

involved in this shrouded case had calmly approached the area of activity alongside specially sanctioned official representatives of our state? Could a united attempt at diplomacy bring about a new meaningful dialogue with the expertly concealed power currently operating in the skies

above our nation and acting with impunity down here among its people; our people. To those looking down from above, our continuous fragmentary responses to their presence must resemble blind anarchy. It could be so different.

Who holds the official record of the truth? By PHILLIP CREIGHTON

In 1999 FSR covered the release of the French "COMETA" report, submitted by IHEDN, The Institute of Higher Studies for National Defence, a quasi-official French committee charged with assessing the validity of UFO reports and their defence implications. In his critique Gordon Creighton noted that there was no mention at all in this report of at least five decades of work produced by eminently qualified French ufologists, their inclusion being merited by both their academic credentials and considerable UFO research experience. Nor was there mention of the most complete historic record of French UFO investigation, held by Lumieres Dans La Nuit, a journal now almost in its fiftieth year. Creighton states "Unquestionably the French government, for half a century past, has known just as much about the realities of the "UFO problem" as the governments of the U.S.A., Russia and Britain have known, so my own particular bet will be that, having divulged nothing so far, the French Government isn't going to divulge anything in the future."

The announcement in March 2007 is that GEIPAN (now the name of the French service of UFO studies at the French space agency CNES, based in Toulouse) will put all of its original files on line, including statements from gendarmerie, photographs and videos, and also the result of its own investigations. There are now a total of 1,650 "official" files in France, including some 6,000 testimonies, and a volume of more than 100,000 pages, A4 format. A first batch of about 400 files has been released on the web site, covering the period of 1988-2005.

Stanton Friedman has pointed out, "Remember this is civilian data, not formerly classified defence department data as some may have mistakenly implied." Technically, some French gendarmerie data is classified under military jurisdiction. In the May issue of MUFON UFO news, a summary article suggests only a few of the recently released cases have been evaluated as significant (Trans-en-Provence; a case from January 1981 with strong ground trace evidence, L'Amaranthe and a few others described in a forthcoming book by GEIPAN).

Similarly we can regard the 1999 French COMETA report, and the anonymously authored British Condign report of 2006, as limited civilian enquiries into the UFO question. The good men of GEIPAN have provided an abundance of civilian material which should by rights be added to the canons of a central English language World UFO archive that could provide translated copies of this new data. Critically, no such body exists; most international ufologists cannot get ready



access to the content of these files because of the language barrier. We will endeavour to include translated salient reports from this new French bounty as they emerge in coming months.

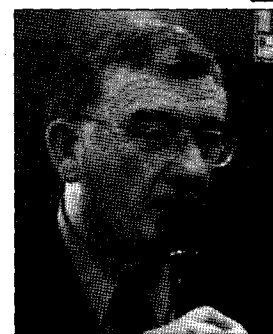
A special mention needs to be made on the work of French

ufologist Gildas Bourdais (left) on official UFO files and studies. He has written two important articles on the evolution of official recording of French UFO reports.

From GEPAN to SEPRA: Official UFO studies in France (pre-2002). The death and rebirth of French official UFO studies: (2004 - 2007)

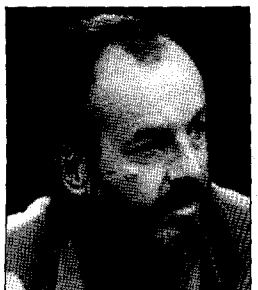
The percentage of unknowns and therefore UFOs is the most important contention decided by these French committees. Bourdais brings forth the following differing values for the percentage of French unknowns, i.e. the residual UFO reports left over for which no conventional explanation can be offered.

Gildas Bourdais quotes Jean-Jacques Velasco who was an assistant to the director of the 1970's GEPAN. Velasco compares, in his book, these French percentages with those found in the fifties in the USA, by the Batelle Memorial Institute for the Blue Book commission. The findings, based on the statistical study of 1,959 usable reports from the period 1952-1954, give a figure of 21.5% for official unknowns.



The mid-1970s French research group GEPAN, established by Claude Poher (left) in 1977, based on the analysis of 678 reports, set their percentage of unknown cases at 38%.

Jean-Jacques Velasco of GEIPAN (right) sets this



percentage of unknowns at 13.5% in 2007.

Yves Sillard, (below right) the president of the steering committee at GEIPAN, sets this figure at 14% in 2007.

GEIPAN itself now sets this unknown figure at twice this value, 28%. Bourdais comments that it looks like GEIPAN has re-evaluated their percentage of unknowns, very recently!

