

A CIGAR-SHAPED UFO OVER ANTARCTICA

by Gordon Creighton

ANOTHER impressive report from Antarctica has been supplied to us* by UFO CHILE, a group in Santiago.

It concerns a group of Chilean scientists who, during the 2nd International Geophysical Year 1956-58, had two UFOs in sight for two whole days.

A party of four men, consisting of two prominent scientists, an assistant, and a medical orderly of the Chilean Navy, had been taken by helicopter to Robertson Island, and were scheduled to stay there for one month studying the geology, fauna, and other features. They had with them a portable metal shelter, a battery-powered radio transmitter, and their gear.

Robertson Island lies south of the 65th Parallel and east of the 60th Meridian, in the Weddell Sea. Of volcanic origin, the island shows much basaltic out-cropping and has an area of some 500 square kilometres.

At the beginning of January 1956, during a period of stormy weather, the party suddenly became aware of something which, in other circumstances, could have been very grave for them. This was that their radio had mysteriously ceased to function. This was however not too worrying a disaster in as much as it was firmly settled that the helicopter would return to take them off again on January 20.

At the request of the two scientists, their true names are not divulged by UFO CHILE, and they are referred to herein by the substitute names of Doctor Tagle and Professor Barros.

Dr. Tagle was in the habit of getting up regularly during what one would call the "night hours" of the Antarctic Summer, and going out to observe any meteorological phenomena of interest. Professor Barros on the other hand did not share this particular habit, and indeed had made it very clear to Tagle that he did not want to be disturbed and called out "even if all the aurorae borealis of the whole world were hanging overhead". Nevertheless, on January 8, 1956, Dr. Tagle saw something of so singular a nature that he at once rushed back to the hut and broke in on the slumbers of Professor Barros. After taking one look at the expression on Tagle's face, Barros dressed quickly and went out with him to face the 21° below zero. In the south-east the sun was shining brightly. The sky, totally clear of cloud, was a profound and limpid blue above the silent expanse of ice. Indeed, the records kept by the Chilean Navy indicate that only seldom have spells of such perfect weather been observed in that region.

The sighting commences

Dr. Tagle pointed upwards, almost overhead. Still in a bad temper through being disturbed, Barros looked as directed, and beheld two "metallic" cigar-shaped objects in vertical positions, perfectly still and silent and flashing vividly the reflected rays of the sun. One of the objects was almost at the mid-heaven, and the other

at a distance of some 30° from the first.

Not without a secret feeling of anxiety, heightened by Dr. Tagle's own manifest excitement, Professor Barros examined the objects through his binoculars. "Of the apparent size of the full moon" (presumably meaning that their apparent length was comparable to the apparent width of the full moon), the things looked utterly solid, with smooth, polished, seemingly metallic surfaces. Everything about them argued in favour of an artificial origin.

The two scientists quickly decided not to call their companions at that stage, but to continue to watch, feeling as they did that there might always be a possibility—however remote—that they were sharing in some curious sort of private hallucination. They therefore moved off to a spot about 100 metres distant from the hut, and continued to watch.

More witnesses

At about 7.00 a.m. the medical orderly, a "fitness fanatic" who always made a point of emerging in his underwear for a brief burst of gymnastics, emerged from the hut and startled both the scientists by yelling almost straight away: "Look, Professor! Flying Saucers!"

The fourth man now appeared, and all four stood there gazing at a phenomenon which they all felt could certainly not be a mirage or hallucination of any kind. The two objects were still there stationary in the sky. They looked as if they had always been there from the beginning of time, part of the sky itself.

Manoeuvres

At about 9.00 a.m. object No. 1 (the nearest to the zenith) suddenly assumed a horizontal posture and shot away like a flash towards the west. It had now lost its metallic brightness and had taken on the whole gamut of visible colours of the spectrum, from infra-red to ultra-violet. Without slowing down it performed an incredible acute-angle change of direction, shot off across another section of the sky, and then did another sharp turn as before. These vertiginous manoeuvres, the zig-zagging, abrupt stopping, instantaneous accelerating, went on for some time right overhead, the object always following tangential trajectories in respect to the Earth and all in the most absolute silence.

The demonstration lasted about five minutes. Then the object returned and took up position beside its companion in almost the same area of the sky as before, but this time with about 50° between them, and now it was the turn of object No. 2 to show its paces and do a weird zig-zagging dance. Shooting off towards the east, it performed a series of ten disjointed bursts of flight, broken by brusque changes of direction, and marked by the same colour changes when accelerating or stopping, and so on. After about three minutes of this, object No. 2 returned and took up its station near its companion, and reassumed its original solid and metallic appearance.

The scientists had with them two Geiger-Miller counters of high sensitivity, one of them auditory and the other of the flash-type. When the two objects had finished their dance and reassumed their stations in the sky, someone discovered that the flash-type Geiger counter now showed that radioactivity around them had suddenly increased 40 times—enough to kill any organism subjected long enough to it. This discovery greatly increased the anxiety felt by the four men, as may well be imagined.

