

UFOs in the 1980s

used to be. Currently-existing periodicals include the *CUFORN Bulletin* (Toronto), the *Cambridge UFO Research Group Newsletter* (Cambridge), and *Swamp Gas Journal* (Winnipeg). John Musgrave also sends his own version of a clipping service to interested parties on exchange.

Because of its proximity to the United States, Canada is often put into the category of "American." This can be true in ufology, since Canadians are heavily influenced by media originating from the United States. The reverse is not true, however, and for that reason Canada is largely unknown to its southern neighbors.

When Jim Brandon defined his "Mystery Meridian" in *Weird America* (1978), it was only suspected that it extended northward across the border. The Meridian, between 97 and 98 degrees west longitude, passes through Canada in Manitoba. It traverses Winnipeg, Sperling, Gimli, Thompson and Norway House, all locations that have hosted anomalous events including UFO sightings. This illustrates that in the context of American ufology, care should be taken to include Canada for geographical if not for social reasons.

George M. Eberhart has many listings for Canada in his massive *Geo-Bibliography of Anomalies* published in 1980. Furthermore, it can be pointed out that Canadian cases can be found in most official American UFO projects, including Blue Book and the Condon Report. And it is no secret that Canadian cases are included in the files of Aerial Phenomena Research Organization (APRO), the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP) and the Mutual UFO Network (MUFON). This is certainly testimony that Canada and its ufologists play a significant role not only in American ufology but in global UFO study.

Chris Rutkowski

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CASH-LANDRUM CE2

On the evening of December 29, 1980, near Huffman, Texas, three occupants of a 1980 Oldsmobile Cutlass observed a remarkable sight. The witnesses, Betty Cash, Vickie Landrum and Vickie's seven-year-old grandson Colby, were on their way home to Dayton from a meal at a truck stop in nearby New Caney and were driving through the southern tip of the east Texas piney woods when they noticed a large light above the trees some distance ahead. Thinking it was an airplane on its way to Houston International Airport, they paid little attention to it. The light was briefly lost to view, but they saw it again when after rounding a curve they found themselves on a straight stretch of two-lane road on Highway FM 1485. This time it was approaching them, floating above the road at less than treetop height, and in short order it was belching flames from its bottom. Cash and the Landrums were only about 130 feet from the object.

Vickie Landrum, who feared they would be

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CASH-LANDRUM CE2 (continued)

burned alive, screamed for Betty, who was driving, to stop. As the car slowed, however, Vickie decided they were seeing the Second Coming of Christ. She consoled Colby by assuring him, "That's Jesus. He will not hurt us" (Schuessler, 1988). But Colby was still terrified.

Escape was out of the question because the road was narrow and rain early in the evening had made the shoulders soggy. If Cash tried to turn around, she knew, the car would get stuck. There was no other traffic on the desolate highway, so she stepped outside, as did the elder Landrum. But Colby's frantic screams brought her back into the car. She held him even as she continued to stare at the object ahead of them. Meanwhile Cash stepped to the front of the vehicle, mesmerized by the bizarre sight.

The object, intensely bright and a dull metallic silver in color, was shaped like a huge, upright diamond, about the size of the Dayton water tower, with its top and the bottom cut off so that they were flat rather than pointed. Small blue lights ringed the center and periodically over the next few minutes flames shot out of the bottom, flaring outward to create the effect of a large cone. Every time the flame dissipated, the UFO floated a few feet downward toward the road. But when the flame blasted out again, the object rose about the same distance.

All the while the witnesses felt heat which cut through the chilly evening. The heat was such, in fact, that the women could feel their faces burning. The car was too hot to touch. At one point Vickie Landrum, leaning out the front window, steadied herself by putting her hands on the dashboard, only to find it molded to the shape of her fingers. (The imprints were still there when John Schuessler of the Mutual UFO Network [MUFON] examined the car sometime later.) A few minutes later, when Cash tried to get back into the car, the doorhandle burned her fingers and she had to use her leather coat as a hot pad.

With a final blast of fire and heat, the UFO ascended slowly into the sky. But then, just as it cleared the tree tops, helicopters flew in from all directions. The helicopters and the UFO were lost to view and once Cash's eyes got used to the dark again, she started her car and the three resumed their journey. They passed along another long curve in the road and in five minutes arrived at the intersection of FM 1485 and FM 2100, where they saw the UFO and the helicopters again. This time Cash was able to pull off the side of the road and count 23 helicopters, all clearly visible because the light from the diamond-shaped object was reflecting off them. The closest helicopter was not far from them and made a great racket. Many of the aircraft were subsequently identified as large, double-rotor Boeing CH-47 Chinooks, a kind used by the Army and the Marines.

