

JETLINER "INTERCEPTED" BY UFO NEAR VALENCIA

SAYS CAPTAIN: "IT WAS AS BIG AS A JUMBO JET"

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Translation from the Spanish by Gordon Creighton

THE UFO DEBATE is back in the centre of the news once more.

I had scarcely had the time to scrape the mud off my boots after my last investigation in the remote village of Villacalabuey, in the Province of Leon — where a number of these silent and mysterious unidentified flying objects had flown low over the house-tops, leaving the astonished peasants with their lights blacked out — when another report, no less amazing, set me off on the road to the East Coast of Spain.

The first newsflash received had reported: "A large UFO has forced a jet *Supercaravelle* air-liner flying on the Palma de Mallorca-Tenerife route to land at the Valencia Airport at Manises."

Interview with Captain of the Plane

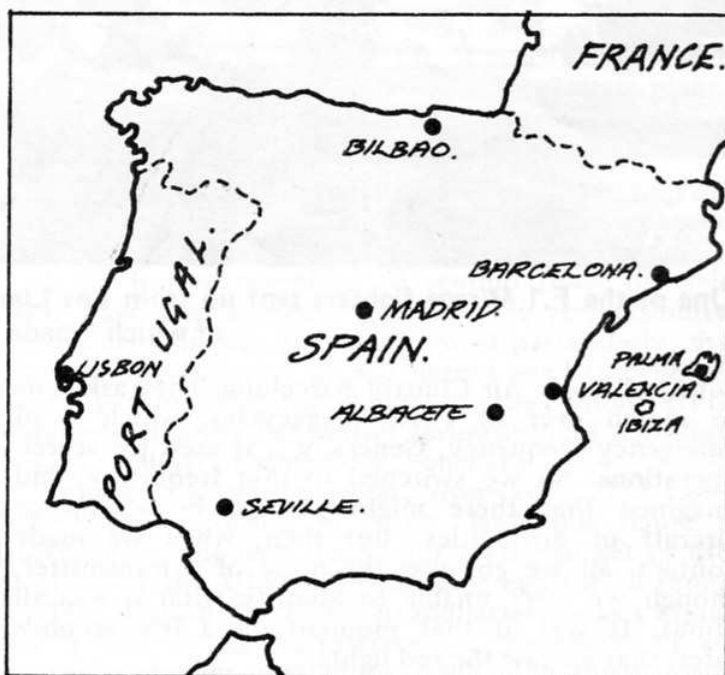
This is not the first occasion on which a UFO has made a close approach to a commercial air-liner.

Only a few months ago another Spanish aircraft — a DC-9 of the Aviaco Company, piloted by Captain Mirallas with, as his co-pilot, José Antonio Silva, the popular TV compère — had another mystery object twice the size of a Jumbo jet on their port side as they were approaching the Madrid International Airport at Barajas. The UFO was seen by the whole crew of the DC-9 in broad daylight, and was also seen on the radar screens at the Flight Control Centre at Paracuelles. The UFO "escorted" the plane for almost four minutes.

But there have also been many other eyewitness reports of UFOs. In my own files alone I have some forty such cases, in every one of which the eyewitnesses were the crew of a civil aircraft of these various air-lines: Iberia, Aviaco, Spantax, Trans-europa, and T.A.E.

It is this last-named line who are the owners of the *Supercaravelle* 297-SE-210-CUM involved in this new case. With 119 passengers aboard, the plane, late on Sunday evening, November 11, was en route to the Canary Islands, on a flight which at first gave no signs of being anything but entirely normal...

It is understandable enough that the first reports to come in about the encounter with the UFO or UFOs were somewhat confused. To begin with, there was uncertainty as to the number of UFOs that had approached the plane. And why had the



pilot decided to depart from his flight-route and make an emergency landing at Valencia?

