

UFO ANSWERS SIGNALS OVER COLOMBIA

Gordon Creighton

WE are indebted to Sr. Sebastián Robiou Lamarche of Puerto Rico for a photostat copy of an article from the Colombian newspaper *El Tiempo*, published in Bogotá. (Date of article: February 18, 1977.) The article gives details of a number of recent UFO happenings in that South American republic, and, in particular, of an extraordinary sighting reported by an air-liner of the Avianca Company. This I have extracted and paraphrased as follows...

At 9.00 p.m. on January 21 of this year, the Avianca machine, registration no. HK-1273, had just taken off from Eldorado Airport at Bogotá, and was flying at a height of 20,000 feet. Suddenly the Captain, Gustavo Ferreira, caught sight of an extremely bright light heading straight towards them from the opposite direction. Simultaneously the radar operator, Jorge Jiménez, picked up on his screen an object travelling at 44,000 km.p.h., in other words forty times the speed of the Avianca jet. The size of the object on the screen was three times the size of a normal aircraft, and that it could be no aircraft was evident, since it was moving in a pronounced zig-zag fashion.

Other crew members of the jet liner, which was on a routine run, Flight No. 132, to Pereira, also saw the UFO. These were Pedro Tapias the co-pilot, the flight engineer, and the two stewardesses.

When he first saw the vivid light bearing down on them, the Captain said to the co-pilot: "Look, Pedro! Do you see that vivid light at — I should reckon — 25 miles or so from us and over Ibagué? What do you think it is?"

"I don't know, Skipper," replied Pedro Tapias. "It must be an aircraft", said the Captain. "Call the Bogotá Control Centre and ask them why they have put us on a head-on collision course with another plane. It's a dangerous thing to do!"

A few seconds later the radar man, Jimenez, had the Control Centre's reply: "Negative. I have no report of any traffic in that quarter, but our screen is picking up an object flying in zigzags at 44,000 km. per hour. What are you seeing?"

"We are seeing a very brilliant white light. At times it is stationary, and at other times it is moving," answered Jiménez.

Captain Ferreira instantly gave orders to put on the landing lights. As he explained later to the newspaper: "I put them on so that he would be able to see me, and although I was quite calm, I felt a weird sensation, of mingled surprise and bewilderment."

The night sky was totally clear and full of stars. Inside the cabin was in darkness; the five members of the crew sat with their eyes glued on the weird light.

Suddenly, its vivid white light changed to red. At once the Captain again switched one of the buttons on his control panel and turned off his landing lights, so that his machine was in total darkness. Then he switched on his landing lights once more, and the UFO at once replied by flashing green lights. This exchange of signals had taken some three minutes or so, after which the UFO moved away southwards and was rapidly out of sight.

The radar man shouted: "Captain, I've lost it! It did a 90° turn at a fantastic speed!" And he duly noted the strange events of this night in his log-book.

Captain Gustavo Ferreira told the newspaper that he had been flying for more than twenty years, and had never before believed in the existence of UFOs. "But I saw one during the night of Friday, January 21, and now I am certain that they exist. No longer is it possible for me to say that they are "secret nuclear weapons of a foreign power," or "the chariot of Elijah mentioned in the Bible."

The article in *El Tiempo* then proceeded to discuss other recent Colombian sightings, adding that these had been so numerous and so persistent over the last two months or so that the control tower and radar personnel at Eldorado Airport decided on February 17 that they would break their silence and open up on the subject. They said that all cases had hitherto been kept secret "...for fear of being thought to be crazy if they revealed them."

Jorge Jimenez, the radar man of the Avianca jet, was also interviewed at the Eldorado Radar Centre. He firmly ruled out all possibility that what they had seen might have been a nuclear weapon "...since those are teleguided, so that their flight is always in a straight line."

Sr. Jaime Olarte, air traffic controller at Eldorado, pointed out that Venus can never be taken for a UFO because this planet, bright as it is, maintains a definite position and a definite course through the sky. And Controller Octavio Lemos remarked confidently: "The facts of the situation are already so evident that it is clear the extra-terrestrial beings are far in advance of us. Any day now, they'll be landing right here on the Eldorado runway."

The paper went on to mention, as a point of some curiosity, that Controller Octavio Lemos is the only one of the Tower's personnel who has had a daylight sighting of a UFO. All the other sightings around Bogota in recent months have always been at night and to the west of the Eldorado Airport.

