

me until the following day, and in the meantime we had heard officially what the objects were supposed to be. ITN reported that according to Greenwich Observatory they were caused by a decaying satellite, while a meteorological establishment opined that we had observed a meteorite shower. Next morning we were told that the Royal Observatory at Herstmonceux had watched the lights and identified them as the Russian rocket "Cosmos 253" re-entering the atmosphere.

A colleague of mine, Mr. James Horn, told me that his son had been spectator at the League Cup soccer match between Arsenal and Tottenham Hotspur, and that most of the 40,000 fans must have seen the stately passage of the lights.

Russian denial

As I was not inclined to accept the official explanation without reservations, I asked Bernard Finch if he would check with the Russian Embassy

whether or not any Russian iron-mongery had re-entered the atmosphere that evening. Their reply was a firm "No". This denial was confirmed to reader Mr. Gill, who told us he had checked with the Russian News Agency.

Next day, while reports of the lights were coming in from the Midlands and the North, Gordon Creighton handed me his reports. They tallied very much with those I had obtained. A physician at a big London hospital—he had once invited Mr. Creighton to lecture on UFOs—had telephoned to say he had been at the Arsenal-Spurs match, and that he was now more prepared to think UFOs existed than he had been at the time of the lecture.

Then there was the Watford man who told Mr. Creighton and his co-investigator, Graham Williams, FRAS, how he saw two rows of whitish lights, parallel to each other, and leaving a large trail of lilac and lemon-coloured light. The leading lights, however, were reddish hued.

The straggler

The most interesting of the Creighton reports came from Albert Davey, FRAS, who had received a telephone call from a Mr. Edwards of Latimer, near Chesham, Bucks, who asked if he could explain eight red lights which had just passed over the Edwards' farm, heading South East towards Rickmansworth. The lights were in *line abreast* and one of them kept stopping dead in its tracks for a few seconds and then *catching up with the others*. The passage of the lights took about 45 seconds, and according to the Edwards family, they "just went out" before they had gone the distance at which they would normally have been expected to pass from view. When asked next day if he agreed with the official explanation that he had seen the Soviet Satellite Cosmos 253 breaking up Mr. Edwards replied: "Absolute rubbish".

Which seems to be the general consensus of opinion about the official explanation.

World round-up

of news and comment about recent sightings

ALGERIA Biskra Saucer

In *Le Progrès* (Saône et Loire edn.) of August 8, 1968, we read that

"Yesterday (August 7) at 7.45 p.m. an oddly-shaped device resembling an umbrella drawing behind it a luminous green trail has been watched for 30 seconds by the people of Biskra. This sighting is confirmed by many inhabitants of this Algerian town.

(Credit: H-J. Besset of Chenove, France.)

BRAZIL "Dino Kraspedon"

In a letter from Nigel Rimes: "At the beginning of August 1968, Aladino Felix, alias Sabado Dinotos, alias *Dino Kraspedon*, appeared on television in São Paulo and stated publicly that his book *Meu Contacto Com Os Discos Voadores* (*My Contact with Flying Saucers*) was nothing more than sheer invention.

"At the end of August, he was arrested, together with a number of other people, charged with being the leader of a terrorist group in Brazil. It now seems pretty certain that he was certainly deeply involved in terrorist activities, but was by no means the leader of the group. The press has been full of his testimony, and indeed on September 10 the São Paulo paper *Ultima Hora* devoted the whole of

three pages to it, with headlines five inches high. He has been 'singing like the proverbial canary', but what he has said is so fantastic and so contradictory that there can be no doubt that the poor chap is extremely unbalanced. He has even gone so far as to say that his arrest will have serious consequences for humanity, as the Venusians will soon attack Earth in order to free him and his friends."

[Dealing with the claim of "Dino Kraspedon" under Case No. 3 in his article in THE HUMANOIDS (*The "Humanoids" in Latin America*) Gordon Creighton wrote in October 1966 as follows:

"No confirmation of the Kraspedon story is known, and most people hold it to be entirely fictitious".

