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# CIA critic's facts are far out

By JOHN D. LOFTON JR.

WASHINGTON — As if they didn't have enough trouble already, the folks at the CIA now have to deny stories that the agency has suppressed information about creatures from outer space.

The man making the charges about what he calls the CIA's "Saucergate" scandal, is Robert S. Carr, a former lecturer in mass communications at the University of South Florida. Carr says he also once worked for Walt Disney on what he says were "highly classified secret government projects" involving nonverbal communication.

As Carr is telling it in college campus lectures, TV and radio interviews, and to anybody else who will listen, the "facts" are as follows:

- Incident One. On Feb. 13, 1948, 12 miles west of Aztec, N. M., a 30-foot flying saucer made a crash landing killing all 12 "little men" aboard. The bodies were whisked away to Dayton, Ohio, to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base where they remain today in the medical lab in cryonic suspension. The whole thing has been covered up by the CIA.

Despite the successful efforts of the CIA to hush up the cold storage of these little creatures, Carr says it is "the worst kept secret in America." He says "at least 500 highly placed people in the medical profession, the academic world, and the intelligence community have examined the humanoids and the craft they arrived in."

One of these people, says Carr, was President Eisenhower, who saw and actually touched the UFO.

- Incident Two. Near New Paltz, N. Y., in March of 1960, some local law enforcement authorities — either the sheriff or the game warden — somehow managed to catch a humanoid outside his UFO.

After 28 days in captivity at CIA headquarters in Langley, Va., says Carr — although the CIA was not in its Virginia headquarters until 1961 — the humanoid croaked.

When I reached Mr. Carr at his home in Clearwater, Fla., I asked him what sort of proof he had to back up his weird tales? I asked if he could refer me to any of the 500 people — other than President Eisenhower — who he says saw the frozen humanoids. He refused.

Carr said he would not betray his sources, that he would not "finger" these individuals whom he praised as "people of vision and courage."

At Wright-Patterson, I talked with a very pleasant captain, Jim Bowman, who very patiently explained that they had had over 130 queries about Carr's charges. He read a statement which said in its entirety: "There are no little creatures or craft from space at Wright-Patterson AFB now. There never have been. The report is without foundation."

Presumably, it's just a matter of time until Mr. Carr's charges are plastered all over the front page of our newspapers. And CIA Director William Colby is forced to once again trudge up to Capitol Hill and attempt to prove yet one more negative, one more thing that his agency has not done.

No doubt, there are times when Mr. Colby wishes someone would put him in cryonic suspension until this whole thing blows over.

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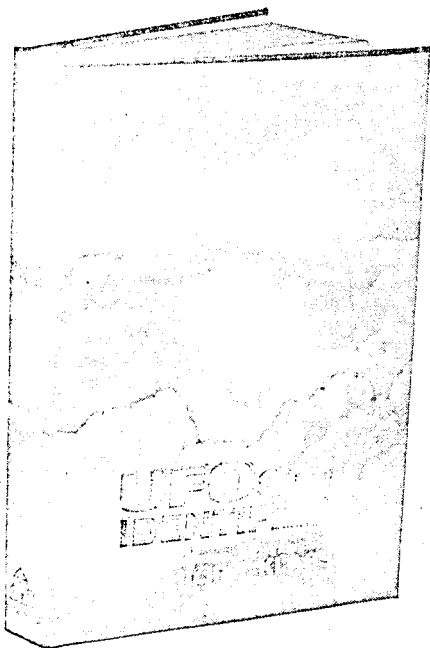
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Although at first glance Philip J. Klass's explanation of unidentified flying objects, in his new book, *UFOs—Identified*, may seem prosaic to those who are anticipating the supreme adventure of communicating with beings from another world, most readers of this soundly based and strongly argued book will have to postpone their daydreams and, accepting Mr. Klass's "plasma theory," conclude that many UFOs really are . . .

# GREAT BALLS OF FIRE!

By J. S. Butz, Jr.

TECHNICAL EDITOR, AIR FORCE/SPACE DIGEST



THERE are many who will not want to believe that "flying saucers" really are "balls of ionized fire," a sort of atmospheric phenomenon as natural as rain-fall but rare as a waterspout.

First of all, it's too easy. If this is so, why haven't scientists known about it for years and scotched the stories that have mushroomed into the modern legend of the UFO?

