

# INVESTIGATE THIS!

## National Press Club news conference, November 12, 2007

### The Nature of the UFO Phenomenon: A Digest of the Testimony

The press conference featured a call for renewed investigation of UFO reports by the U.S. Government with full international cooperation and information sharing. What justifies a large-scale, priority study of UFOs in these difficult times? The type of UFO encounter reported by these highly qualified and experienced military and aviation personnel constitutes a small -- but strong and representative -- sample of the much larger body of accumulated hardcore evidence of something occurring on a global scale that potentially has profound implications for humanity.

The vitally important underlying question is: What is the phenomenon that is being observed? We won't know until there is a comprehensive, world-wide investigation. We do know with a considerable degree of certainty -- thanks to reports of this caliber -- what the phenomenon is not. It is *not* simply a collection of mistaken observations of known or conventional things.

Serious testimony from highly credible witnesses whose reports are confirmed by additional expert witnesses, radar, film, physical trace evidence, and official documentation establishes the bedrock basis for taking UFOs seriously and provides the fundamental reason why a large-scale international investigation is needed. The focus of inquiry should be on what the evidence shows, not on entirely speculative matters or political issues such as "why would the government cover it up?" or "why would extraterrestrial beings want to visit earth? "

Sadly, the news media gets fixated on unanswerable questions such as these rather than simply looking at the documented facts of the phenomenon, as any journalist should. Often the TV pundits use such speculative puzzles to keep the whole business at arms length. CNN's November 12<sup>th</sup> coverage of the press conference included Gary Tuchman telling Wolf Blitzer that "One thing we always tell the enthusiasts: If one of these craft came down on earth and did an interview with us, the debate would be over. But that hasn't happened yet." This is a version of the "why don't they land on the white house lawn?" syndrome.

The question should be "What?" not "Why?"

And the only way to explore the “what,” is to carefully examine the data at hand. The media, which should be reporting the straightforward facts to the public, seems to have a hard time doing the job. CNN continuously infused its coverage with the terms “enthusiasts” and “believers” to describe the members of the distinguished panel, as if the facts the panelists were presenting -- real events that actually did occur -- are somehow due to either enjoyment or some kind of religion.

We have to ask “what” while being willing to drop the filters and preconceived prejudice that contaminate a clear presentation of the subject.

As illustrated by these witnesses and the thousands more like them, totally unexplained craft-like objects that display extraordinary performance have been observed repeatedly in our airspace and tracked on radar for decades. What are they?

The following is a digest of the witness testimony presented on November 12 to illustrate the *nature of the phenomenon* that has been reported by credible witnesses worldwide for at least 60 years starting with World War II.

## **MILITARY WITNESSES & INVESTIGATORS**

**Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Wilfried De Brouwer, Belgian Air Force, fighter pilot, wing commander.**

On his watch as Deputy Chief of staff for Operations, Planning, and Human Resources, a major wave of UFO sightings over Belgium occurred in 1989 and into 1990. On the evening of November 29, 1989, in eastern Belgium hundreds of witnesses including gendarmes and military officers saw a large triangular craft (estimated span of 120 feet) that hovered and moved slowly, occasionally putting on bursts of speed.

The craft's salient feature was three brilliant light beams, one at each apex, that turned or rotated independently of each other and illuminated the ground. In one instance gendarmes reported that the light was so bright that they could read a newspaper by it. De Brouwer in consultation with other NATO partners determined that no flights of stealth aircraft or experimental aircraft could account for the sightings.

The Belgian Air Force tried to identify the intruder craft, and on three occasions launched F-16 fighter planes in pursuit of it. On one mission two F-16s simultaneously registered a radar target displaying rapid changes in speed and altitude beyond the capabilities of any known aircraft. However, they were unable to establish visual contact and false radar targets could not be entirely

ruled out though the radar target performed consistently on both airborne radars. (De Brouwer personally concluded that the target was real.)

De Brouwer's conclusion: "The Belgian UFO wave was exceptional and the Air Force could not identify the nature, origin and intentions of the reported phenomena."

### **Gen. (Ret.) Parviz Jafari, Iranian Air Force, fighter pilot.**

On September 18, 1976, as a major and squadron commander, Jafari was ordered by the Air Force command to intercept a large, brilliantly lighted object that had been observed over Tehran by hundreds of citizens. His was the second F-4 Phantom jet to be scrambled. When the first pilot approached the UFO, he lost all instrumentation and communications and was forced to return to base.