A year and a half previously, Octavio Lemos saw four objects flying in line ahead, at an unheard-of

speed, from south to north, at midday. He said: "They looked like pearls in the sea, and were right overhead, over the Control Tower. They were out of sight in a matter of seconds."

Another case described in the paper happened during the night of Tuesday, February 15, when Eduardo Russi, the Head of the Control Tower personnel, and Controller Jaime Olarte had separate sightings of a UFO which was over Bogotá for three hours.

Jaime Olarte was in the Control Tower and, using a powerful pair of binoculars, was carrying out a routine surveillance, through the window of the Control Room. "Suddenly I found myself absolutely glued to the glass of the window. An extremely bright object held me there, transfixed. I have no doubt whatever that it was a UFO. Its entire flight course was straight from west to east. I had no report of any airborne traffic at the time."

Eduardo Russi's sighting of the same object happened when he was on his way home to his house in the suburb of Normandia after paying a visit to friends. "I saw it as I was driving along the Eldorado motorway. When you work in aviation, you are always watching the sky." He said the UFO was in the direction of La Mesa. It was of a vivid brightness, and its size kept increasing and decreasing very rapidly.

Jaime Olarte was able to confirm this when they met next day, as he had had a clear view of the direction and fashion in which the object was travelling. This explains the apparent change in the size of the object which had been noted by the chief of the Control Tower.

Another Control Tower operator who has had many UFO sightings is Danilo Zambrano. He says that only last week he saw three in quick succession, and all in the same sector of the sky.

COSMIC VOYEURS - 19th and 20th CENTURY STYLE

John Brent Musgrave

THE UFO experience is neither new nor unique. Whether this experience is due to extraterrestrials, ultraterrestrials, the human psyche or what have you, it's been part of the human condition for some time. I've recently come across two episodes, one from the 19th century, and one which occurred not long ago, which appear at first glance to be variations on the same basic theme and which may give some clue to understanding one class of UFO sightings. Perhaps, as some believe, all occupants associated with UFOs are coming here from some equivalent of Zeta Reticulae. But it seems to me that what I refer to as the *cosmic voyeurs* are cases which seem least like physical visitors from nearby star systems, and most like ultraterrestrials, or at least involve an interplay of the human psyche. Typically, in this kind of experience a person awakes from sleep soon to discover a figure or form standing nearby either in the house or at the window. Quite frequently at about the same time a light or UFO is seen in the vicinity, either by the person being "observed" (or who is having something displayed), or by an independent witness.

Such an episode took place in a small farming community in central Alberta during the morning of August 8, 1961, and was collected by Bill Holt, Investigations Chairman for the Edmonton UFO Society. The principle witness was awakened from his sleep about 3.30 a.m. It was already approaching dawn, and he could clearly make out the two men who were standing near him, one at the foot, the other at the head of the bed. He struggled to get up but felt paralyzed and could only wonder at what was going on in front of him. Strangely, he felt

content and fearless as the two figures spoke to each other and then to him. The two men were small, 4 or 5 feet tall at the most, and were smartly dressed in a 2-piece suit of soft, dark-coloured cloth-like material with a belt around the middle. Each had a face helmet or glass bubble pushed back behind his head. The man at the head of the bed appeared older and had a receding hair line. Both were "beautifully proportioned." Neither walked, but floated through the air. Both figures spoke with the man for what seemed a minute, and intimated to him that they would come back and see him again. All at once, one of the visitors said to the other, "I think he's waking up on us, we'd better go." The two figures then just disappeared in front of the astonished man. As this happened a hissing, like air coming out of a pipe, could be heard.

As the two figures disappeared, the man no longer was frozen to the bed. He burst up, landed on the floor, got up and rushed out to the back of the house which faces south. He saw nothing out of the ordinary, and returned to find his wife awake. She too had been awakened by the two figures, and she too felt paralyzed as she could do nothing but look on at the cosmic visitors.

Unknown to both of them, a neighbour directly to the east was awake at the same time and looked out of his window and observed a bluish brilliant globe in front of their house. The globe appeared to be at least 25 feet in diameter, and slowly lifted off the ground and gradually accelerated to the north. Like the visitors, it just suddenly disappeared before it was even a quarter of a mile away.

The second case also involves a night visitor stand-