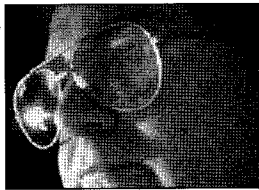
If one views Gordon's prediction of nothing to be divulged on the UFO problem by the French Government as a political statement, his opinion is upheld; for they are releasing civilian records full of dead-filed material that divulges nothing that we do not already know. Indeed, this new emphasis is playing on an old familiar civil service charade, that old chestnut the supposed marginal routine interest governments pay to UFO reports and their inferred low priority. It is a renewed effort to imply that there is nothing else happening but the empty echo of deserted halls and corridors following the "official cessation" of all military enquiries into UFOs worldwide in these enlightened times.



French Agency Releases UFO Files Don't Start Serving The Crepes Just Yet.

Bill Knell <http://www.ufoguy.com>

CNES and GEIPAN placed over thirty years worth of UFO investigation materials online as of Thursday, March 22, 2007. CNES is the official French Space Agency, and GEIPAN is an agency of the French National Police. CNES receives about fifty to one hundred UFO reports each year. The investigative process they use is convoluted and quite different from what most Americans would expect. GEIPAN apparently does most of the field work, prepares reports and passes everything on to CNES. Scientists and Engineers take a look at that data and prepare some sort of final report or appraisal of the matter in question.



Jacques Patenet, the aeronautical engineer who heads the office for the study of "non-identified aero-spatial phenomena", has said that "the data that we are releasing doesn't demonstrate the presence of extraterrestrial beings. But it doesn't demonstrate the impossibility of such a presence either. The questions remain open."

On the day of the announcement and press conference, CNES security was tight. While calling the release a world first, and glowing over his nation's openness about the UFO subject, Patenet failed to explain the need "to screen out uninvited ufologists" as an explanation for the added security. This hardly provides evidence for anyone to believe the agency's files represent a fair and unbiased look at the phenomenon. However, compared to the actions of their American counterpart, this is like allowing people to walk into French Intelligence Headquarters and browse through their files.

Every time American UFO Researchers ask their own space agency for any information about astronaut encounters or unusual phenomenon encountered by space probes, NASA clams up and sends out the debunkers en force. Although many Astronauts have been forthcoming and very honest about what they have seen in space, the space agency always slams the door on them. More than a few have been hit right between the eyes by NASA which claims that the Astronaut statements were the results of space sickness, fatigue or depression, but before we give the French too big a pat on the back, let's look at what's being released.

The CNES-GEIPAN reports only represent what people have reported to the French Government as UFO sightings and encounters. This is in no-way, shape or form a release of information that allows us to examine all that the French know about the phenomenon. Although the investigations have obviously been handled in a more competent and professional manner, this is really little more than a French version of the U.S. Project Blue Book Report.

We have seen these types of releases before over the past several decades. In each case, the information came from individual government agencies, not the government itself. I recall when everyone got all excited about the release of the KGB files on UFOs. I was unimpressed. That's because I received official Russian News Articles and private newsletters, published in countries once controlled by the Soviets for years before that release. These were sent to me by serious researchers in those countries who appreciated receiving materials from me.

Thanks to the efforts of Russian language students who donated their time, most of what I received was quickly

translated and contained a huge amount of information about the UFO phenomenon in Russia and Eastern Europe. Ironically, I could not find a single incident mentioned in those articles and newsletters that matched any in the KGB information releases. I felt then and now that the information I received from those individuals was as good as or better than most of what was released by the KGB.

In 1989 I had the opportunity to meet Marina Lavrentevna Vasliyevna Popovich at a press event in New York City. Marina was a pilot in the Soviet Air Force, holder of thirteen world aviation records and a former Test Cosmonaut. She spoke of personal UFO encounters and those she had heard about from other pilots. While the information was fascinating, it was not anywhere near the best that her government had to offer about UFOs and Extra-Terrestrial Life. UFO Researchers would be wise to view the CNES-GEIPAN information in the same manner.

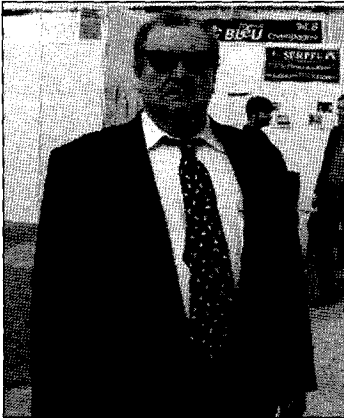
You can view the CNES-GEIPAN website at <http://www.cnes-geipan.fr/>

FSR Comment: Bill Knell brings out the key observation; that in his experience, civilian investigation files may be far more complete and many times better than the official resources we are offered. The best civilian researchers have detailed first hand case knowledge, a realistic historical perspective and the kind of regular direct witness contact which should put them in a commanding position. Especially when compared to the pronouncements of French academics employed as administrators on committees. The cultivated technocrats favoured by French bureaucracy who have enjoyed a rather limited direct contact with the workplace of our discipline; on site investigation. Would we trust the judgement of a detective who had never visited a crime scene? Would we trust the word of a detective whose area of qualified judgement was in an entirely different field to the one he was investigating? This is what ufologists and the public are being asked to believe when digesting official UFO related disclosures prepared by academic sub-committee.