Jafari: "I approached the object, which was flashing with intense red, green, orange and blue light so bright that I was not able to see its body. The sequence of flashes was extremely fast, like a strobe light. We locked on it with radar...at a range of 25 miles. The size on the radar scope was comparable to that of a [Boeing] 707 tanker."

A wild cat-and-mouse chase ensued during which the object emitted four flare- or missile-like illuminated objects at different times. Jafari lost radio communications and his weapons were jammed at those times. When one of the objects headed toward him, Jafari assumed that it was a missile and tried to launch a Sidewinder heat-seeking missile at it, but his missile panel "went out."

When he headed back to base, one of the detached objects followed him. He saw another of the objects land in an open area, illuminating the terrain as it did so.

### **Commandante (Ret.) Oscar Alfonso Santa Maria, Peruvian Air Force.**

At 7:15 a.m. on April 11, 1980, a hovering spherical object was observed above the air base at La Joya, Arequipa, Peru, brightly reflecting the sunlight. Since it was in restricted airspace without clearance, Santa Maria Huertas (then a lieutenant, fighter pilot) was ordered to shoot it down. He took off in a Sukoi-22 jet fighter and closed in on the object, and began strafing it with 30mm shells.

Santa Maria: "Some projectiles went toward the ground [i.e., were deflected], and others hit the object fully, but they had no effect at all. The projectiles didn't bounce off; probably they were absorbed." He added that the concentrated cone of fire from his guns "would normally obliterate anything in its path."

The object then began to ascend and move away from the base, with Santa Maria in pursuit. When it stopped suddenly, he had to veer to one side to avoid hitting it. He climbed above it, locked onto it with his radar and prepared to fire again, at which time the object rose vertically at high speed out of the gunsight.

Santa Maria: "Two more times I had the object on target, when the object was stationary. Each time, it moved away at the very last minute, when I was about to fire, always eluding my attack."

Once again he tried to get above the object, and at 63,000 feet he came within about 300 feet of it as it hovered again. It was a whitish, dome-shaped object about 30 feet in diameter with a wide circular metallic base and no visible means of propulsion. Santa Maria then realized that he was dealing with something totally unknown rather than a spying device of some kind. "I was afraid. I thought I might be finished," he said.

Low on fuel and unable to perform any high-speed maneuvers, he turned and headed back to base, gliding the aircraft to conserve fuel. He also zig-zagged the plane and nervously watched in the rearview mirrors to see whether the UFO was following him, but it did not follow. After he landed, the object remained visible hovering for two more hours. The case was documented by the U.S. Department of Defense.

Santa Maria concluded: "It still gives me chills to think about it."

**Col. (Ret.) Charles I. Halt, U.S. Air Force; Tech. Sgt. James Penniston, U.S. Air Force security police.**

As Deputy Base Commander of RAF Bentwaters, a U.S. Air Force Tactical Fighter Wing facility in the United Kingdom in December 1980 **Colonel Halt** was called out to investigate reports of a strange triangular craft that air police reported seeing in the adjacent Rendlesham Forest. They said the craft was about three meters on a side and was pulsating with multiple bright lights. After a while the craft took off, maneuvered sharply through the trees and sped away.

Two nights later the police commander reported to Halt that the "thing" was back, and he took several air police and other specialist personnel into the woods to investigate. At the landing site they discovered three 1-1/2 inch indentations in the ground in a triangular pattern. He displayed a plaster cast of one of the indentations. Mild radiation was detected and evidence was found of broken tree branches near the site.

Colonel Halt along with the other men then became a witness himself when a bright red-orange oval object with a black center, its light blinking, was

observed maneuvering through the trees. The object approached, then receded and appeared to silently explode into five white lights which then vanished. The team moved out of the woods into a pasture, and there saw several elliptical objects with multiple body lights in the northern sky.

Other similar objects were visible to the South, one of which approached at high speed and emitted a laser-like concentrated light beam down near their feet. In the distance they could see another object emitting light beams down into the weapons storage area. During these events their radios malfunctioned, breaking up on all three radio frequencies. Col. Halt recorded a description of these events as they unfolded on a pocket tape recorder.

Halt: "I have no idea what we saw but do know whatever we saw was under intelligent control."