The temperature stood at between 15° and 20° below zero, the sky was bright and clear, without a shred of cloud or vapour, and so it continued all that day. None of the four men was able to do anything throughout the day except watch the two objects, and not a stroke of work could be done; all of them had the definite feeling of being as it were micro-organisms laid upon the slide of a microscope and subjected to the cold scrutiny of unknown and unknowable eyes, so that concentration on anything else was impossible.

Photographs suppressed ?

Although they had no telescopic lens, they did however have cameras with them, and they took numerous photographs of the objects, both in colour and black and white. We are not told in the report what became of these photographs.

While Professor Barros felt no fear that they were likely to be in danger of attack from the objects, he had to admit that with his severely rational scientific mentality, he found that the idea of being confronted with such a phenomenon from beyond the realms of any known earthly science was "anything but soothing". And as the hours passed the conviction was born in all four men that they were face to face with a phenomenon of non-human origin, that they were being spied upon by an intelligence that for some reason or other desired to remain anonymous, and whose next moves were utterly unforeseeable.

When the "night" period began, they decided to try to act as though they were not concerned and were indeed unaware of the presence of the objects, and they set off northwards along the shore of the Weddell Sea. Their shelter, pitched in a moraine (the bed of an old glacier), was at a height of some 60 metres above sea level, so that when they moved away they were soon hidden from the objects by a steep escarpment. But suddenly there was a flash, as though to warn them that they would gain nothing by trying to hide. It was now about 9.00 p.m., and they went back to their camp. The two objects had not budged.

During the "night" period, during which the sun was visible the whole time, their anxiety was such that none of them slept a wink. But nothing happened that night, nor during the first few hours of the next day. Sleepless, their appetite gone, all four men now felt near the limits of their physical resistance.

Calculations possible

In the evening of the second day, cirrus clouds appeared. In Antarctica, cirrus forms at an altitude of from 7,000 to 10,000 metres, and this is the forerunner of storms. Taking his knowledge of the normal cloud height as his yardstick, Professor Barros now took his

theodolite, and he established the altitude of the two objects at around 8,000 metres, and their length at somewhere in the region of 150 metres. He estimated their diameter at the thickest part to be 25 metres. He felt that these figures were pretty reliable, as one of the objects was so near to a cloud that the cloud threw a faint shadow on it.

Signal answered ?

Next he sent out a beam of polarised light from one of his instruments, whereupon object No. 1 almost immediately emitted an intense white light itself, and by the time this light had gone out he perceived that the object had dropped down to a considerably lower level in the sky, its "apparent size now being that of a small car about 3 metres long".

Doctor Tagle, who was observing with his binoculars, thought he could make out a sort of hatchway on the upper part of the object, but Barros was unable to confirm this.

The unusual descent of object No. 1, which seemed to be a reaction to the signal given by Barros with his light-beam, now triggered off a nervous crisis in Tagle, who kicked out at the instrument and smashed it.

Object No. 1 had meanwhile started climbing again to its former altitude and, once there, began a fresh series of manoeuvres. During one of its astonishing bursts of speed Professor Barros did some calculations, based upon his previous estimate of the altitude of the objects, and found by angulation that its speed was 40,000 kilometres per hour, or in other words not far short of terrestrial escape velocity. Since the object would invariably start from zero speed and attain 40,000 km.p.h. **instantaneously**, then halting again abruptly, with no gradual deceleration whatsoever, the inertia inside the object would clearly be fatal for any living creature unless it had its own gravitational field in accordance with the Plantier theory of UFO propulsion.

Blizzard ends observation of UFOs

At about 11.00 p.m. the Antarctic blizzard—a wind capable of reaching velocities of 300 km.p.h.—began to get into its stride, and the sky clouded over.

At about 2.00 a.m., at the height of the storm, the scientists established that the radioactivity level had dropped. And at the same time the extraordinary psychological tension reigning among the party had suddenly dropped too.

Even before they were able to prove it visually, the party were certain that the objects had gone.

Next day, the radioactivity level was back at normal, and that evening a break in the storm brought a brief clearance of some 40 per cent of the sky, and they were able to see for themselves that the things were indeed no longer there.

On January 20 the helicopter picked up the party. Though they did not dare report their experience officially, for fear of ridicule, they did decide to tell one man, a high-ranking officer in the Chilean Army, who heard their story calmly, without surprise. This officer knew of many sightings of UFOs, registered in almost all the expeditions to Antarctica, but he had never heard of one that lasted so long and was so precise in all its

details as this. And the Air Technical Intelligence Centre (ATIC) in the U.S.A. in due course sent a lengthy questionnaire which "Barros" and "Tagle" completed and returned.

NOTE

* Translated from bulletin *UFO Chile*, No. 2 (October 1967), Santiago de Chile.

CREW OF ARGENTINE SHIP SEE SUBMARINE UFO by Oscar A. Galíndez

Senor Galíndez has been correspondent of *Flying Saucer Review* in Argentina since 1962.