Cash drove on, the diamond and the helicopters still in front of her, until she came to a road that would take them to Dayton. Even then she could see the object in the rearview mirror for the next few minutes. The whole incident—or at least this part of it—lasted a total of 20 minutes.

She dropped the Landrums off at their house and proceeded on to her own, where four friends were waiting. But by this time Cash was feeling sick. She sat in a chair and waited for the feeling to pass, but in the next hours the headache and nausea remained and large knots formed on her neck and scalp. Soon they became blisters. Meanwhile her skin was reddening and her eyes swelled. She threw up repeatedly and experienced severe diarrhea. By morning her friends feared she was about to die.

The Landrums were suffering similar distress, though not quite so intensely. Their skin looked and felt as if it had been badly sunburned, and their stomachs were upset. Over the next days Vickie repeatedly applied baby oil to herself and Colby to alleviate the pain associated with their reddened skin.

Meantime Cash had lapsed into near-unconsciousness. Her friends frantically sought

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medical help, but the groggy Cash, who had had heart problems in the past, could not identify her cardiologist; so they were forced to call strange physicians. Those they could reach during this holiday period had no interest in taking on an unfamiliar patient with a history of cardiac disorder and, moreover, with a crazy story about having been injured by a UFO.

Knowing of nothing else to do, the friends brought Cash to Vickie Landrum's. Landrum tried to feed Cash, but she rejected food and water and continued to grow weaker. Finally Landrum called a local druggist and persuaded him to look through his prescription records for the name of Cash's cardiologist. As soon as she found out who he was, Landrum phoned and was instructed to take Cash to the Parkway Hospital emergency room right away.

The Betty Cash who was taken into the hospital on January 3, 1981, had lost large patches of skin and large clumps of hair. She could not walk. She was released after 12 days, though her condition was not much better, and she later returned to the hospital for another 15 days. The Landrums improved slightly, though the sores on their skin and the damage to their eyes persisted. Vickie suffered periodic sickness for the next few years and her eyesight never entirely recovered. Colby had problems with chronic illness, sores and hair loss.

A radiologist who reviewed the victims' medical records for MUFON concluded, "We have strong evidence that these patients have suffered damage secondary to ionizing radiation. It is also possible that there was an infrared or ultraviolet component as well" (Schuessler, 1988).

Ufologists learned of the case when the witnesses reported it to a NASA representative in Houston. He suggested they talk with John Schuessler, an aerospace engineer and NASA supervisor with a longstanding interest in UFOs. Schuessler and some MUFON colleagues then interviewed other witnesses, some of whom had seen the UFO and the helicopters for as long as an hour and a half. They also sought the source

of the helicopters. The Fund for UFO Research commissioned Allan Hendry, one of ufology's most skilled investigators, to find out where the aircraft had come from. No airport, civilian or military, would own up to knowledge of the helicopters.

Cash and Landrum began a long, frustrating campaign to get answers from government agencies. After getting nowhere with local officials and military installations, they contacted their senators, John Tower and Lloyd Bentsen, who talked with representatives of the Department of Defense. The senators urged Cash and Landrum to take their complaints to the Judge Advocate Claims Officer at Bergstrom AFB in Austin. In August 1981 they met with Air Force lawyers at Bergstrom. They were given blank forms and told that if they could find a lawyer willing to represent them, they should file a claim with the U.S. government for compensation for their injuries. New York attorney Peter Gersten volunteered to help them. The case worked its way through military and federal courts over the next years but got nowhere because the witnesses and Gersten were unable to prove that either the diamond-shaped object or the helicopters were U.S. government property. On August 21, 1986, the U.S. District Court judge dismissed the case, citing expert testimony that no such craft as the UFO the witnesses described existed in the U.S. military arsenal. Nothing was said about the helicopters.

The only known official investigation of any significance was conducted by Lt. Col. George Sarran, whom the Department of the Army Inspector General (DAIG) directed to look into the case in 1982. Sarran interviewed the witnesses and the ufologists who had studied the case, and he tried to determine where the helicopters had come from. No one would admit to knowing anything about them. At the end of his inquiries Sarran concluded, "Ms. Landrum and Ms. Cash were credible. The DAIG investigator felt [four lines censored] . . . the policeman and his wife [who had reported seeing 12 Chinook helicopters in the Huffman area on the night of the incident] were also credible witnesses. There was no perception that anyone was trying to exaggerate the truth.

