

MERSEYSIDE UFO Bulletin

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EDITORIAL

Aims and Policy

This new Bulletin is an informal publication which aims to stimulate local interest in the subject of unidentified flying objects and related phenomena.

In order to do this effectively we will need to exchange ideas and information with ufologists in other parts of Britain and in other countries. We will seek to do this by exchanging copies of this Bulletin for similar publications and by engaging in correspondence. Local readers are invited to assist by supplying information on significant local UFO reports and by offering to help the editors in the production of this Bulletin.

We will deal with all aspects of the subject, but in as objective a manner as is possible.

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DOUBTS ABOUT CONDON

There has been much debate and speculation recently concerning the motives and methods of the Condon Committee in its investigation of the UFO problem.

A year ago Mr Charles Bowen, Editor of Flying Saucer Review, expressed the suspicion that the U.S. Air Force may have set up the Committee in order to "play for time by side-stepping an awkward ~~xi~~ situation." (1)

The "awkward situation" arose as a result of a sharp increase in the quantity and quality of UFO reports, particularly in the U.S.A., since 1964. The U.S. Air Force and the scientific pundits gave out the usual explanations and reassurances, which had always been effective during previous waves of UFO reports. But this time the pressure of spectacular and highly-detailed reports was to prove too great.

On the night of August 2nd-3rd, 1965, thousands of Americans reported seeing formations of brightly-coloured lights zipping back and forth in the skies. In the midst of the resulting sensation the U.S. Air Force reached hurriedly for an explanation and made a mistake which was to produce the opposite effect to the one they desired. They stated that what had been seen were merely bright stars in the constellation Orion. Newsmen checked this statement with professional astronomers, who promptly informed them that at the time of the sightings the constellation Orion was visible only from the other side of the world.

This faux pas attracted much attention and a great credibility gap began to open between government and governed on the subject of UFOs. These events of 1965 have been summarised by Edwards (2) and Fuller's account of his investigations of sightings in autumn, 1965, in New England (3) gives a good idea of the quality of the reports, public interest in them and the reactions of the Air Force at that time.

The flying saucer flap which proved to be the last straw for the Air Force was the one that included the famous Michigan landing reports of March, 1966. In the atmosphere of near-hysteria generated by these sightings, Air Force UFO Consultant Dr J. Allen Hynek's very tentative "swamp gas" explanation was distorted by the press and caused such a furore that a hearing on UFOs was conducted by the House Committee on Armed Services. Hynek appeared before the Committee, which urged the Air Force to give continued attention to the subject. Hynek later made his views on the subject clear in a memorable magazine article (4), which revealed to the world's UFO enthusiasts that he was not the arch-debunker of flying saucers that they had thought him to be.

As a result of public pressure and expert advice, the Air Force awarded a contract (in October, 1966) to the University of Colorado to conduct a thorough scientific investigation of the UFO problem, under the chairmanship of Dr Edward Condon. This group is now popularly known as the "Condon Committee," or "Colorado Project." This event was greeted with acclaim by most "serious" ufologists, apart from some whose experiences had convinced them that the problem was inherently insoluble by conventional scientific methods.

Last summer, the Condon Committee's Co-ordinator, Mr Robert J. Low, visited Britain and Europe and consulted various amateur enthusiasts and government officials concerned with the investigation of UFO reports. In August, Low attended an informal, private meeting of British ufologists and those present gained various impressions. Most of those present were interested in the technical aspects and some of them had been corresponding with the Committee, mainly on the subject of the coding and computer programming of UFO reports.

Others, notably Dr J. Cleary-Baker (5) expressed misgivings as to the ultimate outcome of the investigations, whilst accepting that the Committee's scientists were sincere in their efforts to unravel the mystery. In other words, they feared - despite emphatic reassurances to the contrary - that the Committee might be subject to Air Force interference. In the light of past experience, it was

suggested that the U.S. Air Force, other government agencies, or conservative-minded members of the American Academy of Sciences(6) might try to amend their report in the case of its findings being encouraging to those who believe that the subject of UFOs is important and deserving of continued investigation and research by professional scientists.