To believe the "balls of fire" theory, you also must discount or at least reevaluate the numerous reports of veteran airline and military pilots, and other competent trained observers who have seen UFOs and sometimes flown close formation with them for many minutes.

Strictly from the technical viewpoint, few people in the United States are prepared by formal education, or otherwise, to accept the concept of natural plasma—the fourth state of matter, in which a few ounces of ionized (electrified) air can be kept glowing and restrained for significant periods inside a "bottle" formed by the earth's magnetic field. How can these plasmas grow to diameters of more than 100 feet and, on occasion, maneuver with what appears to be "intelligence"?

A final objection, though one which most of us probably won't admit, arises from a hope the glowing air theory is wrong because it tends to eliminate the possibility of this generation's participating in the greatest of all adventures—an encounter with beings from another world.

In spite of these objections, most readers of the book, *UFOs—Identified*,\* probably will give up their daydreams and accept the plasma theory as the most plausible solution to the great flying saucer mystery.

The author, Philip J. Klass, has collected a mass of data and generated a strong argument to support it. His conclusion, in effect, is that there has been no hoax in the majority of the thousands of UFO sightings. He believes the observers did see something, a plasma,

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*UFOs—Identified*, by Philip J. Klass, Random House, N. Y., 290 pp., \$6.95.

and their consistent misinterpretation constitutes one of the most significant cases of mistaken identity on scientific record.

Mr. Klass's explanation for the lateness in appreciating this phenomenon is that the sensationalism surrounding UFOs has kept serious scientists at a distance. He doesn't claim to have originated the idea that UFOs are a form of *Kugelblitz* (ball lightning) or an electrified plasma of air. But he does make two important contributions.

One is an exhaustive reporting job, which is sufficiently detailed and restrained to appeal to scientists. No previous publication comes close to making as strong a case for the plasma theory. It is likely that at the very least Mr. Klass's book will provide the spark to ignite extensive and badly needed scientific investigation of the subject.

At the same time, the book has great appeal for the layman. Mr. Klass relates his experiences as a detective story—his initial reluctance to consider UFO sightings seriously, the first suspicions that plasma was involved, the occurrences that prompted his decision to make a detailed investigation of many sightings, and some of the bizarre adventures that befall one entering the UFO "community" for the first time.

Virtually anyone interested in UFOs can understand the book, and those who do will run the risk of becoming converts to the plasma theory.

Phil Klass has some unique qualifications for writing this book, which I can attest to personally, as we worked together four years on the staff of *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, where he is now Senior Avionics

Editor. He is an electrical engineer and had ten years' experience on advanced projects at General Electric before turning to technical reporting, and he is knowledgeable about plasmas.