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CASH-LANDRUM CE2 (continued)

All interviewees were extremely cooperative and eager to be helpful in any manner. Through the course of inquiry the DAIG investigator tried to concentrate on any reason or anyone or organization which might have been flying helicopters that particular evening in that general area. There was no evidence presented that would indicate that Army, National Guard, or Army Reserve helicopters were involved" (Schuessler, 1988).

Meanwhile, according to Schuessler, "Betty Cash has been hospitalized at least 25 times, [and] has had two operations for cancer (after having shown no previous signs of it). She has had blood problems [and] trouble with her eyesight. Her hair has regrown, though in a different texture, but she is still very weak and has to spend a good deal of time in bed" (Schuessler, 1988).

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CAVEAT EMPTOR

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Caveat Emptor folded after publishing 15 issues in the early 1970s. More like a freewheeling

science-fiction fan magazine than a UFO periodical, it strayed frequently from its ostensible subject matter to feature often highly-personal ruminations by editor Gene Steinberg and ex-wife-to-be Geneva on occult, political and autobiographical matters. In 1988 Gene Steinberg revived the magazine as a 36-page quarterly in essentially the same format, with his former wife (now Geneva Hagen) as assistant editor and columnist. Now subtitled "A New Age Journal," the magazine covers ufological topics of interest to the editor, but is somewhat removed from current developments in the UFO field, of which Steinberg seems unaware or uninformed. Its focus, now broadly New Age, covers ufology along with a widely divergent literary menu which seems to appeal to editors and loyal readers. Many of these relate to controversies that were raging when the old *Caveat Emptor* was new.

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CERGY-PONTOISE (FRANCE) HOAX

At 5 a.m. on November 26, 1979, when a police officer in Pontoise, a Paris suburb, picked up a ringing phone and heard someone exclaim, "A friend of mine's just been carried off by a UFO!" he would be the first victim of France's most notable—and certainly most widely-publicized—UFO hoax. The call brought officers to the apartment of Jean-Pierre Prevost, a 26-year-old who made a none-too-prosperous living selling clothes in street markets.

As the story went, the previous evening Franck Fontaine, an 18-year-old business associate who lived two miles away, had stayed overnight at Prevost's apartment, because the two planned to wake up early in the morning and travel to Gisors, 37 miles away, to secure a good place at the street market there. Another reason to arise

CASH-LANDRUM CE2

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The light was briefly lost to view, but they saw it again when after rounding a curve they found themselves on a straight stretch of two-lane road on Highway FM 1485. This time it was approaching them, floating above the road at less than treetop height and belching flames from its bottom. Cash and the Landrums were only about 130 feet from the object.

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The object, intensely bright and a dull metallic silver in color, was shaped like a huge, upright diamond, with its top and bottom cut off so that they were flat rather than pointed. Small blue lights ringed the center, and periodically over

the next few minutes flames shot out of the bottom, flaring outward to create a cone effect.

All the while the witnesses felt their faces burning. The car was too hot to touch. At one point Vickie Landrum, leaning out the front window, steadied herself by putting her hands on the dashboard, only to find it molded to the shape of her fingers. (The imprints were still there when John F. Schuessler of the Mutual UFO Network [MUFON] subsequently examined the car.) A few minutes later, when Cash tried to get back into the car, the doorhandle burned her fingers.

With a final blast of fire and heat, the UFO ascended slowly into the sky. But just as it was clearing the tree tops, helicopters flew in from all directions. The helicopters and the UFO then were lost to view. The three resumed their journey. They passed along another long curve in the road and in five minutes arrived at the intersection of FM 1485 and FM 2100, where they saw the UFO and the helicopters again. Cash counted 23 helicopters, all clearly visible because the light from the diamond-shaped object was reflecting off them. Many of the aircraft were subsequently identified as large, double-rotor Boeing CH-47 Chinooks, a kind used by the Army and the Marines.

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By morning friends feared Cash was near death. She had lapsed into near-unconsciousness. Cash had had heart problems in the past but now was too groggy to identify her cardiologist; her friends were forced to call strange physicians. Those they could reach during this holiday period would not take on an unfamiliar patient with a history of cardiac disorder and, moreover, with a crazy story about having been injured by a UFO.