The burning question we should ask on the historical compiling of these official archives in France is; did anyone attempt to talk to the witnesses or look for further case corroborative evidence at the locations where these UFO events took place? Or was case follow up a singularly rare act? Joel Mesenard's 50 year old journal "Lumieres dans la Nuit," is the better archive by a mile; it is almost exclusively constructed from local investigations and detailed case follow ups made by experienced teams of investigators. Whatever the purpose of these recent disclosures, it was not the kind intended to set the minds of any nation into gear or to generate the kind of serious reflection warranted on the UFO subject. It negates our desperate need for future preparedness on the UFO phenomenon when we reap the wind that has blown steadily stronger for the last 60 years.

One final fundamental question: What is a space agency doing trying to investigate UFO sightings in the first place; what has ufology got to do with space? The UFO activity to be investigated is almost exclusively sub-atmospheric? Surely it has more in common with strategic research into aviation detection?

The Thoughts of Joel Mesnard of LDLN on the GEIPAN archive.



The publication of some of GEIPAN's archives is certainly not what we might have expected! It is at best a non-event, and serious people regard it as a subtle piece of disinformation. Most of the cases released over the net have been known for a long time and the witness's names as well as the locations have been blanked out.

of mistakes, indicating that the person (or persons) responsible for this task really don't care about "our subject," as G.C. used to say.

For example there is absolutely nothing about the events of 31st March 1993, and the important sightings of 5th November 1990 are reduced to a very small number, which in no way reflect the nature of what happened that night.

Let me give an example of the "Scientific" objectivity of

GEIPAN. If we look at the case of Landrecies, 26th September 2006, LDLN 384, pg 20-25; two large spheres fly over several witnesses at very low altitude and a white deposit is found along their trajectory. Jacques Patenet, head of GEIPAN, says they were aeroplanes! Did you know we have ball-shaped aeroplanes here in France? If this is official "information" let us call it (disinformation), we have been used to this for many years. There are many useful things we could do to resist this disinformation, if ufologists co-ordinate their efforts.

FSR Comment: This brings us to the situation at home. There is a proposal that our British M.O.D. will release the archive of 7000 documents concerning UFO reports made to the Defence Intelligence Staff covering a period of 3 years. This will be select material released from 24 files containing UFO files from the mid-1970s until 2000 originating from the Defence Intelligence Staff branch DI55. It is alleged that service sources, including pilot and aircrew reports are contained within the body of this new material. It is noted that 3000 of the UFO reports were the data-base used by the Condon Report. FSR will publish future articles on any worthwhile observations to be construed from this deluge of official U.K. UFO documentation.

A new media awareness on aviation related UFO encounters?

The past twelve months have seen an emerging prominence in aviation-related UFO encounters in the media. The U.S. O'Hare airport incident involving a silver disc received large coverage thanks to the inspired work of Peter Davenport of NUFORC. Meanwhile in the U.K., Aurigny Airlines Captain Roy Bowyer spotted two huge unidentified objects off Alderney on Thursday 26 April. His descriptions of a mile-long, bright yellow object made headlines in the Sun and Daily Mail.

The Guernsey Press had broken the story and revealed there was convincing radar evidence that confirmed something was in the area at the time. In his initial interview Bowyer stated "I have visited Radar Control in Jersey, which picked up some interesting traces for 55 minutes." Captain Bowyer explained the sightings to a national UK audience when he appeared on Richard and Judy on June 25, 2007, and CNN. Show co-host Richard Madeley said, he had heard some extraordinary reports from other pilots in the past, and asked what had prompted Captain Bowyer to come forward. 'My experience is that commercial pilots do often speak out, so why have you decided to?' Captain Bowyer replied that the Guernsey Press had broken the story and



revealed there was convincing radar evidence that confirmed something was in the area at the time. He continued, "I have visited Radar Control in Jersey, which picked up some interesting traces for 55 minutes." Madeley asked the pilot whether what he saw could have been a star cloud, to which Captain Bowyer replied that it 'didn't look anything like a cloud'. 'In my view there was a strange object in a controlled airspace which should not have been there,' he added. Captain Bowyer also indicated that he had observed UFOs before. After thanking the captain for coming on to the show and sharing his 'fascinating' story, the show's other presenter Judy Finnigan, commented: 'I wish they were aliens' would just come out and show themselves.' Richard replied: "Well I'm glad they haven't."