We have in fact never heard from any of our South American correspondents that they considered the story to be genuine—EDITOR.]

MOZAMBIQUE UFO trails lorry

The *Pretoria News* (South Africa) of November 7 carried a SAPA account from Lourenço Marques of how—

"A lorry driver, Mr. Joao Alves da Silva, said yesterday [November 6] that an unidentified flying object followed his lorry for two hours on the road from Zavala to Chidenguele in the district of Inhambane on Monday night.

"Mr. Alves da Silva's assistant, Mr. Jose Matavele, who sat on top of a load of timber on the lorry, said the strange, bright object followed them for two hours, taking all the bends in the road and flying at such a low altitude that at times it was hidden by the trees. Mr. Matavele said the object was about 60 yards across, with a dome on top.

"Near Chidenguele the object disappeared into the sky at great speed.

"Mr. Alves da Silva said he was not surprised at the sight of the object, as he had seen several from 1961 to 1966."

(Credit: M. Imber, Pretoria.)

RUMANIA Reports down the years

The Swiss paper *La Voix Ouvrière* (Geneva) of August 21, 1968, published a translation of an article by the Rumanian writer Ion Hobana about sightings in his country.

Case 1. Hobana, who says he finds the extraterrestrial hypothesis the most likely, quotes a number of Rumanian sightings, the first of them dating from 1926 when an old peasant claimed to have seen a UFO at 1 a.m. one morning near Cirta, in the Sibiu District. He saw what at first he took to be a full moon stationary for five or six minutes above Cirta. Then it came

towards him and passed above him, making no sound except for a whistling "like the whistling of the wind". The object lit up the whole area with an intensely vivid light. The peasant, hiding in the long grass, looked up and saw what he later described as "a boat 3 metres long and 1 to 2 metres wide, dark in the centre, and as bright as the full moon at both extremities". Hobana considers this to be the first known UFO sighting in Rumania.

Case 2. One afternoon in the summer of 1944, the Rumanian engineer Grigore Zmeuranu was at the Vega Petroleum Refinery, north of Ploesti. There had just been an attack on the installations by Allied bombers, and oil tanks were still burning fiercely. Suddenly the witness observed a yellow object with a white tail (the latter much shorter than an aircraft trail). At first only of pin-point size in the sky, the object approached, and he could see that it had very clear outlines "and seemed to be propelled by a vibratory movement". It was silent, and moving at several times the speed of an aircraft. After flying around over the burning refinery, it flew off again towards the north, whence it had come.

Case 3. The retired Professor Dumitru Coca of Oradea reported that one summer night in 1955 he and his wife were returning on foot from Fagaras. It was between midnight and 1 a.m. and the night very clear and calm. For some two or three minutes, at a height which he estimated at not more than 1,000 metres, they saw a vivid blue disc of an apparent diameter of 1½ metres. It was silent, edged with whitish-bluish flashes of light, and flying very fast, on a straight course but with lateral oscillations.

Case 4. On the afternoon of September 18, 1967, the engineer Veleriu Bitu, of Bucharest, was on the bridge of a ship sailing from Tulcea to Sfintu Gheorghe (along the lower Danube) when he saw a vivid bright disc-shaped object, stationary at an estimated height of some 200-300 metres, and some 500-600 metres from the vessel. He estimated its width at 6 or 8 metres, and it had a "tail" about the same length. The outer area of the disc was of a purplish-very red colour, and the colour of the "tail" was that of a butane flame. From the extremity of the tail emerged short bursts of flame. The object, silent throughout the sighting, remained stationary for four minutes, then began to rotate, moved sideways, stopped again, and then suddenly shot away, at fantastic speed, straight up into the sky and vanished in the clouds.