Knowing nothing else to do, the friends brought Cash to Vickie Landrum's. Landrum tried to feed Cash, but she rejected food and water and grew ever weaker. Finally Landrum persuaded a local druggist to look through his prescription records for the name of Cash's cardiologist. As soon as she had it, Landrum phoned and was instructed to take Cash to the Parkway Hospital emergency room.

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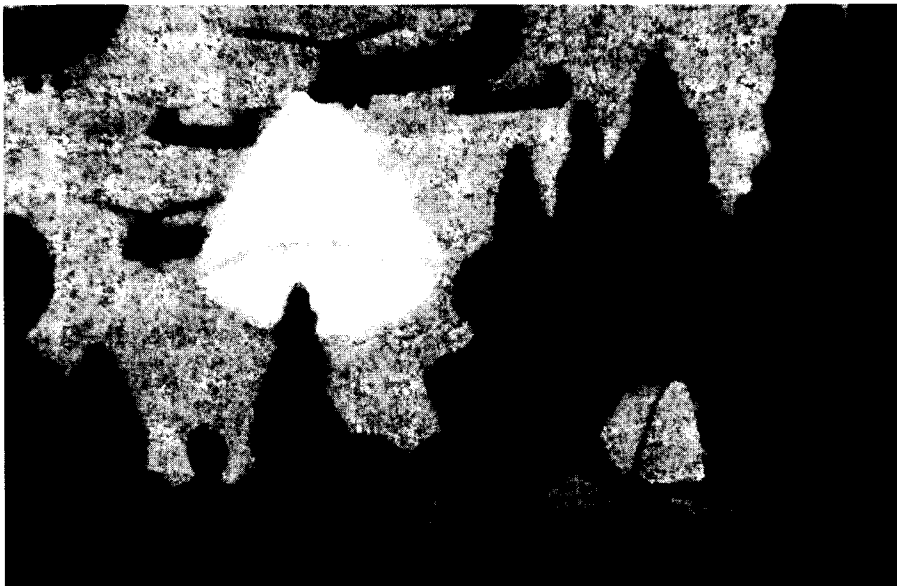
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Investigation. Ufologists learned of the case when the witnesses reported it to a NASA representative in Houston. He suggested they talk with John Schuessler, an aerospace engineer and NASA supervisor with a longstanding interest in UFOs. Schuessler and some MUFON colleagues then interviewed other witnesses, some of whom had seen the UFO and the helicopters for as long as an hour and a half. They also sought the source of the helicopters. The Fund for UFO Research commissioned Allan Hendry, one of ufology's most skilled investigators, to find out where the aircraft had come from. No airport, civilian or military, would own up to knowledge of the helicopters.

Cash and Landrum began a long, frustrating campaign to get answers from government agencies. Eventually their senators, John Tower and Lloyd Bentsen, talked with representatives of the Department of Defense. They urged Cash and

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C2

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Artist Michael Buhler's depiction of the Cash-Landrum encounter in Huffman, Texas, in December 1980. (Fortean Picture Library)

Landrum to take their complaints to the Judge Advocate Claims Officer at Bergstrom Air Force Base in Austin.

In August 1981 they met with Air Force lawyers at Bergstrom. They were told that if they could find a lawyer willing to represent them, they should file a claim with the U.S. government for compensation for their injuries. The case worked its way through military and federal courts over the next few years, but the witnesses and their attorney could not prove that either the diamond-shaped object or the helicopters were official property. On August 21, 1986, the U.S. District Court judge dismissed the case.

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY AND UFOS.

→ See Robertson Panel.

15 UFOS SEEN OVER EAST TEXAS

By JOHN F. SCHUESSLER
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On Wednesday, February 1, 1984, a Montgomery County family, man, wife and three daughters, watched 15 Unidentified Flying Objects move slowly overhead from east to west. The parade of objects started about 9:15 PM and continued for about 45 minutes over the small town of Plum Grove.

Mrs. Vickie Landrum, herself a victim of a close encounter with a large diamond-shaped object accompanied by military-type helicopters, said the recent incident occurred only a few miles from where her sighting happened in 1980.

"The witnesses just moved to East Texas and started new jobs" she said. "They are afraid their employer will think they are crazy or something and fire them."

The objects were described as being triangular shaped and as large as a Boeing 747 airliner. The first object came over the house showing just one light, then many different colored lights came on.