Mr Low was disturbingly vague about certain aspects of the investigation. When asked what the Committee's psychologists were doing, his reply suggested that they were still sitting around wondering where to begin. Also, members of the Committee were chosen only from among those who had no previous interest in UFOs. Now, after twenty years of flying saucers the literature on the subject is very extensive and Low gave the impression that his colleagues were still only scratching the surface of it.

It seems that Low also gave an unfavourable impression to some of our continental colleagues. In reviewing Aimé Michel's postscript to the fourth edition of his work, Mystérieux Objets Célestes, Gordon Creighton writes: "While acknowledging the high attainments of the chairman of the Condon Committee, M. Michel nonetheless voices concern at the seeming absence of Condon investigators when it comes to on-the-spot field work, and he makes a sharp attack on one member by name - Mr Robert Low - who, so he says, gave French delegates at the Prague Astronomical Congress last August the impression that he had never read Flying Saucer Review, had never heard of the AVB or Valensole cases, and thought Socorro was unique."(7)

Complaints about the Committee's half-hearted approach to field work are much in evidence at present among American ufologists, especially in connection with the Alamoso case (discussed elsewhere in this issue). The big American UFO organisation, NICAP, which has kept in close touch with members of the Committee, complained last autumn of "negative public statements about UFOs," made by Dr Condon(8). Another source informs us that Dr Condon has privately hinted that he is not conducting the investigation, but that the investigation is being conducted on his behalf by the U.S. Air Force.

Whether the announcement last November of the setting up of a permanent UFO investigation in the Soviet Union will make any detectable difference to the real or apparent state of official UFO research in the U.S.A. remains to be seen. However, it seems that the politics of ufology are even more complex and interesting than the UFOs themselves. Those who have faith in the Condon Committee will probably regard the current misgivings as merely the effect of ufologists insuring themselves against a negative report. If their suspicions prove to be well-founded they will win new respect from all those who take an interest in the subject. On the other hand, if the Committee's report is encouraging and paves the way for the recognition of ufology as a serious field of scientific enquiry, then their carpings will be forgotten in the general jubilation. The pessimist is never disappointed, but sometimes pleasantly surprised. Let us hope for a pleasant surprise.

Notes and References

1. Flying Saucer Review, Vol.13, No.1.
2. EDWARDS, FRANK Flying Saucers - Serious Business. Lyle Stuart, New York.
3. FULLER, JOHN.G. Incident at Exeter. G.P.Putnam's Sons, New York.
4. HYNK, J.ALLEN Are Flying Saucers Real? Saturday Evening Post, December 17th, 1966
5. CLEARY-BAKER, J. Editorial BUFORA Journal, Vol.2, No.2.
6. The report of the Condon Committee will be studied by the American Academy of Sciences before publication.
7. Flying Saucer Review, Vol.14, No.1.
8. The UFO Investigator, October 1967 (published by NICAP, 1536 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington D.C., 20036, U.S.A.)

THE ALAMOSA CASE

A number of accounts of this event have been published. We reprint below an AP report from an American newspaper, dated October 6th, 1967. (1)

ALAMOSA, Colo. - (AP) - A 3 year old Appaloosa horse was found dead under very mysterious circumstances in a remote area of Southern Colorado's San Luis Valley. Mr and Mrs Berle Lewis, owners of the horse, believe that a flying saucer caused the death of the horse. "I discounted evrything else after it -- the carcass -- came up radioactive," said Lewis, a carpenter in Alamosa, an area where UFO sightings have been as numerous as the population recently. Sheriff Ben Phillips said he has not looked at the site of the body of the horse, but figures the horse was killed by lightning. Dr Edward Condon, head of the Air Force-sponsored UFO study at the University of Colorado, said the story sounded "pretty far-fetched." He said there were no immediate plans to send a team to investigate.