Case 5. The following report came from Ladislau Schmit of Petrila:

"On November 22, 1967, at about

half-an-hour after noon, I suddenly saw all my chickens in my backyard looking upwards and rushing madly towards me. Thinking that there must be a hawk overhead, I looked up too, and saw, very clearly indeed, a brilliant disc-shaped object of the colour of silver or aluminium. It had a small bulge on the under side, and a larger bulge on the upper side, which had several projections sticking out like stalks or antennae. The weather was fine and the sky cloudless. I pointed the object out to several people who were passing on the road."

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Although not as wildly exciting as some of the reports to which we are now getting accustomed, these accounts are not without interest in view of the fact that they emanate from one of the satellite countries of Eastern Europe.

Ion Hobana states specifically that there has been a great increase in sightings in Rumania in the years since 1965.

(Credit: Señor Ignacio Darnaude Rojas-Marcos of Sevilla.)

SOUTH AFRICA Cloud-like UFO

We read in *Die Volksblad* (Bloemfontein) of July 6, 1968, how "An unidentified flying object like a circular cloud in a cloudless sky, kept scores of people guessing in Bloemfontein and in several parts of the O.F.S. Many were obviously distressed and telephoned *Die Volksblad* to ascertain what it was.

"According to the S.A. Broadcasting Corporation the object was also seen at Thabazimbi, Vryburg and Stilfontein.

"The pilot of a S.A. Boeing airliner en route to Cape Town reported that he saw the object near Jagersfontein, but when *Die Volksblad* approached an official in the control tower at the J.B.M. Hertzog Airport, and asked for an explanation, he said that all such information was strictly confidential and that he was not permitted to divulge anything.

"Early that evening several Bloemfontein residents started phoning *Die Volksblad* to report 'the thing'. One woman even asked that someone be sent outside to investigate and to report back to her.

"According to residents who phoned from the suburbs of General De Wet, Hospital Par, Dan Pienaar and Noordhoek, the object was yellowish-white to orange in colour with a dark patch in the centre. It seemed to be 10 to 13ft. in diameter.

"Later that night people from Bethlehem, Heilbron and Abrahamskraal phoned and gave an identical description. They said that the object

approached from the south-west at a height of approximately 6,000ft. and travelled ever so slowly in a north-easterly direction, and sometimes it seemed to hover. It lingered in that area and was often visible for up to ten minutes.

"An official at the Lamont Hussey Observatory on Naval Hill in Bloemfontein told *Die Volksblad* that people as far afield as Brandfort and even a place 110 miles away from the city had phoned him. He said that he had not seen the object himself, and could therefore not give an explanation."

(Credit—and thanks for translation too—to Miss E. van Vloten.)

SPAIN

Humanoids in Majorca patio

The following interesting case has come to us from Antonio Ribera, who investigated a report made privately by the daughter of Count de Rivas. The incident took place in a patio of the Count's house "Bellagra", on the Island of Majorca (Mallorca), about 5 kilometres from Palma de Mallorca. The witness gave Señor Ribera the following testimony—

"That night (I don't recall the precise date, but it was in July 1967) I was the last one to go to bed. I was sleeping at my sister-in-law's. I remember that I read for a while before turning in, and when I began to feel sleepy I turned off all the lights in the house and went upstairs to my room. I should explain that my room looks out on a very large inside patio, and the window is not very far above the ground-level. I was asleep when, at 3.00 a.m., I was awakened by a most intensely bright light shining into my room. I was disturbed by this, for I remembered that I had turned them all off. Still half asleep, I could see that the light was coming from the inside patio. I went to the window, and was terrified to see, in front of it, two small figures, the size of children, which seemed to be talking together and had apparently climbed up via the embrasure.

"They seemed to have very big heads or to be wearing helmets and, another thing, they had enormous eyes.

"I didn't know what to do. I tried to awaken my sister-in-law, but she paid no heed to me. Then I tried to turn on the light, but it would not work. Then, I don't know why, I thought of going to look for some candles, and when I got back to my room the brightness and the little men had disappeared and the light functioned perfectly.

"I was extremely nervous as a result, stayed in bed for three days, and since then I have not dared to sleep alone.

"The only proof I have about the little men are the two little footprints that they left near the window, for