**James Penniston** at the time was the senior security officer in charge of base security at RAF Woodbridge, and held Top Secret U.S. and NATO security clearances. He was in charge of the air police team called out to investigate unexplained lights in the Rendlesham Forest, assumed at first to be an aircraft crash, instead finding the strange triangular craft resting on three legs. "There was a bright light emanating from an object on the forest floor ... a silhouetted triangular craft about 9 feet long by 6.5 feet high, came into view. The craft was fully intact sitting in a small clearing inside the woods," he said. As they neared it, they started experiencing radio problems and so set up a communications relay system.

As Penniston and Airman Cabansak proceeded toward the craft they saw blue and yellow lights swirling around its surface, and the air felt electrically charged. Penniston conducted a thorough on-site investigation, making notes in a notebook and taking photographs (which were blurred out on return from the photo lab). On one side group of pictorial symbols about 3 inches high and 2-1/2 feet long were etched into the surface of the craft, which felt warm to the touch and felt like metal.

After about 45 minutes the light from the craft began to intensify, and as the men took cover it lifted off the ground soundlessly, maneuvered through the trees and "shot off at an unbelievable rate of speed." More than 80 air policemen assigned to the 81<sup>st</sup> Security Police Squadron witnessed the takeoff, he said.

Penniston: "This encounter was no type of aircraft that I have ever seen before .... The information acquired during the investigation was reported through military channels. The team and [other] witnesses were told to treat the investigation as 'top secret' and no further discussion was allowed."

## AIRLINE CAPTAINS & OTHER PILOTS

Some of the earliest observations that established UFOs as a genuine mystery in the 1940s and 1950s were made by airline and military pilots. There is a long and rich history of pilots' aerial UFO encounters. (For example, see [www.narcap.org](http://www.narcap.org)) Following are the reports made by pilot witnesses at the press conference.

**Capt. (Ret.) Jean-Charles Duboc, Air France.** While flying an Airbus A-320 over France from Nice to London at 1:00 p.m. on January 28, 1994, Capt. Duboc observed a large, lens-shaped object at about 25 nautical miles to the left of and slightly below the aircraft, also seen by the co-pilot and another crew member. The object was tilted at a 45-degree angle and moving horizontally. Then it stopped and hovered, appearing a red brown color with blurry outline. After about a minute the object seemed to become transparent and disappeared in about 10-20 seconds. He reported the sighting to Air Traffic Control and Air Defense Operations, which had recorded an unidentified target crossing the path of the airliner at the same time. The object disappeared off the radar scope at the same moment that it disappeared visually. Investigation by GEPAN of the French National Space Centre ruled out other aircraft or a balloon as a possible explanation. No explanation was found.

**Capt. Ray Bowyer, Aurigny Airlines, UK.** In April 2007 he observed two as-yet unidentified disc-shaped objects during a flight over the Channel Islands. During a 15-minute sighting the first object was visible from about 55 miles away. Then as his aircraft approached closer he could see another similar object beyond the first. Another pilot 25 miles to the south also saw the object as did many of the passengers.

Bowyer: "I found myself astounded but curious. But at 12 miles distance these objects were becoming uncomfortably large, and I was glad to descend and land the aircraft." An anomalous air traffic control radar return was detected during the sighting, and the encounter was reported by the BBC.

**Fife Symington, former Governor of Arizona.** Symington, a retired Air Force captain and pilot, conducted the press conference. In his concluding statement he reported being among the hundreds of witnesses to a huge

unidentified V-shaped craft observed over Arizona in 1997. The leading edge had enormous lights.

Symington: "I saw something that defied logic and challenged my reality. I witnessed a massive delta-shaped craft silently navigate over [the mountains]."

## OFFICIAL STUDIES

Government officials from five countries who had been tasked to study UFO reports added their testimony.

**Nick Pope.** Pope served as an official in the UK Ministry of Defence from 1985 to 2006. From 1991 to 1994 he was the desk officer responsible for UFO investigations to determine any potential threat to the UK or whether the reported objects had any "defense significance." Although most sightings turned out to have mundane explanations, about 5 percent could not be explained. These cases involved "incidents where reliable witnesses such as police officers and pilots reported structured craft performing speeds and maneuvers significantly in excess of anything they had seen military jet aircraft perform [and] involved UFOs tracked on radar and incidents where photos or videos were produced and where the MoD's technical experts found no evidence of fakery." One of the cases in March 1993 had about 60 witnesses at two Air Force bases who reported a triangular UFO emitting a low humming sound. The object moved slowly at first, then accelerated and sped away.