Lewis discounted these opinions. "Lightning don't do things like that," he declared. "That sure as hell don't boil all the meat off the bones and take it away and never leave a speck," he said. Lewis reported the carcass was found September 10, on the remotely located Harry King Ranch 20 miles notheast of here. Every trace of flesh was gone from the shoulders up. The rest was as perfect as the day it was killed, he said, but the bones of the neck and head were bleached. Two weeks later, a Forest Service Employee checked the area with a gieger counter and recorded extremely high radioactive readings, Lewis said. Some black material like auto exhaust was found near the scene and also showed high radioactive readings, he said, explaining the material was taken from irregularly-shaped spots about 12 to 13 inches in diameter. There were about 15 of them in a 500-square yard area about 100 yards from the carcass, Lewis added.

He said the death could have been caused by something else --perhaps a secret, private laboratory experiment--but he doubted it. Flying saucers are a more distinct possibility because, Lewis said, "we see something--I won't say what it is--every night." He said, "Any night you want to check for the objects you see something besides airplanes." He said the sightings have been more frequent the past six weeks although he and his wife have spotted strange flying objects for four years. Lately, he said, the objects have been like pulsating green and white beacon lights. They pulsate, stop, move on, stop again, then go out, he said. Others are just straight moving lights. The Lewises said strange jet-plane-like objects, flying extremely low and extremely fast, have been seen recently in the foothills area where their horse was found dead.

Various extra details appear in other press reports of the incident.

Investigations have been carried out by the Denver sub-committee of NICAP. Their theory is that the animal died of disease. We understand that this theory has been severely criticised by APRO and other UFO organisations. There is also widespread dissatisfaction at Dr Condon's attitude to the case. We have been informed that strong evidence has been produced to prove that NICAP's infection theory is confused and incorrect. At present we do not have the details of this evidence, but whatever the truth may be this is obviously a complex and interesting case and we hope to publish further details in future, or to indicate other publications which discuss these details. Meanwhile, attention is drawn to an interesting account published in a recent issue of Phénomènes Spatiaux.

(2)

Notes

1. Seattle Post-Intelligencer, October 6th, 1967. Credit- UAPRO.
2. "Snippy" ou le Mystère Demystifié, Phénomènes Spatiaux, No.14, December 1967.

LOCAL UFO REPORTS

During the great flap of last autumn, Merseyside and the North West had its fair share of UFO reports. These reports continued from October through to January. We summarise here some of these reports, taken from local newspapers.

Early reports spoke of strange noises and lights. A letter from Mr D.J.Furlong, of Brookdale Road, Liverpool 15, published in a Liverpool paper on October 23rd, (1) told of "an unearthly noise coming from the direction of the sky which appears to resemble a high-pitched whistling sound and which in some instances is accompanied by a bleeping noise in the nature of some sort of signal. It gives the impression of something passing overhead as the noise seems to start in the distance, pass overhead and then fade as though going away. It is definitely not a train or an aeroplane as these are quite common in my area and sound nothing like the noise we have heard." The writer then went on to mention that others had heard the strange sounds and this was confirmed by other letters and reports in the local press.

In the early morning of October 24th, there was an interesting sighting at HUYTON. This was the same night as the famous Okehampton "flying cross" sighting. Mrs Joyce Hennesey, of 64 Essex Road, Huyton, said she was awakened by an intermittent whining sound at about 3 a.m. and saw an eerie glow over the rooftops. Her two youngest children, Michael, aged four and Andrea, aged nine, also saw the glow.

Mrs Hennesey said: "The whining noise was so loud that it awoke me and my two children who were sleeping in the front bedroom. Looking out I saw what I can only describe as a glow above the rooftops in the distance. By this time the noise had stopped and the glow was only stationary for a second or two before it vanished." (2)

On October 21st there had been a sighting at Inglesey at approximately 8.15 p.m. Mrs E.S.Dooney, of 13 Tanybryn, Holyhead, and her sister, Mrs Sygal, were on the road between Valley and Holyhead when they saw a large, star-shaped object in the sky. It was stationary for a short while, then disappeared out to sea at tremendous speed. The last plane to fly from nearby Valley R.A.F. station that night did so at 7.10 p.m. (2)

It is interesting to compare the Huyton report with a similar sighting, preceded by persistent reports of strange noises, at Runcorn last July (3).

