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1966 Good Year For UFO Reports

To the Editor of The Post-Standard:

The year 1966 has drawn to a close and summing up UFO activity in total — in the words of the song — "it was a very good year." Since 1964, and 1965 in particular, unconventional aerial objects (—or UAO; this is a term coined by the Aerial Phenomena Research Organization of Tucson, Ariz., best known as APRO, and the term has the same significance as "UFO") have been observed in increasing numbers and for longer periods of time.

As it stands now, important, well-witnessed sightings are being made every month, and there is no longer a lengthy "sleeping" period between the noteworthy reports. Since the famous March, 1966 Michigan sightings, virtually every national magazine has printed something on UFO's.

And, like the earlier part of last year, the months of September, October and November have contributed significant items to the UFO field. September, for example, presented a frightened pilot in Sebring, Florida, with a cone-shaped UFO that paced his plane for several minutes, overcoming every attempt he made to escape it. He was obviously involved with a very noisy object, as it made sounds resembling rubber tires screeching on a rainy road.

Also on Sept. 21, eight members of the Royal Canadian Air Force and two fishermen observed a round, shiny UFO that hovered close to the ground and then shot upward at a tremendous speed; these witnesses were located in two different areas, 45 miles apart on the Canadian province of Prince Edward Island.

We also find during last month, that the U.S. Air Force revised its infamous Air Force Regulation 200-2 (regarding UFO sightings and reports), and assigned a new number to it: 80-17.

October was no less as interesting. On the 19th, Dr. James E. McDonald, a University of Arizona physicist, spoke before the Washington Chapter of the American Meteorological Society and harshly criticized the Air Force's handling of the UFO problem.

On Oct. 5, he had broken a story at his own campus about a 1953 report by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) that persuaded the Air Force to "debunk" UFO's for national security reasons, despite the fact that the Air Force had repeatedly asserted that UFO's were not a danger. The CIA report contained many other interesting provisions and suggestions, but space limits me from stating them here.

Also in October, UFO's returned several times to another well known locale for UFO sightings: Wanaque, New Jersey. As in January and March, there were many witnesses, including police officers (at one time earlier in the year the Mayor of Wanaque had been treated to a sighting, along with other public officials and citizens).

November may be the most important month of the year, as it marked preliminary operations of the new scientific UFO investigation begun by the University of Colorado. The National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP), which has been asked by the scientific group involved for the best cases NICAP can provide, sees this project as possibly

the most significant event in the history of UFO's. NICAP, incidentally, has provided much of the information in this letter in its latest bulletin to members.

Yes, 1966 has come to an end, and as I begin to file away all UFO incidents of that year, and make room for whatever is to come in 1967, one hope remains with me: that the upcoming months will bring less crackpot sightings and UFO hoaxes, and many, many more detailed accounts by serious individuals.

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