City has a copy or not. Normally we do not keep these tapes after an investigation or inquiry has been completed, however we do plan on keeping this one into the foreseeable future. There was no radar coverage in the area of the Alaska Airlines report.

You mentioned visiting the FAA office in D.C. with the intent of reviewing the radar tape. This, as you now realize, is not possible as they do not have the tape. The only place that this tape can be replayed in live time is at the FAA Technical Center in Atlantic City, N.J. No one else has the equipment. The Anchorage Center can put it back up on a screen by hand typing the computer codes from the radar tape. This is a laborious, time consuming task that no one is anxious or interested in doing again.

There are two related items however which might be helpful. 1). Enclosed is a copy of the radar computer printout for the JAL 1628 flight. You may have already received a copy. This printout sets forth the radar data returns in chronological order. This is very important if one is to make legitimate comparisons of the radar returns. It clearly shows the uncorrelated returns and the fact that the data was not returning to the Center at the same time. This accounts for the uncorrelated target returns and the distance between them (as the aircraft continued to move).

The second item 2). is an invitation to you to visit the Anchorage Air Route Traffic Control Center and watch the same radar system (out of Fairbanks) as it tracks aircraft. I did this a few weeks ago when I was out there, and it produces the same kind of uncorrelated target returns.

Hope we get to meet sometime. Best regards.

Paul Steucke



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Aviation
Administration**

Memorandum

Subject: ACTION: Release of Accident investigation material, data, information. Date: February 2, 1987
JL #1628

From: PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER, AAL-5 Reply to Attn of

To: MANAGER, AIR TRAFFIC DIVISION, AAL-500
HENRY ELIAS

Attached is an article about the JAL flight #1628, (UFO), which appeared on the wire service, and in the January 30, 1987, Anchorage Daily News.

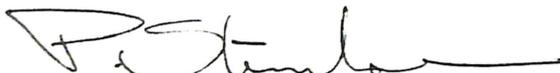
In the article, a Mr. Phillip J. Klass, Editor with the "Aviation Week and Space Technology" magazine, is reported as saying, "According to Klass, who reviewed a complete copy of the transcript..."

The investigation of this incident has not been completed to date and release of information or material prior to the completion of an investigation is not in keeping with existing policy. Mr. Klass used this reference to substantiate a position regarding his theory about the sighting.

As a result of this published reference we received several telephone calls from correspondents throughout the Nation wanting to know why they did not get a complete copy of the transcript as promised when Mr. Klass was able to obtain a copy. We told them we had not released the material to date.

Has the AAL-500 division provided anyone, other than AAL-5 and AAL-200, with a copy of the transcript, or other materials included in the investigation, from the ARTCC, ROCC, or pilot?

If copies have been provided to others I would like to have the names, titles and routing codes.


Paul Steucke

cc:AAL-1

UFO expert says it was Jupiter

Editor Philip Klass believes planets were in the sight line of JAL pilot

Daily News staff and wire services

NEW YORK — A Japan Air Lines pilot who claimed to have seen an unidentified flying object alongside his airplane in the skies above Alaska last November was actually seeing an unusually bright image of the planet Jupiter and possibly Mars, an investigator said Tuesday.

Philip J. Klass said astronomical calculations show that on Nov. 17, when the pilot, Capt. Kenju Terauchi, claimed to have seen the UFO, Jupiter was extremely bright and was visible precisely where the pilot reported that he saw the UFO.

Mars was just below and to the right of Jupiter, and may explain the pilot's initial report that he saw two lights, Klass said.

Terauchi Wednesday rejected Klass's explanation.

"It was not a weather phenomena," Terauchi said. "Not a star. It moved with you."

Terauchi said he did see Jupiter during his flight, but he said the planet was not the UFO.

Klass, an editor with the magazine *Aviation Week and Space Technology* and a long-time investigator of claimed UFO sightings, said the pilot's claims that the object followed him as he made

a 360-degree turn are contradicted by what he told flight controllers at the time.

John Leyden, a spokesman for the Federal Aviation Administration in Washington, quoted from a summary of conversations between the pilot and ground controllers in which the pilot reported losing sight of the object after completing his turn.

The object reappeared a few moments later, according to the FAA summary quoted by Leyden.

Terauchi was over Alaska enroute from Europe, via Iceland, to Tokyo when he reported sighting the object.

Paul Steucke, a spokesman for the FAA in Anchorage, said that Terauchi told FAA officials in an interview that the object stayed with him as he turned. Terauchi, in a Wednesday interview, said he did lose sight of the object during part of the turn.

Steucke said the FAA would be releasing the results of its own investigation in mid-February.

According to Klass, who reviewed a complete copy of the transcript, the pilot never reported seeing Jupiter or Mars, even though they were clearly visible.

Klass's report was issued by the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of

Claims of the Paranormal in Buffalo, N.Y., an organization of scientists who investigate claims of UFO sightings, ESP occurrences and other so-called paranormal phenomena.

Klass, who heads the organization's UFO subcommittee, is the author of "UFOs: The Public Deceived." He has been investigating UFO sightings for more than 20 years.

"Jupiter was only 10 degrees above the horizon, making it appear to the pilot to be roughly at his own 35,000-foot altitude," said Klass in his report. Mars was visible closer to the horizon and to the right of Jupiter, but was not as bright, the report said.

"This is not the first time that an experienced pilot has mistaken a bright celestial body for a UFO, nor will it be the last," Klass said.

A United Airlines flight and an Air Force C-130 cargo plane that were in Terauchi's vicinity at the time of the claimed sighting were asked to look for the object, and neither reported seeing it.

"I think that the Japanese pilot should have been a little more skeptical when the United airliner and the Air Force plane reported seeing nothing," Klass said Tuesday in a telephone interview from Colorado.