More reports appeared in the press on October 26th (4). Unfortunately it is not entirely clear from the newspaper report whether the following few reports refer to the night of October 24th-25th, or 25th-26th.

Mr James Speirs, of 22 Monkswell Drive, WAVERTREE, LIVERPOOL, was awakened shortly after 2.30 a.m. by a noise which he said was impossible to identify. "At one stage it sounded like an express train rushing through a tunnel," he said. "Then it changed to a piercing, high-pitched oscillating sound." Mr Speirs looked out of his bedroom window, but could see nothing. The noise faded away after about 10 minutes.

Mr Ken Rose, of 45 Durning Road, WAVERTREE, said that he and his wife heard a strange whining noise in the early hours. He said that his wife awakened him at 2.30 a.m. to listen to the noise. "I went to the window, but could see nothing," he said. "The whining continued for about 40 seconds. There was no traffic anywhere in sight, and I am convinced that it did not come from the railway at Edge Hill. I have never heard anything like it in my life before."

There were a number of sightings on the night of October 25th-26th. Shortly after 7 p.m. a "mystery object was seen twice at HUYTON and at MOSSLEY HILL, FAZAKERLEY, KIRKBY and at WALLASEY, where it was seen heading out towards North Wales. An hour later there were reports of a cluster of four or five lights--sometimes more--forming and reforming in different shapes. They were seen in several parts of Liverpool. By way of explanation, a spokesman at Preston said that between 7 p.m. and 8.30 p.m. four R.A.F. planes ~~WERE~~ were flying in formation over and around the Isle of Man

on a photo-flash exercise.

There were sightings at WARRINGTON on October 25th, 26th and 27th. The sighting on the 26th was made by 16-years-old Ray Spencer, of 29 Yardley Avenue, WARRINGTON, at 6.30 a.m. He said: "I looked through the bedroom window which faces north east, and saw a light in the sky. It was moving in irregular jerks and it definitely wasn't a star. It is hard to judge, but it appeared to be a long way away and was just like a round ball. After about a minute it disappeared at a rapid speed." (4)

The other WARRINGTON sightings were made by John Goodman, aged 19, of 100 London Road, APPLETON, and his girl friend. On the night of October 25th, his girl friend pointed out a UFO and he observed it through a telescope. On the night of October 27th, they were at APPLETON Reservoir looking towards the west when they saw lights in the sky, one red and the other white. Goodman said: "They were close together and directly in front of us. The object travelled swiftly towards Fiddler's Ferry at a height of about 100 feet, then stopped. Without turning round--the lights remained in the same position--it reversed and travelled backwards in a straight line." Mr Goodman estimated that the object travelled about five miles before it disappeared from view behind a wood. (5)

The night of October 26th-27th, proved fairly hectic on Merseyside, especially for the police, and further developments took place in the story of the mysterious whining noises at WAVERTREE.

The police sent out special search parties to Croxteth Hall Lane and NORRIS GREEN after objects were reported to have been seen falling from the sky. These investigations failed to solve the mystery, which began at about 11.30 p.m. (October 26th) when a motorist, Mr Peter Murphy, a 35-years-old garage manager, of 12 Willow Avenue, Kirkby, called at the Dog and Gun police station. Mr Murphy told the police that while driving along Croxteth Hall Lane he had seen a black, shining object flash across his windscreen at 11.25 p.m. The object disappeared into a nearby field. Mr Murphy at first believed that hooligans had been throwing something at his car.

