

AN ARABIAN LANDING?

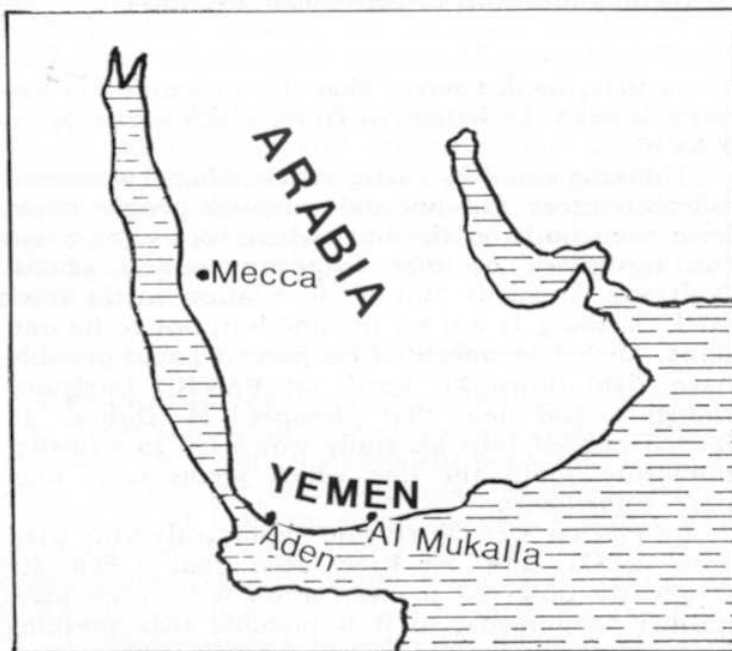
Gordon Creighton

FOR various pretty obvious reasons, few UFO reports reach us from countries under totalitarian governments and with effective censorship systems, countries with large numbers of languages, or countries where the levels of education and literacy are low, and no efficient news-gathering network exists. Many of the Arab-populated lands fall within this general category – some of them for more than just one of the reasons enumerated – and consequently Arabian-source UFO reports have hitherto been exceptionally few. (Religious taboos and prejudices may of course also play a role.)

The Arabian account of which I give a translation below comes from the German publication *Das Neue Zeitalter*,¹ No.28/1974. The author of the article is Wolfgang Appel, and his title, in translation, reads: *The Extraterrestrials landed in the Hadhramaut*. We are indebted to Frau Ilse von Jacobi of Wiesbaden who sent us the original German text.

“Mullah Umar Siddiq, priest of the Al-Hud Mosque at Al-Mukalla,² in the People’s Republic of Yemen, is a level-headed, down-to-earth sort of fellow who was not so long ago a guerrilla fighter in the war in Yemen.

“Umar Siddiq, with two friends, the merchant Ibrahim Khaleb and the physician Muhammed Watif, was standing on the roof of the mosque. The date was February 8, 1974, or 16 Muharram 1394 by the Muslim Calendar, and the time was the evening between the *Maghrib* and the *Ishā* – that is to say, between the Evening Prayer and the Night Prayer.



Sketch map showing the location of Al Mukalla

“Suddenly, just as the Sun was sinking in the West, and while they were gazing towards the East, where the first few stars were beginning to show in the sky, they clearly beheld, to their vast astonishment, three large white discs gliding slowly down towards the Earth.

“Among the more educated circles of the Hadhramaut, at any rate, word of the “Space Age” has already penetrated to some extent, so the three friends were in agreement that what they had just observed must have been the descent of a number of space-capsules, though whether these might be Russian or American remained uncertain.

“Losing no time, they at once gathered together some provisions and hired three camels, and Dr. Muhammad Watif thoughtfully packed his instruments. According to their estimate, the three white discs had probably landed in the Wadi Jawlan, a dry and totally uninhabited valley some 50 kilometres to the east of Al-Mukalla. The valley lies beyond a range of rocky hills and runs out towards the coast. Two other deep gullies lie between it and the town of Al-Mukalla, however, and in fact it took the party five hours to reach the Wadi.

“As they plodded on, the doctor mused to himself that their caravan was at any rate well balanced. For did it not contain a practical man of affairs, and a medical expert? And should they encounter Shaitan, the Devil himself, on their journey, did they not have as their third member a holy man of Allahn the Mullah Umar Siddiq himself?

“At dawn they dismounted from their camels to say the Fajr, the Morning Prayer and, after that, to partake of a little refreshment. And just as the three men, kneeling on their prayer-rugs and facing towards Mecca in the North-West, had ended the *Taslimat-at-Tahlil*, the invocation of peace with which the prayer concludes, a vivid glow suddenly lit up the whole eastern sky.

