

UFOs AND EARTHQUAKES

By Gordon Creighton

PEREIRO is a small town in the State of Ceará in the North-East of Brazil. It lies in a strange crescent-shaped area where, usually every 11 years, at the height of the sunspot-cycle,* devastating droughts occur, killing off large numbers of cattle and forcing the human population to flee into adjacent parts of the country where there is no drought.

Pereiro has been much in the news lately on account of the earth tremors† that have been occurring almost daily since last year both at Pereiro itself and in the nearby hills (Serra dos Macacos or Serra do Frade, both these names being used). The principal geological feature of the region is limestone and the explanation—assuredly the correct one—given for the tremors by the many Brazilian and foreign geologists who have been taking a look at the place lately is that subterranean water-courses have worn great hollows in the limestone, as the result of which settlement and accommodation are inevitably occurring. Nor indeed are 'quakes and tremors unknown to

* Scientific proof of the strange link between the droughts in the State of Ceará and the eleven-year sunspot-cycle was provided by the Englishman Lt.-Col. Francis R. Hull, R.E., Ret'd, who was my Vice-Consul for that part of Brazil some eighteen years ago. He made a very remarkable study of these matters and I know that many of the Brazilian officials were impressed with the correctness of his findings.

† Many people already realise that (as the Aztecs knew!) there is considerable evidence for a link between sunspots and earthquakes, and that the latter are therefore probably (at least partly) due to magnetic changes.

As it happens, we are now approaching a sunspot maximum (Feb. 1969?), so perhaps there is a case for arguing that the Ceará tremors and the Ceará droughts are also interlinked? In periods of drought the hollowed out cavities in the limestone would be more empty and thus more liable to crumble.

the region. The years 1898, 1909, 1918, were notable for them, and there have been literally hundreds since 1918.

The present spate of tremors seems quite severe. There has been great damage to buildings and a state of near-panic reigns among the 30,000 inhabitants of the region who feel totally abandoned and neglected, and who have petitioned the President of the Republic to do something about their plight. Press reports indicate that many of the local officials seem to have made themselves scarce.

New phenomena reported

But while tremors and 'quakes in the Pereiro region are nothing new, the press reports emanating from there in the period since March of this year contain some features that would appear to be new.

In the first place, tremendous detonations like thunderclaps are now accompanying or following the 'quakes. In the second place, immense bluish-green fiery balls, "twice the size of the Moon", are now being seen flying in all directions overhead. It seems that these "lights" or "balls of fire" only began three years or so ago. They do not appear to have been known during the 'quake years of 1898, 1909, or 1918. Today there must be few among the 30,000 inhabitants who have not seen them. The witnesses repeatedly describe them as "like big automobile headlights" that sometimes stay hovering, sometimes move up or down in the sky, and sometimes shoot about in straight, level flight.

According to the Mayor of Pereiro, the objects are conical in shape, their luminosity is blinding, they travel absolutely silently at fantastic speeds, performing all sorts of manoeuvres, and carry brilliant lights, like searchlights, which are directed downwards on to buildings and the countryside in general. They appear regularly every night, and are frequently seen to land, though generally in inacces-

sible spots in the dense *caatinga* thorn scrub.

Among the countless witnesses is the chairman of one of the municipal councils. While on horseback one night in mid-July 1968, in the region of the Serra dos Macacos, he saw a large greenish light. At first, unable to find any other explanation, he decided it must be a truck being loaded with cotton by the farmers, but he soon perceived that the light was coming from a huge object floating above the tops of the trees. He watched it while it flew around over several farms, finally vanishing behind a crest. Earlier in July whole groups of the fiery objects had been seen. On one occasion one of them flew low over Pereiro, shone a vivid beam of light upon the tower of the principal church, and produced a general panic in the town.

Beams of light projected before landing

There is almost invariably one object that is much larger than the rest. This larger one shoots a beam of light down on to the ground "like a great searchlight, or like a beam from a lighthouse". The other luminous objects, all smaller, remain higher up in the sky than the big one. Then the big one will land, while the smaller ones still remain overhead, sometimes moving about and sometimes dimming their brightness. Then, suddenly, all of them, big and small together, shoot away together, straight up into the sky and are gone.

By August 15 of this year the reports out of Pereiro were emphasising that it had now been established as definite that the appearance of these luminous objects overhead always precedes the tremors by a few hours. It is certain, the populace say, that "the balls of fire seem to know where and when the 'quakes are coming".