Constable David Jackson immediately went with Mr Murphy to the area and searched the field without finding anything. However, while they were there both Mr Murphy and Constable Jackson saw an object in the sky over NORRIS GREEN. They described it as being the size of a very large plate, shaped like a star, with a very bright, bluish-white light. The two men estimated that the object hovered at an altitude of about 400 feet. It then fell and vanished. A search was made of the NORRIS GREEN area, but nothing was found. A short time later the two men again saw what appeared to be the same object over the East Lancashire Road. It was travelling very fast away from them when it disappeared.

In the early hours of October 27th, Mr William Sharples, of 41 Garmoyle Road, WAVERTREE, tape recorded the famous mystery noise. Mr Sharples said that he had heard the mystery noise several times and decided to see if he could record it. He said: "I set the alarm clock and it awoke us at 2.25 a.m. The noise was there and appeared to be overhead. I opened the window, put the microphone there and recorded the sound for about 20 seconds."

The Liverpool Echo borrowed Mr Sharples' tape recorder and ran the tape through several times. They reported: "For about 20 seconds it gave out a high-pitched, continuous tone, as several people who telephoned the Echo today described it."

That same morning the famous "flying cross" was reported from Cheshire and Derbyshire. At 4.15 a.m. it was seen by two policemen at STALYBRIDGE. Fifteen minutes later, it was seen by a policeman at MATTRAM-IN-LONGDENDALE who reported the object to be moving from side to side over GLOSSOP. The object then began an up and down movement and finally remained stationary for about 5 minutes. Police headquarters at Chester were informed of the sighting and three officers were sent out by car to verify the report. The object disappeared at 5.30 a.m. into misty cloud. Chester police sent a report of the incident to the Ministry of Defence. ~~That~~ At about 3.20 a.m. that morning a butcher, Mr George

Winward, saw the object through a telescope and binoculars at WINSFORD. He described it as an elongated, glowing star-like object. The previous morning, at 4.30 a.m., a "flying cross" was seen by a housewife at CHESTER.(6)

A UFO was seen over BROMBOROUGH, on October 26th. A "silver ball" was spotted by Mr Mark Comerford, of 16 Bowness Avenue, BROMBOROUGH, while he was waiting at a bus stop near his home at 8.10 a.m. The ball was heading for an aircraft. "It missed it at the last moment," he said.(7)

One of the numerous sightings of the early morning of October 27th, came from BACUP, Lancashire. It was to have a curious sequel. Constable Brian Earnshaw was on duty at the police station in BACUP. He said that he heard crackling noises over the station's radio. He went outside to examine the aerial, at 4.10 a.m., and he said that he saw a cigar-shaped UFO hovering 250 feet above the station. In his report to police headquarters he said: "It was approximately 50 feet long and 10 feet in diameter. There were portholes along the side, but no visible signs of propulsion. The ship appeared to be metallic and gave off a bright glow. There was a low whirring sound coming from it." Two other policemen, Colin Donahoe and Malcolm Reader, also said that they watched the object for several minutes. It then rose vertically and disappeared.(8)

This report went through the "usual channels" and was investigated by County police headquarters at Preston. The Ministry of Defence also made enquiries. Then, on January 15th, (1968) a police spokesman said that the incident was "a hoax between colleagues that went wrong." But when approached by the press, one of the constables (not named) said: "All three of us stand by the report. We definitely saw the object we described, but I can make no comment about the incident."(9)

After the reports of October, there was apparently a lull in the North West, until the night of November 6th-7th, when UFOs were reported from WIGAN, Lancashire, and WINSFORD, BARNSTON and WEST KIRBY, Cheshire. On the evening of November 6th, hundreds of supporters at WIGAN's Springfield Park football ground watched a strip of golden light hovering overhead for six minutes, vanishing occasionally and reappearing. As the final whistle blew, the object flew away over Kitt Green. At 4.30 a.m. on the morning of November 7th, Mrs Mabel Allen, of 35 Border Road, BARNSTON, Wirral, saw a UFO from her bedroom window. She reported: "Something woke me up, and then I heard a terrific roaring noise. I thought it was a plane, but when it didn't go away, I got out of bed and looked at the sky. There I saw a great big light, stationary and high up. With the naked eye it could have seemed like a blurred cross."