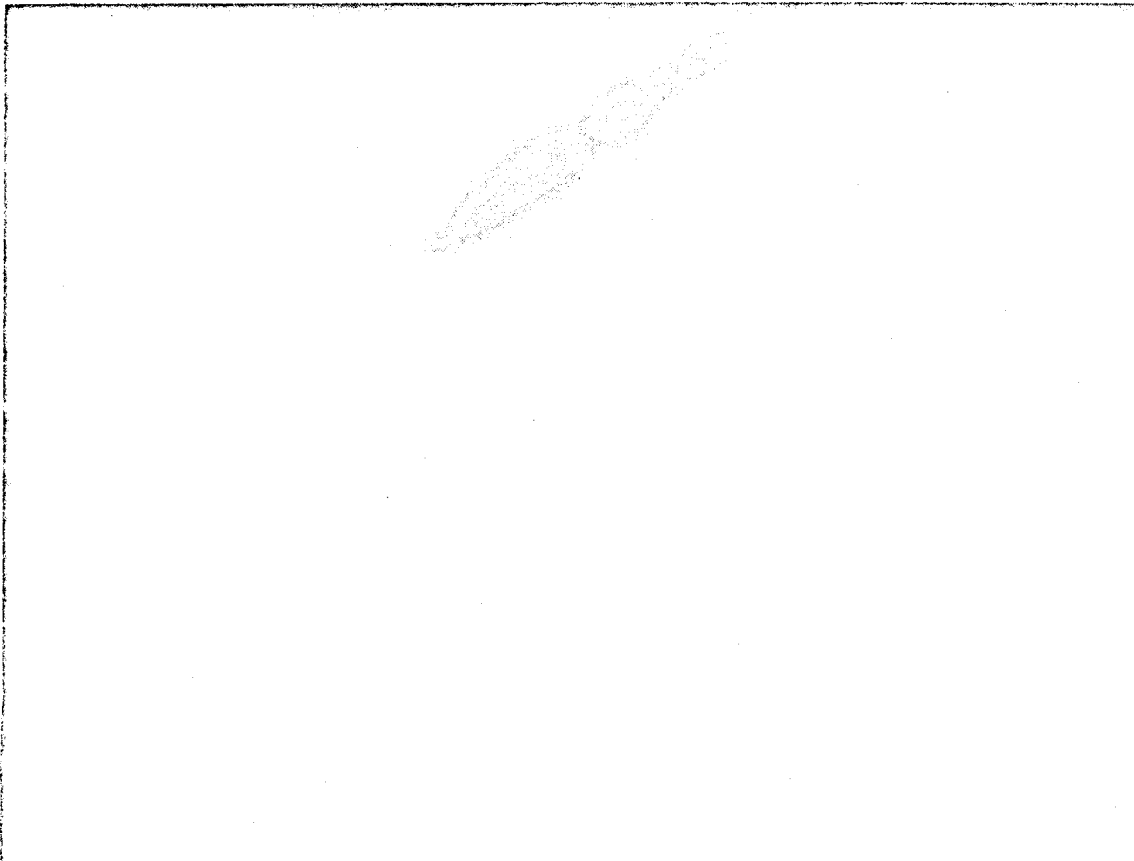
But much more important is his prodigious capacity for reporting and writing. In his fifteen years with *Aviation Week* he has poured out a volume of stories that probably won't ever be equaled in the technical reporting field. His record is of the Babe Ruth variety; few people will come close. To top it off, Mr. Klass has a high batting average for accuracy. He is seldom wrong.

The combination is formidable, and it is apparent in his book, *UFOs—Identified*. If Phil is wrong on this one, he's picked a lulu.

But the chances of his thesis being incorrect seem small. He reports a survey conducted by Dr. J. Rand McNally, Jr., of the Atomic Energy Commission's Oak Ridge Laboratories. Nearly 16,000 persons were interviewed, and only 513, or 3.2 percent, reported ever having seen ball lightning.

Mr. Klass discusses talks with a number of other scientists who have studied *Kugelblitz*. Some of this work has related to possible defenses against missiles. So far this aspect has proved fruitless, but it has produced several experts in the field. One of them, Dr. Martin A. Uman of the Westinghouse Research Laboratories, believes that ball lightning is a family of phenomena, one of which can be triggered by the corona-type of electrical discharge that glows around high-voltage power lines.

Dr. Uman's corona theory fits right in with Mr.



Ball lightning, or *Kugelblitz*, is shown at left in this time-exposure photograph taken by Dr. B. T. Matthias in 1961 at Los Alamos, N. M. Ball lightning usually is reported during or after a thunderstorm. However, according to Mr. Klass, other forms of natural plasma have been triggered on clear days, at high and low altitude, by power line corona and electrical discharges from aircraft.

A photograph of a glowing, saucer-shaped UFO (right) with a "vertical tail" extending from its lower portion was taken by James Lucci of Beaver Falls, Pa., as he was making time-exposure of the moon (left). This saucer came from the direction of high tension lines. Only the saucer-shaped portion was visible to Lucci and his companions, suggesting that the "tail" was radiating infrared energy outside of the visible light portion of the spectrum.

—Photo by James Lucci

Klass's own conclusions. Mr. Klass's investigations began when he read the book *Incident at Exeter*, in which John G. Fuller reported exhaustively on widely publicized UFO sightings near Exeter, N. H. Mr. Fuller suggested, among other things, that most of the sightings had taken place near power lines because the "objects" were seeking the power. Mr. Klass explains the sightings in the area on the basis of a combination of salt air from the sea, the dry dusty atmosphere that summer, possibly extra-high voltage excursions

in the power system, and other conditions that tend to create plasma discharges.

As Mr. Klass records, he believes that virtually all UFO sightings at low altitude are either out-and-out hoaxes or can be explained by the corona-discharge theory.

High-altitude UFOs are another matter, and Mr. Klass suggests they are triggered by aircraft when atmospheric conditions are right. This could occur when an aircraft accumulates a relatively high electrical charge and a discharge occurs at the wingtip and "ignites" water vapor, ice crystals, or pollution products in the wingtip vortex.