It was followed immediately by a second object of the same description. The first one would move and the second would move up and then the first one would move again.

NORAD, Continued

Even the files of the radar man of the group were devoid of any mention of any alert. It appeared that all material relating to the event had been pulled!

Within about 60 days, everyone in the group received a written reprimand for *drinking on duty*, which none of them had done. In fact, they weren't even on duty at the time of the sighting. The men were reportedly not abused or mistreated. Nor were there any stripes pulled or were any of the men "passed over" by their superiors. They simply received a written reprimand, which came "out of nowhere, dated the same day as the sightings," a copy of which was put in their 201 file.

The first six objects came in twos as described above. Later, single objects crossed the sky.

The witnesses said the objects were silent except for a slight whirring sound audible when they were directly overhead. They described the sound as completely unlike the noise made by a helicopter or regular airplane.

A neighbor woman said her television set started messing up about the same time as the incident. She said she saw the lights in the sky from her window, but she never went outside. Her husband said he thought a bunch of airplanes must be going over and he wished they would stop.

A sketch of the objects showed they were shaped more like an ice cream cone with the rounded end forward as they flew.

Although this is a variation on the common triangle shape, it is not unlike the shape of the huge object seen near Huffman, Texas, on December 29, 1980. Because Huffman and Plum Grove are only a few miles apart, one could speculate that something very unusual is going on over the forests of East Texas.

When the witnesses called various

The radar man, who is still in the Air Force, received the letter mentioning drinking on duty and *dereliction of duty*. He was the only one who lost a promotion about six months later, simply because this was on his record.

In the overflight documents there is one page that states, and I quote, "(3) HQ USAF/DADF also forwarded a copy of a NORAD document for a review for possible downgrade and release. We have determined the document is properly and currently classified and is exempt from disclosure under Public Law 90-23, 5 USC 552b(1)."

Signed, Col. Terrence C. James
USAF, Director of Administration"

agencies for assistance, they were given the classic run around. Some officials reacted with tongue-in-cheek, while others suggested they call someone else. Again, the public has not been served by their local, state, and national officials in a time of need. Fifteen unidentified flying objects, witnessed by five honest and sober people, should be cause for at least a mild level of concern, not something to be ignored.

The lady called the Splendora Police Department to get them to go outside and look while the objects were flying over. The dispatcher made fun of her and told her they could not send anyone out at that time. Then she was told to call the FAA at 443-1333. She also tried calling the Cleveland Municipal Airport and the *Advocate* newspaper. The newspaper people were courteous and did a short article on the incident.

The FAA was not able to help. They said to call the Flight Service Center at 644-7386. The Flight Service Center said to call 643-6504, an aviation office that could tell her about any military maneuvers that may have been going on at the time.

The aviation office person verified some maneuvers were taking place, but referred her to Ellington Air Force Base for details. She contacted Bill Stumball, Air Field Manager at Ellington (481-1400, ext. 2205), who verified some helicopter maneuvers over the Gulf of Mexico during the early evening. All units had landed by 9:15 pm.

She called back to the Aviation Office again and was told some confusing story about Fort Hood saying that the Army reserve was on maneuvers in that area from Fort Dix in Arkansas. Again, Ellington officials said there was no record of such flights.

All these groups achieved their apparent goal — to make the task of getting information as difficult as possible. The mystery continues.

M, F-84



Hunters find more than they bargained for

By HAROLD HAGLUND
MUFON State Section Director

An Ithaca, New York, businessman and a companion reported seeing an unidentified flying object on the evening of October 26, 1983, as they searched for places to hunt deer.

The two, whose names are on file with MUFON, had been using a 300,000-candlepower portable light from a four-wheel-drive station wagon to find areas where deer had been reported. This information would be used later during daylight hours to help find deer.

They were in a rural area some ten miles southeast of Ithaca, near the communities of Slaterville and Caroline Center. It was about 9:45 PM. A mist was falling, but so light that the

windshield wipers were needed only occasionally.

After turning south off Highway 79 near Slaterville onto Level Green Road, they traveled 1.8 miles and turned west onto Yapple Road. About a tenth of a mile from the intersection, they both saw what looked like a light through the windshield straight up the hill slightly and to the right of the road.

"We assumed it to be something like a lighted silo at a farmhouse, since neither of us had been in this specific location before," said the businessman, who is in his late 20s.