Mrs Allen said she woke her husband and he got his binoculars and they watched the object, which was stationary for five to ten minutes.

Mrs Allen said: "Through the binoculars it did appear to be a saucer-shaped object with lights all round it. It must have been enormous. My husband rang the police, but they said they had seen nothing. Mrs Allen added: "We are quite rational people. This was definitely something unusual. The noise of the powerful engine or whatever it was, was tremendous." The object finally "swiftly went higher until it vanished straight upwards and the noise died away."

That same morning a postman, Mr Harold Holmes, of 5 Ridley Grove, West Kirby, Wirral, was cycling to work at about 5.35 a.m. along a cinder path between WEST KIRBY and HOYLAK, when he saw a bright red object in the sky. He said: "It was saucer-shaped with a cup-like shape at the back of it. I stopped my bike and watched it for about two minutes. There was not a breath of wind and the object made no noise. It was not very high and eventually just faded away."(10) The UFO seen at WINSFORD at 1.30 that morning was said to have resembled an "elongated star."

One evening in November, "a few days" before November 14th, Mrs L.C. Ellis, of 42 Wolverham Road, ELLESMERE PORT, reported seeing a UFO at about 11.20 p.m. She looked out of her

bedroom window and saw a small, round object hovering about 200 feet in the air approximately 50 yards away. Mrs Ellis said the object seemed as large as a plate and very colourful. She said she observed it until 1.30 a.m. the next day, when all the object's lights went out and as it moved a final light faded away.(11)

On December 28th, Miss Judith Craine, aged 18, of 36 Dukesway, UPTON-BY-CHESTER, was returning home from work with her friend, Mrs Pat Perry, aged 19, when they saw strange lights hovering over a house in Weston Grove, UPTON. The time was about 7 p.m. The girls ran across the road to get a closer look and the object, making a strange throbbing noise, appeared to rise and move off slowly in the direction of the Chester by-pass.

Judith said: "I began to run after it, trying to get a closer look, but when I had reached the corner of St. James' Avenue, it suddenly shot off at a tremendous speed. The light we noticed first was a very bright orange, but as the thing began to rise it seemed to turn and there were other green and orange lights. Although it was dark and I couldn't make out any exact shape, it was easy to tell from the noise--like a ship's engine --and the way it moved, that it was not a plane."

Pat, of 34 Queen's Crescent, UPTON, said: "I was scared out of my wits. When Judith ran after the object my legs wouldn't move. I just stood rooted to the spot."

After the first sighting the girls continued on their way home, when they saw another set of lights. "This time," said Pat, "whatever it was seemed to stop, turn round in its own circumference and shoot off in another direction." (12)

One of the latest local UFO sightings was a report from WIGAN on January 11th. Mr Edwin Clayton, his wife and his mother-in-law, watched the object from the backyard of their home at 19 Hazel Avenue, Beech Hill, WIGAN. Edwin said: "It was a lovely night and I just looked up at the stars. Then I saw much lower a round, orange coloured object hovering over the railway line near the Tupperware factory. I got a pair of binoculars and I could see it quite close. It was spinning and had a green fringe of light round the outside. I shouted to my wife Rita and she saw it too."

Edwin first saw the object at 9.30 p.m. and when his mother-in-law Mrs Mary Robinson arrived home at 10.50 it was still there. Mrs Robinson said: "I could see it quite plainly although Edwin said it had moved away to the right since he saw it first."