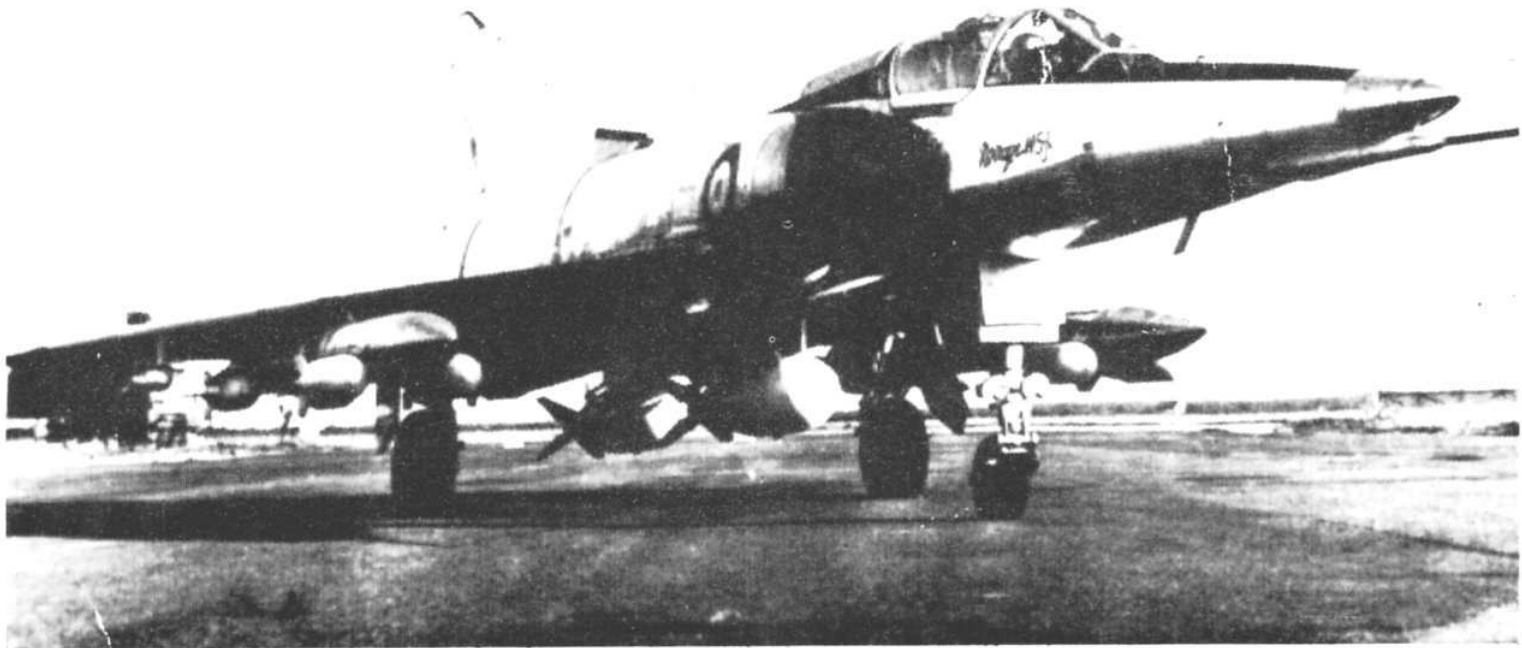
The best way to solve these uncertainties was to get an interview with the Captain of the *Supercaravelle*, and a few hours later I had the good fortune to speak to both the Captain, Comandante Tejada, and his co-pilot, Sr. Suazo.

A little before that, the deputy director of the T.A.E. Company, Sr. Alfredo Espantaleon, had very kindly given me confirmation of the occurrence. He said: "Yes, it seems that the plane was forced to land at Valencia. And we know that the UFOs were also seen by other eyewitnesses on the ground, as well as by the pilots of several military aircraft."

Here now is the statement of Comandante Tejada, Captain of the *Supercaravelle*, a veteran with more than 8,000 flying hours to his credit. He was still visibly affected by his experience with the UFO:—

"We were about forty miles to the north-east of Valencia and, as you know, we were en route from Palma to Santa Cruz de Tenerife. We were on a charter flight from Salzburg to the Canary Islands, with German and Austrian passengers.

"Well now, a few minutes before 11.00 p.m. we



One of the F.1 *Mirage* fighters sent up from Los Llanos Air Base, near Albacete, to search for the UFOs, one of which "made a pass" at a *Mirage*

got a call from Air Control Barcelona. They asked us to switch over to 121.5 megacycles, which is an emergency frequency. Generally it is used for search operations. So we switched to that frequency, and imagined that there might perhaps be a ship or aircraft in difficulties. But then, when we made contact, all we got was the noise of a transmitter, though we were unable to identify what it was all about. It was at that moment, or a few seconds later, that we saw the red lights."

"What lights?"

"Two very red, powerful lights. They were heading towards us at nine o'clock of our position. In other words, they were coming in from our left, as it would be on the dial of a watch."

"Were there two of them?"

"I don't think so," the Captain added quickly. "I think there was just *one* 'thing.' The two lights seemed to be set at the two extremities. All the movements of the two lights were perfectly coordinated, just as if it were one single device we were dealing with. Of that we feel certain..."

"Then what happened?"

"The speed at which they came at us was staggering. I have never seen anything like that speed... The two lights, in line, came up to us on a bearing of 250. That is to say, to our left, and a little behind us."

"At what distance would they have then been from you?"

"When we saw them first, they were at about ten miles. Then they made towards us, and then were literally 'playing with us' at not much under half a mile or so."

"What do you mean when you say they were 'playing with your aircraft?'"

Just what I say. Simply that the object was moving upwards or downwards at will, all round us, and performing movements that it would be quite impossible for any conventional machine to execute."

"Then, do you think that the possibility that it was another aircraft must be ruled out?"

The Captain was manifestly uneasy about this question.

"Another aircraft? But do you think that, at those altitudes, we don't know how to tell what is an aircraft? What aircraft flies at that sort of speed? What sort of aircraft takes up a position at less than half a mile from my jet liner and then sets about 'playing games' with me? Besides, as I've already told you, the turns and manoeuvres it performed weren't those of a plane."

"What could its size have been?"