Mendoza too

The other piece of evidence which I have to give comes from

Argentina where the city of Mendoza, right up on the flanks of the Andes, has often figured in UFO reports in recent years. The Buenos Aires illustrated magazine *Gente Y La Actualidad* (September 5, 1968) has an article regarding recent encounters with UFO entities in the Mendoza region, and these are dealt with elsewhere in FSR in a separate article. What struck me as extraordinarily interesting and relevant to the present issue was that the article began by saying that of course UFO sightings in the Mendoza area did not begin recently, but "the history of the UFOs at Mendoza is almost as long as the history of Mendoza itself". For the whole thing started with the earthquake that destroyed the

village of Mendoza (as it then was) during the 19th century. Documents of the period show that some days before the catastrophe strange objects were seen moving through the skies overhead.

And, the article continues, much the same has happened in the years since then, in the present century. For example, ten years ago, inhabitants of the region of Puente del Inca, where a series of avalanches occurred, had reported that strange things were seen overhead some days beforehand. With the passage of time, nobody any longer remembered these things, "until just two months ago, when once again the UFOs showed themselves over Mendoza in a most emphatic fashion and, once again, though

this time without such grave results, a powerful earthquake shook the city, bringing the Mendozans streaming out of the cinemas on to the streets half way through the film."

Sources:

- 1 *Folha da Tarde*, São Paulo, March 23, 1968.
- 2 *Diário de São Paulo*, March 26, 1968.
- 3 *Diário da Noite*, São Paulo, July 7, 1968.
- 4 *Diário da Noite* São Paulo, July 20, 1968.
- 5 *Folha da Tarde*, Pôrto Alegre, August 6, 1968.
- 6 *Correio do Povo*, Pôrto Alegre, August 15, 1968.
- 7 *Jornal do Brasil*, Rio de Janeiro, August 20, 1968.
- 8 *Gente Y La Actualidad*, Buenos Aires, September 5, 1968.
- 9 Letter dated August 30, 1968, to Gordon Creighton from Sr. Jäder U. Pereira. Our thanks and credits to Mr. Nigel Rimes of São Paulo for items 1, 2, 3, 4; to Sr. Jäder U. Pereira of Pôrto Alegre for items 5, 6 and 9; to Mme. Rose-Marie de Argaez of Rio de Janeiro for item 7 (forwarded to FLYING SAUCER REVIEW via M. Aimé Michel); and to Señor Guillermo J. Gainza Paz of Buenos Aires for item 8.

Humanoids encountered at La Baleia

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of 2.30 metres and then a sort of lift emerged from its base, almost to the ground. Inside it there was a man, 1 metre 70 centimetres in height, who, approaching, gently drew the witness from his hiding-place and calmed him by stroking his head in a friendly manner. The clothing of the strange being looked like a diver's suit, fitting the body closely; it seemed to be made of plastic. Entering the disc with the entity, the motorcyclist observed that there were five or six men in there dressed in the same manner and sitting in front of panels of instruments. An extraordinary light filled the cabin, and there was a series of square portholes which, strangely enough, he had not been able to see from outside. Then the motorcyclist was escorted out again, towards his machine. His companion placed a hand on his shoulder, as though in a farewell gesture, and then re-entered the lift, which then rapidly rose up into the saucer.¹¹

The Rio Pardo Case¹²

On a night in June 1959, three citizens of São Paulo, hunting alligators on the Rio Pardo river, in Mato Grosso, saw a luminous object approach and stop at a distance of 100 metres from them. It was 60 metres in diameter, with a metallic surface. Slowly a cone was projected from the centre of the under-surface, reaching a length of 40 metres and coming down to 5 metres from the tops of the trees. The sketch made by the investigator Ruppert Kiener shows the projection as being quasi-cylindrical, giving the UFO the general shape of a mushroom.

C. Cases remote in time, in neighbouring areas

The frequency of reports of close approaches or landings of UFOs in the Belo Horizonte area is increasing. CICOANI have been able to document four alleged cases of landings in the urban district of Belo Horizonte from 1963 onwards. The only one that seems to have some correspondence with the Baleia Case is that of Sagrada Familia, "The One-Eyed Man of Belo Horizonte",¹³ which has already been the subject of a special report. This case, according to the statements of the witnesses, involves the presence of four individuals over 2 metres high, one of them walking in the garden of a house. Three children describe the giants as having only one round eye, without any white part (sclerótica), in the centre of the head.

REFERENCE NOTES

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- 2 Report of November 1967 (p. 12) by GEOANI (Group for the Study of Unidentified Aerial Objects, at Itajubá, State of Minas Gerais).

- 3 Review *O Cruzeiro*, Rio de Janeiro, October 7, 1967.
- 4 GEOANI Report (Itajubá) November 1967, p. 12.
- 5 CICOANI Reports, Nos. 254, 255, 258.
- 6 CICOANI Reports, Nos. 260 and 261.
- 7 *A Tribuna*, Santos, September 17, 1967.
- 8 *Diário de Pernambuco*, Recife, October 8, 1967.
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