"We continued slowly up the hill, swinging the spotlight slowly along the woods on the right and the open fields

on the left, for about another tenth of a mile. Then we stopped to look more closely at the light.

"What in _____ is that?" I shouted.

"My friend used the 10-power binoculars on the light and exclaimed, 'It looks like the thing is round!'"

The businessman grabbed the binoculars from his friend (fortunately the strap wasn't around his neck) and jumped out of the station wagon, stalling the engine as it was still in low gear.

"Focusing on the light, I found the object had started to move slowly towards our right," said the witness.

(continued on next page)

Stonewalling at the FBI?

By LARRY W. BRYANT

If you ever send a freedom-of-information request about unidentified flying objects to the FBI headquarters in Washington, D.C., you'll learn at least two lessons:

(1) For a few hundred dollars, they'll send you a copy of the 1,600-odd pages of UFO-related documentation that they admit to possessing.

(2) They hesitate not at all to tell you that they have no jurisdiction for participating in official U.S. government investigation of UFO encounters.

But if you write such a request to one of their field offices, you might hear a different drumbeat — as is the case with the Bureau's special-agent-in-charge of the office in Boston, Mass.

In responding to a recent FOIA request for access to his office's UFO-related records, he declined to release any part of a six-page UFO-related document that had surfaced in his records search. The reason? "Investigatory records compiled for

law-enforcement purposes..." — in the words of FOIA exemption No. (b) (7).

As Citizens Against UFO Secrecy prepares to appeal that denial, I wonder why the Bureau is trying to have it both ways: dismissing the UFO problem as irrelevant to its mission while at the same time keeping a tight, censorial lid on whatever UFO data in its files that might be requested for public view.

Can the Bureau really justify withholding the entire document rather than just those parts of it that might reveal confidential sources or safeguarded investigatory methods? If FBI headquarters can release a thus-sanitized version of a March 22, 1950, memorandum recounting the alleged crash-landing of three occupied "flying saucers" in New Mexico, then why does the Boston office feel it has a lesser obligation to acknowledge the public's right-to-know?

These are just some of the questions that ought to be addressed

by a federal judge when CAUS files suit under the U.S. Freedom of Information Act. And they also should receive Congressional attention to determine whether the UFO problem is being handled properly by the Executive Branch. If the FBI denial in this case is upheld by the courts, the Bureau will have joined the National Security Agency (now withholding 57 documents) in the dubious distinction of denying public access to the government's vital UFO records.

And one final "if": if the appropriate Congressional committee can pull its head from the UFO quicksand long enough to hold open hearings on the "Cosmic Watergate," we will have embarked on a (hopefully short) journey toward assuring both the accountability and the credibility of government pronouncements on the UFO problem.

Haglund, Continued

"As it got closer, it looked like rows of lighted window panels, maybe two or three horizontal rows, with a single brighter light above those panels. This single top light seemed to revolve and be reflected off the low, hazy clouds. It was not noticeable when it was first seen.

"When it was closest to us — about 200 yards to the west — I looked at it without the binoculars. The lighted panels seemed to be a 'dirty' white color without any shadows. The rows seemed to be in an arc, like they would have gone clear around the object.

"I felt it was about the size of a very large room, based on the impression of a real object around the lights."

The object appeared to be about 200 feet above the treetops.

"It continued slowly — maybe at 5

mph — without any apparent change in direction and went over the ridge of a hill to the northwest. However, the glare of the light was still visible

"During the entire time there was no noise at all, a complete silence in the area."

The two men thought they should be able to see the object again from the Level Green Road area, so they quickly drove back there but by then the light was gone.

"We discussed reporting the matter to someone, if only to talk about it," the businessman said. "The night when I got home, I called the Sheriff's Office because I knew a friend would be on duty there.

"The following day I was asked if I wanted to make a formal report, but I declined because of fear of local ridicule. However, the Sheriff's Office furnished an out-of-town phone

number to contact, and because I felt a record of this experience should be on file somewhere, I made a phone report the next day."

The number given him was for the National UFO Reporting Center in Seattle.

The businessman said that normally a third man would have been with them that night, one to drive, the second to use the spotlight to pan the areas, and the third to record what they saw with a video camera. Unfortunately, on this night the third man could not accompany them and the video camera was not in use.

"My knowledge of the UFO subject has been mainly from television, both in documentaries and fictional movies," said the businessman. "Since this experience, I am quite convinced that something exists to support the UFO problem."