Edwin said that he would have called the police if he had known that it was going to remain in view for so long. He reported it to the police later.(13)

References

1. Liverpool Daily Post, 23/10/67.
2. Liverpool Daily Post, 25/10/67; Liverpool Echo, 25/10/67.
3. Runcorn Weekly News, 6/7/67; Flying Saucer Review, Vol.13, No. 5; MUFORG Bulletin, August, 1967.
4. Liverpool Echo, 26/10/67.
5. Liverpool Echo, 28/10/67.
6. Liverpool Echo, 27/10/67.
7. Bebington News & Advertiser, 28/10/67.
8. Daily Express, 28/10/67.
9. Daily Mail, 16/1/68.
10. Liverpool Echo, 7/11/67.
11. Ellesmere Port Pioneer, 14/12/67.
12. Liverpool Echo, 29/12/67; Liverpool Daily Post, 29/12/67.
13. Liverpool Echo, 12/1/68.

LOCO HOAX

Mr Carroll Wayne Watts, a farmer, aged 29, of Loco, Texas, told stories about trips into space with "little grey men" from the planet Mars. He had been telling these stories for months but, on February 26th he confessed that it was all a hoax.

He said that the tale had been implanted under hypnosis in four sessions with an artist who provided him with pictures with which to back up the stories. He made his confession after failing a lie-detector test. He said that the matter got completely out of hand and he couldn't stop repeating the story.

He said that the artist, whose identity has not been disclosed, wanted to sell the story, together with the fake pictures, to a national magazine.

(Sources: Liverpool Echo, 26/2/68; Liverpool Daily Post, 27/2/68; Daily Telegraph, 27/2/68)

UNSETTLED UFOLOGISTS

There are many obstacles to the organised quest for the solution to the UFO mystery. For amateurs the more obvious ones are ridicule and the embarrassing attentions of crackpots and dear old ladies. The professional ufologist soon finds that he has to contend with the machinations of "tightly knit groups of politically motivated men," as our Prime Minister would put it.

In the amateur field the latest news is of the collapse of the promising American UFO organisation, UAPRO (Unidentified Aerial Phenomena Research Organisation), and a serious quarrel in Britain's major UFO group, BUFORA (British Unidentified Flying Objects Research Association).

Mr Gary R. Lesley, Director of UAPRO (not to be confused with APRO), sent out a circular, dated January 9th, stating that he had resigned due to "financial reasons and repeated disagreements with the International Staff members." As a result of this, UAPRO is now defunct, but Mr Lesley intends to continue trading UFO information with his correspondents.

In Britain, a sub-committee has been set up to "investigate" the BUFORA National Council. It seems that some people are concerned about the suitability of certain members to serve on the Council. The trouble is that some prominent BUFORA members and some of the affiliated local groups have proved to be a great embarrassment to some of the more serious BUFORA officials in their attempts to have their organisation taken seriously by scientists and government officials interested in UFOs. This question was raised in MUFCB Bulletin last year, but some BUFORA officials intimated that a willingness to "suffer fools gladly" was desirable in order to obtain the necessary finance and maintain the sources of basic information (i.e. sighting reports) to carry out serious research work. However, it now seems that patience with the odd antics and attitudes of some of the more flamboyant members has begun to wear a bit thin. The basic reason for the present row is thus fairly simple, but there are the inevitable odd undercurrents.

It is too early to predict what effects the present row will have on the work of BUFORA and its affiliates, but any disruptive effects will probably be counterbalanced by the growing influence of the university UFO groups, led by Cambridge and Imperial College, London.

In the professional sector, disturbing news about the Condon investigation continues to filter through the UFO grapevine, and the Russians have been fighting it out in the pages of Pravda.

Two members of Condon's team have--we hear--been sacked by Robert J. Low for "incompetence." It seems they made the mistake of making it plain that they take the UFO problem seriously. Thus the prognosis on the Condon Report is, at present, somewhat unfavourable.

When the Russians set up a military investigation and announced it last November, it was thought that this news would force the Americans to take the subject more seriously. However, the Soviet investigation has recently been condemned by the Civilian Academy of Sciences as "sensational and anti-scientific."

The situation thus seems to be, as Charles Bowen put it in the latest issue of Flying Saucer Review: "The prospect before us is that, as always, we will have to 'go it alone'".

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