"Approximately the same as a Jumbo Jet."

The Captain went on to tell me that the speed of approach of the UFO was so great that he found himself forced to perform what in the parlance of aerial navigation is called a 'break.' In other words, he had to turn the aircraft sharply, so as to avoid a possible collision. He continued:—

"I remember that just as I made this 'break' in our flight course, we were about 60 miles from Valencia, and in Radial 300."

"Did you tell Flight Control what was happening?"

"Yes, of course. I called Barcelona and told them that I had some unidentified traffic at a little under half a mile from my aircraft."

"How long did the UFO stay near you?"

"About eight minutes or so. After that, when I had completed my 'break-off' operation towards my right, the object followed us for about thirty miles."

"Did the presence of the object affect the controls or instruments of your plane?"

"No. The only thing that failed was the automatic pilot, but I don't think that was due to the presence of the UFO. The situation finally got so dangerous that we decided to call Manises and request permission to make an emergency landing there. And this we did."

"Did the passengers see the movements of the object?"

"I don't think so, because dinner was being served at the time."

The *Supercaravelle* touched down at Valencia shortly before midnight on Sunday. And Senor Morlan, the Director of the Valencia Airport, together with his Traffic Controller and a number of the ground personnel all saw an extraordinary object with a number of red lights, stationary over the Airport buildings. There was a certain degree of confusion among the eyewitnesses on the ground, who thought that several UFOs were involved. Some of the eyewitnesses even declared that some of the red lights had been seen over the top end of the runway and over the Airport Terminal itself, but there is no official confirmation yet on this.

Strong reaction from Defence Headquarters

My own investigations have revealed that there was a vigorous 'lightning response' by the Spanish Air Force through their operations 'heart,' the Defence Command Centre in Madrid.

The information which I possess indicates that the military radarscopes did indeed register a number of echoes moving at high speed and precisely in that area of the sky where the T.A.E. Air Transport Company's *Supercaravelle* was flying at the time.

The UFO, or UFOs, so it would appear, were picked up by the radars at Barcelona and Valencia, and by the Air Defence Command Headquarters itself. As is well known, the Defence Headquarters is linked to an extensive and sophisticated radar system throughout the whole length and breadth of Spain.

In view of this incident with the airliner at Valencia, and in view of the constant presence of unidentified echoes registered over the land territories and territorial waters of Spain, the Air Defence Headquarters ordered two F-1 fighters to take off from the Air Force Base at Los Llanos, near Albacete, on an intercept mission five minutes after the air liner had landed.

And, although I have of course not yet been able to secure official confirmation for this part of the information in my possession, it seems that the pilots of the fighter craft did succeed in establishing visual contact with the UFO. It seems indeed that one of the F-1 fighters was even subjected to several sudden close approaches on the part of one of the UFOs.

Enquiry started

Shortly after the air-liner had landed, the Captain and his two co-pilots and the flight engineer — all of whom had seen the UFO — underwent a series of

official interrogations. As is usual in all cases of this sort the Spanish Air Force — in common with almost all the air forces in the world — initiates an extensive investigation and appoints an official with the title of *Juez-Informador* to preside over it. He is generally a high ranking Air Force officer. In the present case, the enquiry is still in progress and is obviously secret.

The fact that the passengers were not informed of what had happened, but were simply suddenly accommodated in one of the hotels near Manises, led to the sort of comments and enquiries — generally pretty angry — that might logically be expected to come from passengers in such a situation.

All the same, I feel that Captain Tejada and his crew were extremely wise to act as they did. For what might have happened aboard the aircraft had the pilot told the passengers what was really going on outside? It was far wiser to avoid all possible panics or accidents by not telling them, at least not at the time, what was in the close vicinity of their plane.

Need for a thorough study

As I have said already, this is not the first of such cases. Nor is it likely to be the last that will take place in our skies.

I am moved therefore to remind those officials who have the supreme positions of responsibility for security in the air — and, most particularly, the Spanish Air Force — of the urgent need to proceed with a thoroughgoing study of the whole UFO Problem, treating the matter seriously, and with due regard to all its potential consequences.

During this present year, over 200 UFO cases have been recorded in Spain. Isn't this figure a sufficiently eloquent reason for trying to get to the bottom of the UFO Problem once and for all time?

The Spanish Air Force Headquarters — as I know for a fact — are themselves in possession of an extensive dossier, containing more than thirty cases that occurred in Spain. I myself have received directly, from the hands of several of their high-ranking generals, a total of fourteen files which confirm this.

Moreover, if the Air Force has a group of officers and chiefs who genuinely are sufficiently well versed in it all to be able to carry out the study and investigation of this subject — and I know several of them myself — then why not appoint a Special Commission who, working in collaboration with a number of scientists of standing and with civilian investigators, who draw up a report throwing light on the UFO Problem?

Now might well be the right moment to do this. Or do we have to go on waiting until public opinion starts demanding explanations from those who are responsible for the country's security?

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For further information on this case readers are advised to turn to the World Round-up item on page 31 — EDITOR.