**Dr. Claude Poher.** An astrophysicist who had a 33-year career in space research at CNES (the French space agency, Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales), he created and directed the original French space agency UFO study known by the acronym GEPAN. He recounted several cases involving such features as animal reactions and physical trace evidence.

Poher: "The official conclusion of GEPAN in 1979, was that about 15 percent of cases remained unidentified after careful analysis by our experts. We concluded that the objects, in most of these cases, were compatible with flying machines whose flight physics were foreign to the experts' knowledge."

**Dr. Jean-Claude Ribes.** Dr. Ribes is an astrophysicist and radio astronomer who has been a long-term consultant to the French government UFO study that goes by the acronym GEIPAN (formerly GEPAN). He contributed to the COMETA report, a three-year military study of UFOs and

national security conducted mainly by high-ranking military officers associated with the High Studies Institute for National Defence. The report, released in 1999, concluded that the extraterrestrial hypothesis – though not formally proven – is the most logical explanation of UFOs. Among the recommendations made were that detection systems be modified to take UFOs into account (present configurations tend to screen them out) and that France cooperate with other countries on an international study.

Ribes: My personal opinion is that UFOs should be taken seriously and studied without prejudice....some cases strongly suggest actual flying machines with characteristics well beyond our terrestrial capacities.”

**Dr. Anthony Choy.** A lawyer with a master's degree in defense management, Dr. Choy was a founding member in 2001 of the Peruvian Air Force UFO study office known by the acronym OIFAA. He conducted a three-year investigation of a series of sightings of eight intense red orange spheres “moving in an apparently intelligent manner,” and videotaped sightings of spheres descending into woods. The investigation concluded that the objects were physically real and unexplained. On August 6, 2004, they were able to record an object for 55 minutes moving at high speed and maneuvering up and down and from side to side.

Choy: “The evidence we have from actual UFO cases and incidents that have taken place in our country show that the UFO phenomenon remains one of the greatest challenges to our current knowledge of science and technology.”

**Captain Rodrigo Bravo Garrido.** Bravo currently serves as a Captain and pilot for the Aviation Army of Chile. In 2000, he was assigned to conduct an internal study titled "Introduction to Anomalous Aerial Phenomenon and their considerations for aerospace security" involving previous case reports of military planes encounters with UAP. For the last several years he has continued this research on recent and current cases affecting aviation safety in cooperation with the Committee for the Study of Anomalous Aerial Phenomena (CEFAA), a branch of the General Administration of Civil Aeronautics, Chile's FAA. “New cases are being documented by pilots, traffic controllers, operations staff at the world’s airports, and by many others with the proper training to determine if a flying object is something unusual,” Captain Bravo said. “The true origin of these UFOs is unknown, yet they do affect aviation all around the planet, and this must be addressed.”

**John Callahan, Division Chief, Accidents and Investigations Branch, Federal Aviation Administration.**

A Japan Airlines B-747 cargo plane encountered one or more UFOs on November 17, 1986, while flying over Alaska, and was followed by a gigantic Saturn-shaped object through FAA-controlled airspace for about 31 minutes. The UFO also trailed a United Airlines flight until the plane landed. The data includes visual sightings, airborne and ground radar confirmation, videotaped radar evidence, air traffic control voice communications, and official reports.

Mr. Callahan became involved in the case investigation in early January of 1987 when he was contacted by the FAA Alaskan regional office for advice. He was responsible for collecting all the data on the case and having it sent to the FAA Technical Center in Atlantic City, New Jersey, for analysis. In his summary of the events, he reported that the large object jumped around between sweeps of the radar, traversing miles at a time and rapidly changing positions around the B-747. The radar targets coincided with the pilot's visual reports.

After briefing the FAA Administrator, Callahan was told to hand the case off to the intelligence community since "the FAA controls aircraft, it does not control UFOs." At a meeting with the President's science advisers during which the evidence was presented, one of the CIA representatives said "This event never happened; we were never here; we're confiscating all this data and you are all sworn to secrecy."

Other than the briefing materials which were confiscated, all of the FAA technical analysis data remained in Callahan's office for two years until he retired and he has had them ever since.