World War II "foo-fighter" reports of glowing fireballs shooting past aircraft or flying "formation" for many minutes, and more recent UFO reports of large saucer- and cigar-shaped objects, are similarly credited by Mr. Klass to this type of phenomena.

Scientific interest has been aroused, and Mr. Klass reports on conversations with many physicists who are beginning to look at UFOs as a matter for serious investigation. Many men are equipped for serious study, as *Kugelblitz* and plasma are being created experimentally in many laboratories. However, a rigorous answer to the question is going to take a unique expertise in plasma and atmospheric physics, and to date no one has suggested an easy method of experimentally proving the theory.

One current need is for more detailed descriptions of foo fighter and UFO sightings at high altitude. Anyone who has had such experiences is invited to get

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### What USAF Is Doing About UFOs

*An independent investigation of UFO sightings is under way at the University of Colorado. The Air Force is sponsoring the study, but has given Dr. Edward U. Condon, the project leader and former director of the National Bureau of Standards, a completely free hand in seeking a valid explanation of UFO phenomena.*

*The Colorado study was initiated about two years ago after complaints from UFO enthusiasts about the USAF's "withholding" of flying saucer information had reached the thunderous stage. A report from the Colorado group is due next fall. It will be reviewed by a special group from the National Academy of Sciences.*

*The Air Force also is continuing to record and investigate UFO sightings through a small office at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.*

A plasma in the process of shorting out a high-frequency radio antenna for the USAF/Martin Titan III launch vehicle is shown at right. Most antenna designs have failed this type of vacuum chamber test of broadcasting characteristics in a near-space environment. Mr. Klass cites such antenna shorts as another mechanism for creating plasma UFOs in the atmosphere, and in space near the earth.

in touch with Mr. Philip Klass through this magazine.

Mr. Klass also is experiencing the saddest aspects of "UFO fever." Men who have "flown" on saucers, around the earth, and "to other worlds" are attracting cults of believers. Some are booked solid on speaking tours, appear regularly on TV, and are followed about by newspaper reporters. Some are taking in substantial sums from their followers.

One young woman recently called Mr. Klass from Florida to ask his opinion on a move her in-laws were about to make. They were being encouraged by a saucer "flyer" to donate their home and savings to an institute of "cosmic" research and to come to California to live on a ranch which is "visited" by the saucermen.

The young woman, incidentally, alienated her in-laws by recommending against the move. She is now accused of wanting their money herself.

#### \$10,000 OFFER

*Philip Klass, author of UFOs—Identified, has not yet had any takers for his offer to pay \$10,000 to anyone who signs an agreement with him. Mr. Klass will pay the \$10,000 when an authentic extraterrestrial visitor appears on live television or presents his credentials to the United Nations, or if a crashed spacecraft is found which clearly exhibits construction techniques from another world. There's one catch—the other party to the agreement must agree to pay Mr. Klass \$250 a year until any of the above specified events occur.*

"UFO fever" also has bitten large numbers of reputable men and women. The most conservative of their organizations is NICAP (National Investigation Committee for Aerial Phenomenon) with about 12,000 members. This group earnestly believes the UFO question has not been studied adequately by the government and has undertaken to do it itself. NICAP has sent its investigators all over the United States and prepared detailed reports on thousands of sightings. It has attracted many thousands of man-hours of volunteer time from enthusiasts and maintains a small full-time staff. Most people familiar with its activities, Mr. Klass included, report they are not out to make a buck on the UFO craze.

NICAP officials, however, do not put much stock in Mr. Klass's plasma theory. One says, "He is trying to explain one unknown with another unknown."

Among the rank-and-file UFO believers, however, there is a strong resistance to Mr. Klass's idea because it seems to rule out the possibility of extraterrestrial life, at least in terms of current visits to this small planet. But this must be recognized as a narrow view.

Certainly it doesn't do justice to UFO enthusiasts of two decades ago. They would have looked at many options for an advanced world sending out space travelers. Solid "earth-style" vehicles piloted by what has become the stereotype "little green men" are only one possibility. Who is to say that advanced civilizations cannot—or do not—travel in plasma form? After all, it is now well known that the universe itself is ninety-nine percent plasma, and an earth-type assemblage of atoms is an occurrence of relative rarity.

Mr. Klass may have started far more than even he bargained for.—END

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