“What they saw, as they turned to look, they described to me as follows:

“ ‘Although the Sun was not yet above the horizon in the East, the whole of the south-eastern sky above the Wadi Jawlan (still a few kilometres distant, behind the hills) was for a few seconds lit up and became as bright as noonday. The light was of yellowish-white colour, and came from three beams which were stabbing upwards and fanning out into the sky. The vivid light soon died down, but the three beams still remained visible for some time afterwards. Then they grew gradually paler and thinner, until finally they were lost in the light of dawn.’

“The party hurried on, and soon descended into the Wadi Jawlan. The valley of the Wadi, as they

described it to me, and as I was able to confirm for myself some days later, is roughly triangular, the base line being some two kms. in length and the two other sides both about five kms. The base line lies on the coast. All around the valley are steep hills. I have established to my own satisfaction, when I visited the area, that the only means of getting down into the Wadi Jawlan is by means of the very steep and very narrow flights of steps cut out of the rock-face in a number of places, and that getting down there is no easy job. Nowhere could any wheeled or caterpillar-tracked vehicle possibly get down into the Wadi Jawlan by any means whatsoever, whether from the land or from the sea. Between the mountains which form the base-line, it is true that there is a small opening, some 100 metres wide, which leads to the sea. But the whole of its mouth is so beset with rocks and reefs that no boat could possibly get through them. Consequently no vehicle or craft could possibly have got into the Wadi Jawlan unless it be by air. But, even then, no normal aircraft would be able to land there either, owing to the vast quantities of rock detritus scattered everywhere.

"The only craft that could have penetrated there would accordingly have had to be a helicopter. Or a space-craft.

"And what Mullah Umar Siddiq showed me, when I visited the place ten days later and beheld it with my own eyes, was nothing less than staggering. For, impressed in the sand, all over the area, were the absolutely clear-cut tracks of caterpillar-track-type vehicles. Whatever it was that had made these tracks must have been pretty heavy, not only because of the fact that the tracks were quite deep, but also because, all along the extent of the tracks, numerous rocks of volcanic *tuff* type had been crushed.

"From where could those tracks have come?

"For there are, in the whole of the Hadhramaut, no tanks whatsoever, and no tractors whatsoever.

"And why on earth should any foreign helicopter have brought any sort of caterpillar-tracked vehicle and set it down precisely in this wilderness of the Wadi Jawlan!

"And then, finally, came our most staggering discovery of all. For at three places, all about 100 metres apart, in the form of a regular triangle with sides some 5.3 metres long, we found scoop-marks, each 85 cms. in width. Right at the centre of this triangular zone were slabs of outcropping rock, and on this rock we could see areas where the rock had been fused and melted. And, along the whole extent of the triangle, the grass and thorn-scrub were burnt.

"I stayed in the Wadi Jawlan for three days, and made a painstaking examination of all these marks and traces in the hope that I might come upon some object or some further piece of evidence which might throw some light on these enigmatic phenomena, but in vain.

"Then I sent a report on the matter to NASA, but I have so far had no answer from them.³

"So I leave it to the public now to form their own

conclusions regarding what I found, and regarding the statements made to me by the Mullah Umar Siddiq and his friends."

Notes

- 1 In English: *The New Age*.
- 2 Mukalla or Makalla on some maps. Its coordinates are: 14°33 N.; 49°02 E.
- 3 I fear that Herr Appel is just a wee bit naive if he thinks he can extract any sort of reply or comment from NASA!

CENTER FOR UFO STUDIES

This is the Institute founded by Dr. J. Allen Hynek, professor of astronomy at Northwestern University, and former U. S. Air Force civilian scientific consultant on UFO reports, who is the Director.

The *UFO Center* is an affiliation of scientists from several United States universities who wish to see positive action taken to end a quarter of a century of misrepresentation and misunderstanding.

"Hynek's work has started a steady shift in public and scientific attitude to UFOs . . ." (*Nature*, October 4, 1974).

Details from : **UFO CENTER,**
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THE NBC DOCUMENTARY ON UFOs

In FSR Vol. 20, No. 2, an item under the title *Reporting UFOs on Film* told of preparations to screen on TV, in the United States, two films in which Dr. J. Allen Hynek had been one of the advisers on the script.

It is now known that the title of the first of these, an hour-long documentary to be broadcast by NBC on Sunday, December 15, 1974, is **UFOs: Do you Believe?**

It is still not known when the second film will be shown, but Dr. Hynek informs us that Ballantine Books is releasing a paperback based on the film.

C.B.