A TOPIC which seems to be connected with the UFO problem is that of the mysterious submarine bodies which have been observed in the seas of our world. Many of these cases appear in fact to be part of the astonishing enigma of the Unidentified Flying Objects.

Not long ago consideration was being given by *FLYING SAUCER REVIEW* to these marine aspects of the phenomenon,* and some authors have suggested the possibility of underwater UFO bases in areas where these strange happenings have been recorded.

I would like to relate a recent occurrence which is quite sensational in comparison with most of those reported so far. My sources are press reports which appeared in the Argentine newspapers *La Razón*, *Córdoba* and *Los Principios*.

On July 30, 1967, the Argentine steamer *Naviero*, belonging to the Argentine Shipping Lines Company, was some 120 miles off the coast of Brazil, opposite Cape Santa Marta Grande (Lat. 28 48 S., Long. 46 43 W.) in the State of Santa Catarina, when an elongated submarine craft was sighted. The time was about 6.15 p.m. Argentine time (10.15 p.m. G.M.T.), and the *Naviero* was running at 17 knots.

The officers and crew were at their evening meal at the time. The Master, Captain Julián Lucas Ardanza, received a call on the intercom system from one of his officers, Jorge Montoya, to the effect that there was something strange near the ship.

Arriving at once on deck, Captain Ardanza beheld a shining object in the sea no more than about 50ft. away on the starboard side. It was cigar-shaped and he estimated its length at about 105 to 110ft. It had a powerful blue and white glow, made no noise whatsoever and left no wake in the water. There was no sign of any periscope or railing or tower or superstructure, in other words no external control surfaces or protruding parts.

The mystery craft paced the *Naviero* for 15 minutes. Captain Ardanza estimated its speed at 25 knots, as against the 17 of his own vessel (an old Liberty-type ship built in the U.S.A.).

The next development however was disconcerting to say the least. The mystery craft suddenly dived and passed right under the *Naviero* and vanished rapidly in the depths at great speed. As it went it glowed brightly beneath the water.

The *Naviero* was carrying explosives and gunpowder, and in order to stave off any panic among the crew should they get the idea into their heads that they

were being "pursued" because of this type of cargo, Captain Ardanza and his officers judged it prudent to assemble the crew and tell them what had been seen.

In the subsequent interviews with reporters from the Argentine press, the Captain said that during his twenty years at sea he had never seen anything like that before. Chief Officer Carlos Lasca described the object as "a submergible UFO with its own illumination".

The possibility that the object seen was a whale or a conventional type of submarine is ruled out. The witnesses were firm in their insistence that the "luminous cigar" looked totally different from a submarine or a whale and could not possibly have been either of these things.

The case has been classified by the Argentine maritime authorities as an "Unidentified submarine object".

NOTES

- * Gordon Creighton, *Argentina 1962* (Pedro Atilli's experience) and item about Soviet submarines, *FSR*, July/August 1964, pp. 11 and 13.
- Antonio Ribera, *UFOs and the Sea*, *FSR*, November/December 1964, p. 8.
- W. S. Robertson, *UFOs and the Scottish Seas*, *FSR*, May/June 1965, p. 36.
- Antonio Ribera, *More About UFOs and the Sea*, *FSR*, November/December 1965, p. 17.
- H. J. Hinfelaar, *Submarine Craft in Australasian Waters*, *FSR*, July/August 1966, p. 28.

(continued from page 19)

However, there are unconfirmed rumours that he called again soon afterwards and is reported to have said: "It's still above me, making my speed or better. I'm going up to 20,000ft. If I'm no closer, I'll abandon chase."

About an hour later the wreckage of his plane was found scattered over a very wide area. What happened? And what was he chasing?

That year the U.S. Navy had been sending up giant Skyhook balloons to obtain high altitude information about the earth's upper atmosphere and the U.S. Air Force's view is that Mantell was chasing one of those huge balloons and lost consciousness due to lack of oxygen. They consider that his plane continued to climb for a while, then went into a steep dive and disintegrated.

On the other hand if Mantell was actually pursuing a UFO then it is possible that he came too close to the powerful force field of such a huge craft. This might have caused his plane to break apart.

Whatever the real answer—Skyhook balloon or giant saucer—it is interesting to note that the U.S. Air Force official report definitely clears whatever object it was of any hostile intent. The report states:

"The UFO was in no way directly* responsible for this accident. However, it is probable that the excitement caused by the object was responsible for this experienced pilot conducting a high altitude flight without the necessary oxygen equipment. . . ."

It is strange that very soon after Mantell's tragic death the U.S. Air Force formed Project Sign, the first official investigating body into UFOs, the earliest predecessor of Project Blue Book.

NOTE

* Underlining by U.S. Air Force.

SOURCES

Flying Saucers from Outer Space, by Major Donald E. Keyhoe.
Flying Saucers have Landed, by D. Leslie and G. Adamski.
The Riddle of the Flying Saucers, by Gerald Heard.
Flying Saucers. A special issue of *LOOK* magazine, 1967.